



Faculty of Humanities Postgraduate Manual

(Procedures and
Processes) 2025



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Faculty Postgraduate Manual

(Procedures and Processes)

2025

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CPO	Central Postgraduate Office
DREC	Departmental Research and Ethics Committee
DSC	Departmental Selection Committee
FAR	Faculty Assistant Registrar
FB	Faculty Board
FEC	Faculty Executive Committee
FHDC	Faculty Higher Degrees and Ethics Committee
FPO	Faculty Postgraduate Office
FRP	Faculty Research Professor
HoD	Head of Department
LangCom	School of Languages and Communication Studies
Manual	Faculty Postgraduate Manual
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
QIP	University of Limpopo's Quality Improvement Plan for the National Doctoral Qualifications Review
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
ScREC	School Research and Ethics Committee
SD	School Director
SoE	School of Education
SREC	Senate Research and Ethics Committee
SSS	School of Social Sciences

1. Foreword by the Executive Dean of the Faculty

This Faculty of Humanities (Faculty) Postgraduate Manual (Manual) outlines rules, policies, procedures and guidelines that prospective (and current) Honours, Master's and Doctoral students shall follow during selection, admission and registration. It does not go beyond the scope outlined above. For this reason, the Manual does not replace the role of the supervisor in guiding the student on ways to harvest publications from Master's dissertations/mini-dissertations or Doctoral theses; or on the average word count or other size specifications for Master's dissertations/mini-dissertations or Doctoral theses, for example. Supervisors shall thus continue with their full set of supervisory duties regarding their supervisees and not expect the Manual to assume that role. Neither does the Manual replace University rules, policies, procedures and guidelines nor Faculty ones – it anchors itself in and refers to them.

The Manual must be read in conjunction with the [University General Academic rules](#), policies, procedures and guidelines contained *inter alia* in the *University Calendar*; *University of Limpopo National Doctoral Review Report*; *University of Limpopo's Quality Improvement Plan for the National Doctoral Qualifications Review*; [University of Limpopo Manual/Guidelines for Postgraduate Students 2022](#); *Code of Practice on the Admission, Supervision and Assessment of Masters and Doctoral Students (RDA-CPASA01 2013/03/20) 2013* and its subsequent updates; *Senate-Approved Policy for the Appointment of Assessors and Assessment Process for Master's Degree Dissertations and Doctoral Degree Theses, 2015, University of Limpopo* and its subsequent updates. Where Faculty-specific rules, policies, procedures and guidelines adapt the University-wide ones, the former shall take precedence.

The Manual is equally applicable to and binding for students, academic managers and supervisors. Most important, however, is to note that the Manual speaks to rules, policies, procedures and guidelines from the perspective of the (prospective) student and **not** from the vantage point of the academic manager or supervisor. It is intended to provide a clear road map in terms of student recruitment, selection, admission, registration, supervision, assessment and graduation. As a result, information that solely benefits the academic manager or supervisor on general rules, policies, procedures and guidelines that do not have to do with selection, admission, registration, supervision, assessment and graduation is not within the scope of this Manual.

Compilation of this Manual was originally completed by the following senior personnel on 7 October 2022:

Maoto, RS (Prof)	:	Executive Dean: Faculty of Humanities
Rafapa, LJ (Prof)	:	Research Professor – Faculty of Humanities
Van Der Merwe, SP (Ms)	:	Faculty Assistant Registrar
Mabasa, LT (Prof)	:	School of Education
Ramaligela, S (Prof)	:	School of Education
Themane, MJ (Prof)	:	School of Education
Mogoboya, MJ (Prof)	:	Director: School of Languages and Communication Studies

Abodunrin, OJ (Prof) : School of Languages and Communication Studies
 Kubayi, SJ (Prof) : School of Languages and Communication Studies
 Sithole, SL (Prof) : Director: School of Social Sciences
 Govender, S (Prof) : School of Social Sciences
 Sodi, T (Prof) : School of Social Sciences

Confirmed by, with the status and approval progress specified below:

Accounting Executive Officer : Executive Dean
 Faculty Managing Officer : Faculty Research Professor
 Status of the manual : Approved
 Approved by : Faculty Board (FB)
Date of Approval : 14 November 2022

2. Faculty Administration Personnel

Table 1: Administration personnel contact details

Division	Staff	Contacts
Executive Dean	Maoto, RS (Prof)	satsope.maoto@ul.ac.za
Faculty Research Professor	Rafapa, LJ (Prof)	lesibana.rafapa@ul.ac.za
Faculty Assistant Registrar	Van Der Merwe, SP (Ms)	susan.vandermerwe@ul.ac.za
Faculty Executive Secretary	Kennedy, JL (Ms)	jennifer.kennedy@ul.ac.za
Director - School of Education	Maruma, MW (Prof)	kgetja.maruma@ul.ac.za
Senior Secretary – School of Education	Kupa, RT (Ms)	reginah.kupa@ul.ac.za Office telephone: +27(0)15 268 2687
Director - School of LangCom	Mogoboya, MJ (Prof)	mphoto.mogoboya@ul.ac.za
Senior Secretary – School of LangCom	Seabi, PA (Ms)	annah.seabi@ul.ac.za Office telephone: +27(0)15 268 2613
Director - School of Social Sciences	Sithole, SL (Prof)	sello.sithole@ul.ac.za
Senior Secretary – School of Social Sciences	Sekoala, MM (Ms)	maleka.sekoala@ul.ac.za Office telephone: +27(0)15 268 2230
University Enrolment Department	Baloyi, S (Mr)	steven.baloyi@ul.ac.za

