

## Policy: Response to Thesis Examiners' Reports

### Purpose

To ensure that the relevant College Dean (Dean of Science or Dean of Medicine & Health Sciences) has sufficient information on which to base the decision on award of the degree at the completion of the examination process; and to complete the documentation of that process.

The Policy is in keeping with established practice in responding to peer review of research articles submitted for journal publication.

### Examiners' Reports on Research Theses: ANU practice

The examiners of a Higher Degree Research student's thesis complete an Examiner Recommendation Form and provide a detailed written report setting out their assessment of the thesis; the report often includes detailed comments and suggestions for revision. The examiners make a recommendation in one of the following categories:

1. Award of the degree
2. Award of the degree subject to corrections or revisions to the satisfaction of the Delegated Authority
3. No award – revision of the thesis and submission for re-examination
4. No award – fail

Once the recommendation by the Head of the relevant School or Department, based on the examiners' reports and recommendations, has been approved by the Delegated Authority and Dean, the candidate receives copies of the examiners' reports and is invited to revise the thesis and to submit it to the Head of School/Department (in the case of recommendation 2); or to revise and submit the thesis for re-examination (in the case of recommendation 3). In both cases the College Dean determines the final outcome of the examination process.

### CMBE/CPS Policy on responding to Examiners' Reports

In the case of recommendation 2 it is ANU College of Medicine, Biology & Environment/ANU College of Physical Sciences Policy that HDR candidates are required to provide a written response to the examiners' reports at the time of submission of the thesis for approval.

The written response must include an itemisation of each of the examiners' substantive comments and a response by the candidate to each comment, briefly stating the action taken to address the comment or the reasons for a decision not to act on a particular comment.

Comments may be dealt with separately for each examiner, or synthesised, *e.g.* to address all comments relating to a particular chapter or section of the thesis.

### Implementation

The Policy will be effective from the first day of the month following its approval by the CMBE and CPS Executives.

Heads of Schools/Departments, HDR Conveners and all HDR students in CMBE/CPS will be informed in writing of the requirements established in the Policy. A copy of the Policy will be provided to each HDR student in category 2, at the time that they receive the recommendation for revision and the examiners' reports.

Heads of Schools/Departments, the Delegated Authority and the relevant College Dean must sight the written response to the examiners' reports before making a recommendation for award of the degree.

### Review date

1 December 2009