

Division of Health Sciences | Te Wāhanga Matua Mātau Hauora

Guidelines on

EXTENSIONS FOR DISSERTATIONS, REPORTS, and PROJECTS > 40 points at 400 to 800 LEVEL

1 Purpose

1.1 This document provides guidelines on the processes for extensions of dissertations (as defined below) at 400 to 800 level in postgraduate programmes in the Division of Health Sciences.

2 Scope

2.1 These guidelines apply to all research reports, dissertations, project reports, creative components and exegeses that are a significant component of the degree in which the student is enrolled. A significant component is defined as having a points value of 40 points or more up to, but not including, 90 points. These guidelines do not apply to 30 point research projects or research papers.

3 Definitions

3.1 *Access to resources* refers to the normal resources a student enrolled in a particular programme has access to (such as library facilities, office space, student email, on-campus computing, department, school or programme support, supervision).

*3.2 Dissertation* usually refers to a significant piece of research that comprises a points value of

40 points or more up to, but not including, 90 points. In some degree programmes this will include a creative component and an exegesis, or will be termed research report, or project.

3.3 *Examination* refers to the evaluation of student dissertations (as defined above) in accordance with the relevant degree regulations.

3.4 *Extension* refers to the date by which a student must submit their dissertation after the normal submission date required by the Programme.

3.5 *External moderation* refers to the monitoring of provisional marks and grades by one or

more moderators from outside the University of Otago, to confirm that the standards applied are appropriate and not qualitatively different from those in other universities. External moderators may make recommendations concerning grades for individual students or groups of students, as well as more general comments concerning examination processes and standards. If external moderation is applied, it must occur prior to the final confirmation and release of grades.

3.6 *External Scholarship* refers to a scholarship which is funded by an agency external to the University of Otago, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade or similar entity. These often have unique guidelines and regulations governing the award.

3.7 *Programme* refers to the programme/ qualification (e.g. PGDipHealSc) in which the student is supervised.

3.8 *Regulations for the degree* refer to the degree regulations as set out in the University of

Otago Calendar in the year the student first enrolled in the degree.

**4 Submission dates**

4.1 Programmes are responsible for setting submission deadlines and processes for dissertation submissions.

4.2 In setting the deadline for submission of dissertations, Programmes must ensure that:

(a) Deadlines are set within the relevant Regulations for the degree as specified in the

Calendar.

(b) Where no deadlines are specified in the relevant regulations, the deadline should be set within the enrolment period of the dissertation paper code.

(c) Where external moderation is required, the deadline should be set to enable examination and moderation to occur prior to the date that final grades are made available to the student.

4.3 Students must be advised of the submission date at the commencement of their postgraduate degree and at the commencement of their dissertation (if different). Students should be made

aware of submission expectations, and that extensions are given in exceptional circumstances. These points should be covered and documented in the supervisor/student agreement.

**5 Extensions**

5.1 Extensions to submission dates will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances are those that are unexpected, beyond the student's control, and have significantly impaired the student's ability to meet the deadline.

Examples of exceptional circumstances include:

• serious illness or injury

• severe psychological impairment

• bereavement of a significant other

• critical personal circumstances involving the health or wellbeing of a relative or close friend

• other exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control such as natural disaster, damage to significant property, impacts arising from being the victim of a crime, impact of a pandemic.

5.2 An extension is **not** normally granted for:

* Events that occurred prior to the month before the deadline when there has been no previous notification of them
* Insufficient progress
* Anxiety experienced close to the deadline
* Other assessments due in the lead-up to the deadline
* Low-level impairment in the lead-up to the deadline
* Known impairment such as chronic illness (medical or psychological), injury or disability unless medical evidence confirms that the circumstances were exacerbated, despite appropriate management, in the month before the deadline. (Please note that where applications are repeatedly made for the same or similar reason, then the application may be declined on the grounds that the reason is not unexpected).

5.3 Where a student is in receipt of an external scholarship, in some circumstances consultation will be necessary with the funder of that scholarship. In such cases, an extension shall not be granted until that consultation has taken place. For international students, consultation will occur through the International Office, who will also provide an assessment on the implications an extension may have on the student's visa and insurance.

*5.4* An extension to the submission date of less than one month can be granted by the Heads of Department, School, or Programme (as appropriate), or delegated authority. Only one signature is required. The process for such extensions shall be determined by the Programme. Where an extension to access resources is also required for less than one month, the Head of Department, or delegated authority will request this via email to the Head of Student Experience, cc Associate Dean Postgraduate (Health Sciences).

5.5 Any extension to the submission date of more than one month requires the approval of the Associate Dean Postgraduate (Health Sciences). The supervisor will complete the 'Extension Request for Dissertation Submission' form and send it to the Associate Dean Postgraduate (Health Sciences) for approval with supporting evidence (e.g. medical certificate, death notice).

*5.6* If a student seeks an extension to the submission date of their dissertation but would prefer that the Programme, Department, or School remain unaware of the reasons for the extension, they may approach the Associate Dean Postgraduate (Health Sciences) directly. The Associate Dean Postgraduate (Health Sciences) will consider such applications on a case-by-case basis.

5.7 Under 5.4-5.6 the examination and return of grades to the student timelines shall be determined by the Programme. External moderation processes shall be undertaken for any affected dissertations, even if this is outside of the Programme's normal external moderation timeline.

5.7 Continued access to resources for extensions granted under 5.5 or 5.6 above, is granted by: (a) the Associate Dean Postgraduate (Health Sciences) when the extension is for up to

four months

(b) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), on the recommendation of the Associate Dean Postgraduate (Health Sciences) when the extension requested is for more than four months.