3. Heads of Department and School Directors

Table 2: Contact details of Heads of Departments and School Directors

School of Education				
Surname and Initial(s)	Designation	Department	Email address	Office Telephone
Kola, M (Prof)	HoD	Education Studies (EDST)	malose.kola@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2753
Maruma, MW (Prof)	Director	School of Education (SoE)	kgetja.maruma@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2415
Molotja, TW (Prof)	HoD	Language Education (DLE)	wilfred.molotja@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2391
Singh, SK (Prof)	HoD	Maths, Science and Technology (DMSTE)	suresh.singh@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2968
Thotse, M (Dr)	HoD	Social Sciences, Economic Education and Management Education (DSSEEME)	mahunele.thotse@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2878
School of Languages and Communication Studies				
Surname and Initial(s)	Designation	Department	Email address	Office Telephone
Bopape, ST (Prof)	HoD	Communication, Media and Information Studies	solomon.bopape@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 4015
Kekana, TJ (Prof)	HoD	Languages	tebogo.kekana@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2586
Mogoboya, MJ (Prof)	Director	School of Languages and Communication Studies (LANGCOM)	mphoto.mogoboya@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2257
Mphela, KL (Dr)	HoD	Linguistics, Translation and Interpreting	kgabo.mphela@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 3797
School of Social Sciences				
Surname and Initial(s)	Designation	Department	Email address	Office Telephone
Maluleke, W (Prof)	Acting HoD	Criminology and Criminal Justice	witness.maluleke@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 4881
Rapholo, SF (Prof)	HoD	Social Work	frank.rapholo@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 3876
Mashegoane, S (Prof)	HoD	Psychology	solomon.mashegoane@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2317
Mmakola, KL (Dr)	HoD	Sociology and Anthropology	lulu.mmakola@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 3162
Mrubula-Ngwenya, GS (Dr)	Acting HoD	Cultural and Political Studies	samukezi.mrubula-ngwenya@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2254
Sithole, SL (Prof)	Director	School of Social Science (SSS)	sello.sithole@ul.ac.za	+27(0)15 268 2230

4. Postgraduate Qualifications Offered by the Faculty

The Faculty offers the following postgraduate qualifications per school that the students shall at all times enter accurately during registration and beyond. [Please refer to the 2023 Faculty Programme Structure:](#)

4.1 Postgraduate Diplomas

Table 3: Qualifications, Qualification Codes and Streams (Specialisations)

School of Education		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
None	N/A	N/A
School of Languages and Communication Studies		
Postgraduate Diploma in Information Studies	PIN01	Information Studies
School of Social Sciences		
None	N/A	N/A

4.2 Honours Degrees

Table 4: Qualifications, Qualification Codes and Streams (Specialisations)

School of Education		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
Bachelor of Education Honours in Mathematics Education	HEB02A	Mathematics Education
Bachelor of Education Honours in Science Education	HEB02B	Science Education
Bachelor of Education Honours in Technology Education	HEB02C	Technology Education
Bachelor Education Honours in Educational Management	HEC02	Educational Management
Bachelor of Education Honours in Adult and Community Education and Training	HEDA01	Adult Education
Bachelor of Education Honours in Language Education	HEDB02	Language Education
Bachelor of Education Honours in Educational Studies	HEDC02	Educational Studies
Bachelor of Education Honours in Curriculum Studies	HEE01	Curriculum Studies
School of Languages and Communication Studies		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAA01	English Studies
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAB01	Tshivenda
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAC01	Xitsonga
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAD01	Northern Sotho
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAE01	Language Studies
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAF01	Media Studies

School of Languages and Communication Studies		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAG01	Translation and Linguistics
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAH01	Communication Studies
Bachelor of Information Studies Honours	HIS01	Information Studies
School of Social Sciences		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAI01	Criminology and Criminal Justice
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAJ01	History
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAK01	International Politics
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAL01	Political Science
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAM01	Psychology
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAN01	Sociology
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAO01	Anthropology
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAP01	Geography
Bachelor of Arts Honours	HBAQ01	Philosophy

4.3 Master's Degrees

Table 5: Qualifications, Qualification Codes and Streams (Specialisations) per School

School of Education		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Programme Name (Elective)
Master of Education by Research	MED01	Education Stream
		Dissertation (Curriculum Studies) HCSA090
		Dissertation (Education Studies) HEDA090
		Dissertation (Language Education) HLEA090
		Dissertation (Mathematics Education) HMEA090
		Dissertation (Science Education) HSEA090
		Dissertation (Technology Education) HTCA090
Master of Education by coursework		Education Stream
Master of Education in Adult Education	MEA01	Coursework (Adult Education)
Master of Education In Language Education	MEL01	Coursework (Language Education)
Master of Education In Mathematics Education	MEM01	Coursework (Mathematics Education)
Master of Education In Science Education	MES01	Coursework (Science Education)
Master of Education In Technology Education	MET01	Coursework (Technology Education)

School of Languages and Communication Studies		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Programme Name (Elective)
Master of Arts by Research	MAA01	Arts Stream
		Dissertation (Communication Studies) HCOA090
		Dissertation (English) HENA090
		Dissertation (Media Studies) HMDA090
		Translation Studies and Linguistics HTRL090
		Dissertation (Northern Sotho) HNSA090
		Dissertation (Xitsonga) HTSA090
		Dissertation (Tshivenda) HVEA090
Master of Information Studies by Research	MIS01	Information Studies Stream
		Dissertation (Information Studies) HINF090
Master of Arts by Coursework		English Studies Stream
Master of Arts in English Studies	MAEA01	Coursework (English Studies Literature)
Master of Arts in English Studies	MAEB01	Coursework (English Studies Language)
Master of Arts in African Languages by Coursework		African Languages Stream
Master of Arts in African Languages	MAL01	Coursework (African Languages)
Master of Arts in Translation Studies and Linguistics by Coursework		Translation Studies and Linguistics Stream
Master of Arts in Translation Studies and Linguistics	MAT01	Coursework (Translation Studies and Linguistics)
School of Social Sciences		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Programme Name (Elective)
		Arts Stream
		Dissertation (Anthropology) HANA090

School of Social Sciences		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Programme Name (Elective)
Master of Arts by Research	MAA01	Dissertation (Criminology) HCRA090
		Dissertation (Folklore Studies) HFOA090
		Dissertation (History) HHIA090
		Dissertation (International Politics) HIPA090
		Dissertation (Philosophy) HPHA
		Dissertation (Political Science) HPOA090
		Dissertation (Psychology) HPSA090
		Dissertation (Sociology) HSOA090
Master of Social Work by Research	MSW01	Social Work Stream
		Dissertation (Social Work) HSWA090
Master of Arts by Coursework		Clinical Psychology Stream
Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology	MAC01	Coursework (Clinical Psychology)
Master of Arts by Coursework		Folklore Studies Stream
Master of Arts in Folklore Studies	MFS01	Coursework (Folklore Studies)

4.4 Doctoral Degrees

Table 6: Qualifications, Qualification Codes and Streams (Specialisations) per School

School of Education		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
Doctor of Philosophy	DHE01	Education Stream ELECTIVE (Choose One Module)
		Adult Education (HAEA100)
		Curriculum Studies (HCSA100)
		Educational Administration (HEAA100)
		Educational Psychology (HEPA100)
		Educational Studies (HESA100)
		Language Education (HLEA100)

School of Education		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
		Mathematics Education (HMAA100)
		Science Education (HSCA100)
		Technology Education (HTEA100)
School of Languages and Communication Studies		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
Doctor of Philosophy	DHH01	Humanities Stream ELECTIVE (Choose One Module)
		Communication Studies (HCOA100)
		English Studies (HENA100)
		Folklore Studies (HFLA100)
		Media Studies (HMDA100)
		Northern Sotho (HNSA100)
		Translation Studies (HTRA100)
		Tshivenda (HVEA100)
		Xitsonga (HTSA100)
School of Social Sciences		
Name of Qualification	Qualification Code	Stream
Doctor of Philosophy	DHH01	Humanities Stream ELECTIVE (Choose One Module)
		Anthropology (HANA100)
		Criminology (HCRA100)
		Folklore Studies (HFLA100)
		History (HHIA100)
		International Politics (HIPA100)
		Philosophy (HPHA100)
		Politics (HPOA100)
		Psychology (HPSA100)
		Social Work (HSWA100)
Sociology (HSOA100)		

5. Procedures and Processes for Selection, Admission and Registration

5.1 Selection Procedure

- 5.1.1 In a pre-registration dialogue, the student and supervisor shall ensure that prior to the Departmental Selection Committee (DSC) considering the selection of an applicant, all mandatory admission documents are available and ready for online attachment and for inclusion in the student's Research Portfolio. The student and supervisor shall together start simultaneously with compilation of the student's Research Portfolio. For contents of the Research Portfolio please refer to paragraph [1.5 of the University of Limpopo Manual/Guidelines for Postgraduate Students 2022](#). The mandatory documents shall include written Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) approval by the Senate and international student-specific mandatory documents where applicable. For more such pre-registration documents requiring the action of the student and supervisor, refer to paragraphs 15 to 18 of [FH outline of postgraduate policy for appointment of assessors and supervision code of practice](#) and to the [Process Flow for New Postgraduate Students 25 January 2021](#), and [Process flow for returning postgraduate students 25 January 2021](#).

- 5.1.2 The Departmental Selection Committee (DSC), convened and chaired by the Head of Department (HoD), shall evaluate all applications for postgraduate study. When the DSC is satisfied that the student meets all admission requirements, it shall submit the lists of students recommended to the Faculty for registration. For Masters and Doctoral studies, recommended lists of students shall include allocated supervisor(s) for each student. Along with the HoD, each supervisor on a list shall sign against the student assigned to him/her, after which the School Director (SD) shall quality assure, sign off and process the list further with the Faculty Assistant Registrar (FAR) copying the Faculty Research Professor (FRP).
- 5.1.3 The Faculty shall adhere to the supervision ratio of 1:5 in any academic year.
- 5.1.4 The student shall ensure that his/her supervisor(s) has/have entered into (a) an informed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and (b) the Contract, and that both are adhered to as emphasised in paragraph 1.4 of the [University of Limpopo Manual/Guidelines for Postgraduate Students 2022](#). The two documents shall be finalised prior to formal registration in a dialogue between the student and his/her supervisor(s), as per paragraphs 15 to 18 of the [FH outline of postgraduate policy for appointment of assessors and supervision code of practice](#).
- 5.1.5 The student shall, within 24 hours of the finalisation of registration, reach out to the supervisor for immediate commencement of supervision. The supervisor shall not wait until registration of all students has been completed in a given period before starting with the supervision of individual students registered in the past 24 hours. The student's communication with the supervisor should be ongoing as indicated in paragraph 3.5 of the [University of Limpopo Manual/Guidelines for Postgraduate Students 2022](#).
- 5.1.6 In the case of one party dishonouring the MoU and Contract, the grievance procedure shall be followed as in "[Workshopped Faculty Points](#)" [Discussion Point 13](#), from first to last bullet. It is beneficial that the student further refines his/her grasp of the grievance procedure by consulting paragraph 3.4 of the [University of Limpopo Manual/Guidelines for Postgraduate Students 2022](#).
- 5.1.7 International students shall ensure that they provide certified copies of mandatory admission and registration documents (Valid passport, Study permit, SAQA accreditation, Proof of medical aid membership) to the International Affairs Office, which shall forward them to the Faculty for consideration prior to admission and registration. Note that your SAQA evaluated qualifications' certificates shall be processed by the Faculty only after the International Affairs Office shall have confirmed them with the relevant Assistant Registrar.
- 5.1.8 Hereafter, the admission and registration procedures of international students shall follow all steps applicable to all students and, along with the rest of the students, shall be processed through DSCs as in the entire "Process Flow" document with separate versions for first entering and returning students. Please note that by complying with the online registration procedure and executing action prompted by the system, automatically the student's application will follow the steps as in the said two versions of the documents accessible here, [Process Flow for New Postgraduate Students 25 January 2021](#) and [Process flow for returning postgraduate students 25 January 2021](#).
- 5.1.9 On approval by the Faculty, the International Affairs Office shall notify international students of their admission status.

5.2 Admission Procedure

For fuller information please refer to Rules G2 and G3 in the [University General Academic Rules](#).

- 5.2.1 Applications for admission shall be made using the University Online Registration system, which may be integrated with the South African Research Management System (SARMS).
- 5.2.2 An average of at least 60% admission into Postgraduate Diploma and Honours Degree studies is calculated from undergraduate Year 1 up to the Final Year of the appropriate major learning programme.
- 5.2.3 An average of at least 60% admission into a Master's study shall be calculated from all the Honours modules in the appropriate major learning programme.
- 5.2.4 A prerequisite for admission to a Master's study shall be an appropriate Honours degree in a cognate discipline at NQF Level 8 with a minimum of 120 credits or a four-year undergraduate degree in a cognate discipline at NQF Level 8 with a minimum of 480 credits, an appropriate Postgraduate Diploma at NQF Level 8 with a minimum of 120 credits, alternatively an equivalent qualification at NQF Level 8 and with respective minimum credits stated above.
- 5.2.5 A prerequisite for admission to a Doctoral study shall be a Masters degree in an appropriate learning programme at NQF 9 with a minimum of 180 credits. However, RPL requests in accordance with the relevant General Academic Rule and with Senate approval shall be considered. Senate approval shall be obtained before the DSC may include the student for admission and subsequent recommendation to the Faculty for registration.
- 5.2.6 Senate shall approve any special recommendation for admission, including admission by RPL prior to the DSC including the name of the student on the list of students recommended to the Faculty for registration. After that, proof of Senate approval of the special recommendation shall form part of the mandatory documents for uploading on the online registration system as per the "Process Flow" document for the affected student to qualify to be on the list recommended to the Faculty for registration.
- 5.2.7 Each returning student who wishes to enrol for an Honours, Masters or Doctoral degree in the Faculty shall complete the designated application form and submit it to the HoD. However, returning students may be required to complete an Application Form issued by the Enrolment Management section.
- 5.2.8 Each new student shall be required to complete an Application Form through the Enrolment Management section, which will refer the Application Form to the Faculty.
- 5.2.9 Although the duly completed Application Form shall be uploaded online as required, the student shall keep a hard copy of it and submit it within seven (7) days of registration finalisation to the HoD for further processing with the FAR and FRP.

5.3 Registration Procedure

Registration of students into Honours, Master's and Doctoral degrees is coordinated by the offices of the FAR and FRP and eventually executed by the office of the FAR. While registration for first entering research Masters and Doctoral students is open

throughout the year, the Faculty does not encourage registration of such first entering students in the second semester unless such exceptional registration is strongly motivated by proof of preceding funding and/or other challenges deemed to be serious. Registration by all first entering coursework Master's students and by all returning Master's and Doctoral students shall fall under the registration period announced for each year. The respective registration rules, as per the table below, shall apply.

Table 7: Qualification as per University General Rules

Qualification	General Rules
Postgraduate Diploma	Rule G32 and G33
Honours Degree	Rule G32 and G33
Master's Degree	Rule G37 and G38
Doctoral Degree	Rule G55

- 5.3.1 Upon receipt of the student's Acceptance Letter, the student shall initiate the registration process from his/her side by going on the online registration portal and following all the prompted steps, including the uploading of mandatory documents. In addition, the student shall make sure not to forget to press the Submit button at the end of registration.
- 5.3.2 After online registration, the student shall obtain Proof of Registration from the Faculty.
- 5.3.3 Each first entering and returning Honours, Master's and Doctoral student who has not previously completed the course shall independently register and complete at least the first three online TRREE modules on ethics in the first semester. This is the link for registration: <https://elearning.trree.org/>
- 5.3.4 A student shall not, except with the permission of Senate, register for more than one qualification simultaneously, either at the undergraduate or postgraduate level (Rule G11.2).
- 5.3.5 In the case of the uploading of mandatory registration documents failing during online registration, the alternative submission to the DSC shall occur via email to the allocated supervisor, who shall process the documents further with the FAR copying the FRP.
- 5.3.6 For returning students who have interrupted their studies, the DSC shall demand written proof of Senate approval of such interruption. Such evidence per student shall be included in mandatory documents for quality assurance by the DSC before the student shall be included in the lists of students recommended for registration.
- 5.3.7 The right to interruption of studies shall not be abused by the student who would have failed without acceptable external factors beyond his/her control to make adequate progress as per University rules.
- 5.3.8 To ensure a safeguarding of the preceding paragraph, the interruption of studies shall best be requested in the previous year or latest during the first half of the first semester of the current year and shall be accompanied by proof of adequate progress made in the studies before the setting in of the cited debilitating factors.
- 5.3.9 Each student registering for an Honours degree should include modules as required, enabling him/her to obtain the required Total Credits pertaining to the name of the Honours qualification.

- 5.3.9.1 The required Total Credits are 120 for the Bachelor of Arts Honours degree.
- 5.3.9.2 The required Total Credits are 128 for Bachelor of Education Honours in Mathematics Education; Bachelor of Education Honours in Science Education; Bachelor of Education Honours in Technology Education; Bachelor of Education Honours in Educational Management; Bachelor of Education Honours in Adult and Community Education and Training; Bachelor of Education Honours in Language Education; Bachelor of Education Honours in Educational Studies; and Bachelor of Education Honours in Curriculum Studies.

5.3.10 Honours students shall be allocated supervisors and topics for their research projects within the first two months of their registration.

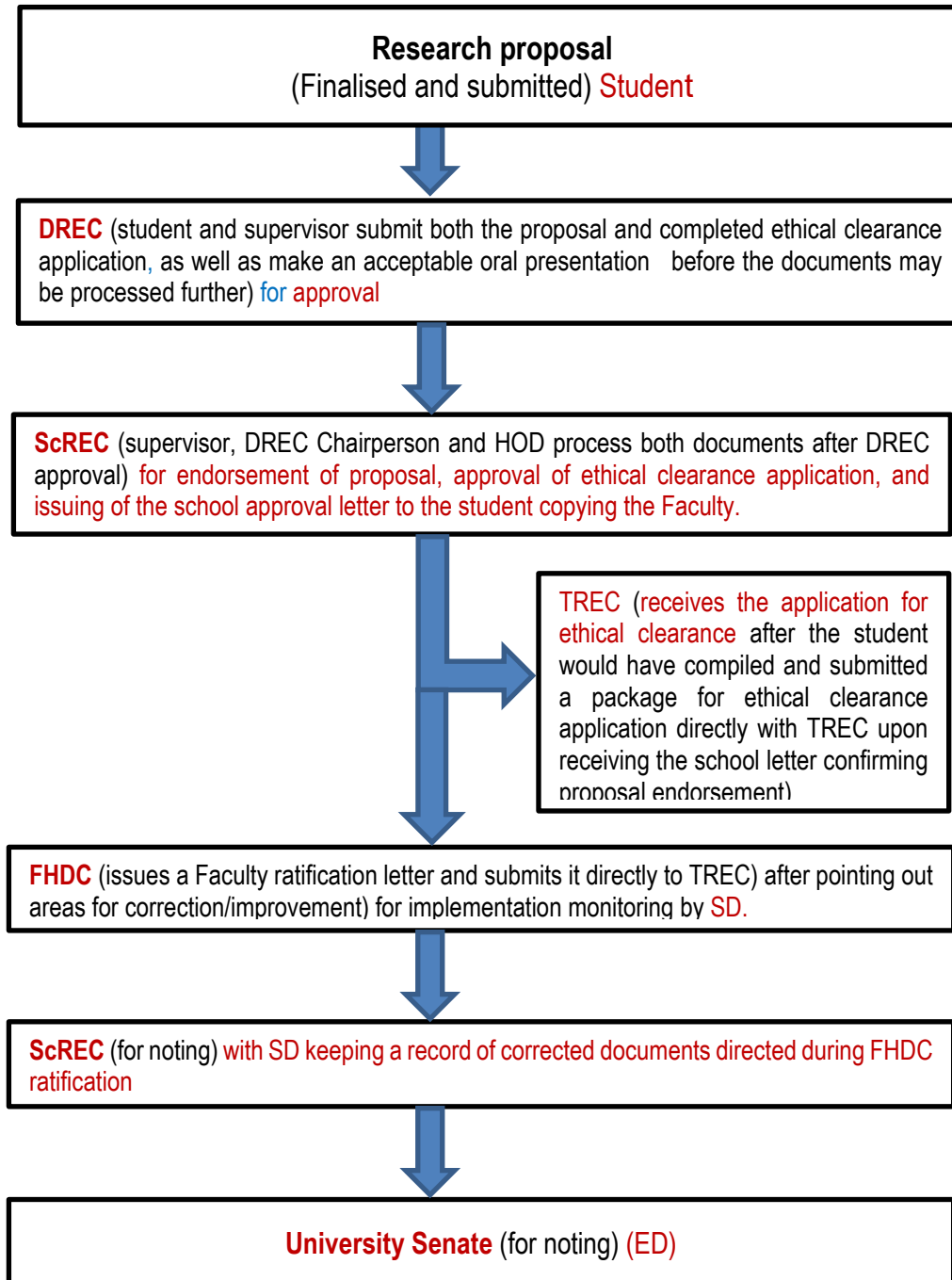
5.3.11 Returning Honours, Masters and Doctoral students shall renew their registration yearly during official registration periods.

5.3.12 All first entering coursework Master's students shall register for all prescribed modules in their first year of registration, including the Research Project module.

6. Flow Chart for Approval of Research Proposals

The student shall exercise his/her agentive responsibility by enabling the commencement of the proposal supervision process with the supervisor within 24 hours of registration completion, as stated above.

Respective actors and deliverables are made visual in the diagram below:



7. Timelines for Approval of Research Proposals

It is crucial to note that the entire process shall respectively not spill over into the second semester of the first year of registration or into the second semester of the second year of registration in respect of full dissertation Masters and Doctoral studies on the one hand, and course work Masters on the other hand. It shall be completed within the first six (6) months of the student's first or second year of registration in a programme respectively. For further assistance on how the student's research timelines can be managed effectively refer to paragraph 3.2 of the [University of Limpopo Manual/Guidelines for Postgraduate Students 2022](#). Only a researcher responsible for niche areas within whose framework the student's study belongs shall be allocated to supervise the student, as per the ["Experienced Researchers" Faculty Instrument](#).

Table 8: Timelines for Acceptable Progress

Activity		Timeline	Responsibility	
1.	Concept paper submitted by the student to HoD for supervisor allocation before selection and admission	One week	Student	
2.	MoU and Contract	One week	Student	Supervisor
3.	Application	Up to one month	Student	DSC/DREC
4.	Selection/ Admission and Registration	Within one week (and open until June of every academic year)	Student	DSC
5.	Supervision Allocation	Immediately	DSC	HOD
6.	Signing of MOU and Contract	Even if the online registration system fails the supervisor and supervisee, who would have used email or other technology to finalise the MOU and Contract pre-registration, shall still interact by any means within 24 hours and start with implementation of the MOU and Contract. (Refer to the "FH Outline" already linked under Selection Procedure paragraph 1).	Student	Supervisor
7.	Compulsory Orientation and Induction	February and ongoing throughout the year	Student	Department
8.	Supervision	Commences within 24 hours of registration	DSC (niche areas)	DREC
9.	Proposal development and presentation	1 to 5 months	Student & supervisor(s)	
10.	Proposal approval	1 to 5 months	DREC	
11.	Issuing of ethical clearance certificate	3 to 6 months	ScREC	TREC
12.	Further stages of the study	Biannual reports	Student	Supervisor

8. Progress Reports (Further Stages of the Study)

- 8.1. The plan should be to complete the study within the minimum period of the study ([Rule G10](#)) [University Academic Rules](#). Any time thereafter should be regarded as recovery time that can be categorised as follows:
- Minimum Period + Six Months [**Green Minus**]
 - Minimum Period + Twelve Months [**Amber**]
 - Maximum Period – Six Months [**Red**]

- 8.2. A first entering postgraduate student shall submit a progress report to the supervisor biannually in the second (2nd) month of first registration in a programme, and in the second (2nd) month after being registered for six months. Acceptable progress for purposes of the progress report shall mean the student having completed all research (for theses and dissertations) or all course work and research (for Masters with course work and mini-dissertation) enabling him/her eventually to complete a Masters or Doctoral degree at the most in three (3) or four (4) years respectively since the first year of registration in the programme. In terms of the duration of the study, progress at any reporting stage shall also be proportionate with time already spent and time remaining for the study to be completed within the maximum time permitted by University rules.
- 8.3. A returning student shall submit a progress report to the supervisor biannually during March and August. Acceptable progress for purposes of the progress report shall mean the student having completed all research (for theses and dissertations) or all course work and research (for Masters with course work and mini-dissertation) enabling him/her eventually to complete a Masters or Doctoral degree at the most in three (3) or four (4) years respectively since the first year of registration in the programme. In terms of the duration of the study, progress at any reporting stage shall also be proportionate with time already spent and time remaining for the study to be completed within the maximum time permitted by University rules.
- 8.4. In the case of a potential recommendation for exclusion instead of continued registration/re-registration in the next semester or next year of re-registration, the supervisor(s) shall diagnose lack of progress earlier and issue a warning letter to the student at least two (2) months before the time for termination of studies as a result of lack of satisfactory progress.
- 8.5. Within the first five (05) working days after warning letters have been issued to the students at risk, the HoD shall compile a departmental list of all affected students and, in consultation with the SD, design an intervention plan entailing the arrangement of workshops and writing retreats for the students to take place in the next fourteen (14) days. Such intervention shall be geared towards saving the affected students from termination.
- 8.6. A progress report for the second (2nd) month of first registration in a programme and for the second (2nd) month after being registered for six (6) months in a programme in respect of first entering students and in respect of returning students a progress report for March and August, shall have a recommendation for continued registration or for exclusion in the next semester or next year of re-registration. Please refer to Rules G37.3 for Masters and G55.3 for Doctoral studies in [University General Academic Rules](#) and to Recommendation 7 of the [UL Quality Improvement Plan \(QIP\) for the National Doctoral Qualifications Review Working Version 9 November 2021](#).
- 8.7. For dissertation Masters and Doctoral students in their first year of registration in a programme, the progress reports in the second month of first registration in a programme and in the second month after being registered for six months shall be in relation to ratification of the research proposal by the FHDC and issuing of ethical clearance by TREC/AREC within six months of registration, and in relation to research progress proportional to the remaining period of maximum permissible time to complete the qualification. Please refer to Recommendation 9 of the [UL Quality Improvement Plan \(QIP\) for the National Doctoral Qualifications Review Working Version 9 November 2021](#).

- 8.8. For first year course work Masters students whose proposals could only be ratified and ethical clearance applications approved in their second year of registration in a programme, the same requirement as in (8.6) shall apply in the second year.
- 8.9. The student whose further renewal of registration has been denied, or whose registration has been cancelled as a result of the above, has the right to appeal the decision within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of a termination letter.
- 8.10. A student whose registration has thus been terminated shall not be re-admitted within the Faculty for the same Masters or doctoral degree.
- 8.11. Postgraduate appeals shall be directed to the email address indicated in the termination letter, and not to the Faculty/School/Department.

9. Faculty Procedure for Putting Students' Dissertations and Theses under Assessment

- 9.1 The supervisor(s) shall initiate the supervision process with the HoD as per paragraphs 2 to 7 of the approved Faculty policy document, [FH outline of postgraduate policy for appointment of assessors and supervision code of practice](#).
- 9.2 For the assessment of completed Master's studies and in terms of Rule G41.1 of the *University of Limpopo General Academics Rules*, the Faculty shall approve the appointment of an assessment panel consisting of two external assessors who should preferably be from different institutions for dissertation Master's, as well as of one external and one internal assessor in the case of coursework Master's. Please refer to the [University of Limpopo General Academics Rules](#). For dissertation Master's departments shall recommend a total of **four** external assessors for approval by the FEC, while for coursework Master's departments shall recommend a total of **three** external assessors for approval by the FEC.
- 9.3 For the assessment of completed Doctoral studies and in terms of Rule G 59.1 of the [University of Limpopo General Academics Rules](#), the Faculty shall approve the appointment of an assessment panel consisting of three external assessors who must be from different institutions, of whom **at least one** must be an international assessor. Departments shall recommend a total of **five** external assessors for approval by the FEC. A minimum of **two** out of the five assessors recommended by departments for approval by the FEC shall be international assessors.
- 9.4 The Faculty shall appoint one additional member who is not an assessor, to act as chair of the assessment panel in terms of Rule G 59.2 of the [University of Limpopo General Academic Rules](#). Such an additional member shall also function as indicated in paragraph 10.4.1 of this *Manual*.
- 9.5 In recommending external assessors for support by the HoD and SD, the supervisor shall include all needed administrative supporting documents, including a Compliance Audit Form that attests to the NQF level and credits of the prerequisites to the current study, approved oral presentation at the time of proposal approval by DREC, accompaniment of the assessor appointment request by a Turnitin report of the dissertation or thesis and other compliances with the CHE Doctoral Review Improvement.
- 9.6 It is the prerogative of the FEC to appoint assessors even outside the set of those recommended by a department, guided by the databank of the specific department. Supervisors and other officers outside FEC and CPO shall not know the identity of who eventually becomes appointed as an external assessor for any submission, as this is confidential.
- 9.7 The final version of the mini-dissertation, dissertation or thesis; Turnitin report with a phrase similarity length of less than 10 and overall similarity index of 15% or less; and Proof of Registration shall be included in the application package for the appointment of assessors.
- 9.8 Requirements for the final version of a mini-dissertation shall include compliance with the size of 10 000 - 12 000 words (about 75 - 80 pages) inclusive of references; while the size of a dissertation shall comprise 15 000 - 25 000 words (about 100 -120 pages) inclusive

of references; with a thesis comprising 50 000 words or more (about 150 - 200 pages) inclusive of references.

- 9.9 Equally for mini-dissertations, dissertations and theses the font shall be Arial 12 while line-spacing shall be 1.5 and margins shall be 3cm all round.
- 9.10 Language used in writing proposals, mini-dissertations, dissertations and theses in the medium of English shall be in UK English spelling.
- 9.11 Duties of supervisors shall include guiding the students to harvest research publications from their dissertations/theses. On their own students shall consult any further helpful support the University offers in this regard, including the contents of Section 9 of DRDA's [University of Limpopo Manual/Guidelines for Postgraduate Students 2022](#).
- 9.12 For PhD assessment, at least a copy of one (1) refereed research publication qualifying for DHET subsidy shall be included in the Faculty submission of the summarised report of the student's assessment reports to CHDC in order for graduation to be finalised. Alternatively, written proof of the approval of such a research output shall be attached. Please refer to Recommendation 25 of the [UL Quality Improvement Plan \(QIP\) for the National Doctoral Qualifications Review Working Version 9 November 2021](#).
- 9.13 The FPO led by the FRP is responsible for the submission of assessment packages to the CPO, for updating FEC at least monthly and BoF at least quarterly on assessment progress made by each student under assessment.
- 9.14 If supervisors feel that the assessment progress updates obtained from SDs or HoDs are not as current as their needs dictate, they shall enquire by email from the FRP. Students shall only enquire about such progress from their supervisors and NOT from the FRP.
- 9.15 Students, supervisors, HoDs, SDs and other academic managers shall comply with the rule forbidding CPO from communicating to them any response to a query mistakenly not directed to the FPO by the former.
- 9.16 Students and supervisors shall not communicate with assessors except for supervisors beyond the release of summary reports by CPO, and in relation to the needs for clarity regarding parts of required revisions of the assessed research reports. Such communication shall take place only after written permission by the Registrar. The principled premise is that assessment reports are self-speaking and do not need any discussion between the supervisor and assessor.

10. Procedure for Thesis Oral Defence

Doctoral qualifications of the University of Limpopo (UL) underwent the National Review of Doctoral Qualifications initiated by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in 2021. Subsequently, CHE produced the Doctoral Evaluation Report for UL which contained 27 recommendations that the University has to implement. It is worth mentioning that numerous recommendations (that is, Recommendations 22 – 26) pertain to assessment of Doctoral qualifications at UL. Recommendation 24 as outlined below is one of the fundamental assessment recommendations that the University has to fulfil:

DOCTORAL ASSESSMENT

Recommendation 24:

The oral defence of a Doctoral thesis should be considered an important and intrinsic part

of the assessment process, going forward. This will support the broad research culture that has a strong history of a teaching institution. Recommendation 2, p. 9).

During the drafting of the SER, the University noted the lacuna left by its Rule G56.2 which allows for the inclusion of an oral defence as an optional requirement for a student to qualify for a Doctoral degree. The Doctoral Qualification Standard expects students to reflect critically on their work, that the work is authentic, that they are able to communicate their work to diverse audiences, and show intellectual competence to problem solve, and defend their analysis and conclusions. Successful completion of an oral defence will provide assurance that these qualities expected of a Doctoral graduate are met. This requirement was formalised through the adjustment of the University Rules, and all Doctoral students are henceforth required to defend their thesis. This recommendation aligns with the Institutions Quality Improvement Plan bullet (a) submitted with the SER.

In order to accomplish Recommendation 24 as reflected above, the oral defence (viva voce) of the thesis is expected to become a crucial component of the doctoral assessment process at the University of Limpopo. This means, in addition to writing and submitting a thesis for assessment, doctoral candidates shall be required to defend their theses before a panel of experts, on the subject of their study. The objectives of the oral assessment are to:

- Provide the candidate with an opportunity to defend his/her thesis and reply to critical appraisal or challenges to his/her arguments while enabling assessors to clarify issues in the thesis;
- Establish whether the candidate has met the qualities expected of a Doctoral graduate as stipulated in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF Level 10);
- Enable the assessors to provide to the candidate inputs towards strengthening the quality of his/her individual research output beyond graduation, drawing from areas in the passed thesis that could lift the quality up from the expected doctoral standard to above average, outstanding or extraordinary achievement.
- Ascertain that the candidate is the authentic author of the research report and that the research report has emanated from ethical and original research;
- Complete the thesis assessment pursuant to Rule G56.2

This standard operating procedure shall apply to all candidates who registered for the doctoral qualification at the University of Limpopo, effective from the 2023 academic year.

The language for conducting the oral defence of the thesis shall be in accordance with the Language Policy applicable to the programme in question as approved and accredited.

10.1 **Process Prior to the Oral Defence of the Thesis**

10.1.1 The oral defence of the thesis is conducted after the assessment reports are back from the assessors.

10.1.2 The oral defence shall be conducted as an integral part of the overall assessment process after the assessment reports of all external assessors have passed the thesis without a need for revisions; or

10.1.3 In the instance where the external assessors have made recommendations and raised concerns that require either minor or major revisions, the candidate must first address all these and meet all the requirements for a pass before the oral defence takes place.

10.2 **Planning and Timing of the Defence**

10.2.1 The timing of the oral defence must be properly planned and established once the external assessors are nominated and the thesis is submitted for assessment;

10.2.2 Invitations are sent to the external assessors depending on the availability of all panel members.

10.3 **Venue**

10.3.1 The oral defence of the thesis shall preferably be in a designated relatively quiet venue;

10.3.2 The venue should allow the oral defence of the thesis to occur without interruptions;

10.3.3 In the case of a face to face oral defence, seating arrangements for the oral defence should adhere to the applicable health and safety protocols and regulations in a given period;

10.3.4 In the event that the oral defence is conducted online, it is the candidate's responsibility to ensure the availability of the right online equipment from his/her side.

10.4 **Members of the Oral Defence Panel**

The thesis must be defended before a Faculty Oral Defence Panel comprised of the following:

10.4.1 A senior academic within the faculty shall chair the meeting as a non-assessing member;

10.4.2 Head of Department;

10.4.3 All thesis assessors;

10.4.4 Supervisor/s and co-supervisor/s (as observers);

10.4.5 The candidate.

The Chair may use technical support for the oral defence.

10.5 **Duties and Responsibilities of the Chair of the Oral Defence Committee**

The Chair of the oral defence panel oversees the conduct of the oral defence and ensures that:

- 10.5.1 Administrative support and other needs are ready for the smooth occurrence of the oral defence;
- 10.5.2 Panel members are notified timeously of the intended thesis oral defence;
- 10.5.3 The entire oral thesis defence is recorded;
- 10.5.4 The candidate keeps the camera on if the oral defence is conducted online;
- 10.5.5 The session and procedures are in line with the specified time for oral defence sessions;
- 10.5.6 Panel member questions should be in line with the evaluation tool for consistency;
- 10.5.7 All external assessors and reviewer(s) have the chance to ask any questions they may have about the thesis and to discuss other matters related to the research;
- 10.5.8 The candidate has adequate opportunity to defend his/her study and to answer any questions or respond to criticisms;
- 10.5.9 The candidate is treated objectively and fairly, as well as not subjected to undue treatment during the oral defence;
- 10.5.10 Consensus about the presentation outcome is reached and clearly communicated;
- 10.5.11 Consensus shall mean all assessors passing the oral defence;
- 10.5.12 Should one of the assessors not pass the oral defence, the oral defence outcome shall be a fail as per Rule G...., resulting in the candidate's entire assessment result for the doctoral study being a fail;
- 10.5.13 The faculty shall assign a pertinent staff member as the oral defence scribe for all oral defence events for the sake of a consistent and quality recording of the proceedings;
- 10.5.14 The Chair shall produce and submit a report on the oral defence of the thesis to the Executive Dean of the relevant faculty (within two weeks), making use of the approved form.

10.6 **Oral Defence**

- 10.6.1 The Chair welcomes the panel members, outlines the purpose of the oral defence, and introduces the candidate and panel members;
- 10.6.2 The candidate shall prepare a formal presentation that entails the introduction, problem statement, literature review, methods, analysis, key findings, conclusions, contributions and recommendations, as well as indicate/discuss how comments in the assessor reports were addressed adequately;

- 10.6.3 The candidate's presentation shall be about 25 minutes long and allow time afterwards for questions;
- 10.6.4 At the end of the presentation the candidate shall answer questions on substantive issues as posed by the oral defence panel;
- 10.6.5 The candidate shall be allowed to bring a copy of his/her thesis or any other study materials to the oral defence for open book reference.
- 10.6.6 The candidate shall not be permitted to interact with anyone outside the venue of the oral defence;
- 10.6.7 The oral defence should largely not take longer than 90 minutes (however, depending on the circumstances, the Chair has the discretion to determine how long the session will last);
- 10.6.8 When the panel adjourns for final evaluation, the candidate, supervisor/s and observers shall be excused from the session;
- 10.6.9 The Chair and external assessors shall discuss and deliberate on the quality of the candidate's presentation and adequacy in responding to the questions from panel members and eventually reach a verdict (which will be based on the general instruments reflected in 10.6.9.1 and 10.6.9.2 below);

10.6.9.1 Recommendation of the assessment panel on a candidate's oral defence of the thesis:

Date of Meeting:			
Name of Candidate:			
Student Number:			
Name of qualification:	PhD in		
Faculty:			
School:			
Department:			
Mandatory evaluative points for the panel to respond to	Yes	No	
Are you convinced that the thesis is the candidate's work? If no, provide reasons.			
Does the candidate show satisfactory knowledge and comprehension of the literature about the subject of the thesis?			
Does the candidate demonstrate a high level of research capability?			
Does the candidate show mastery of appropriate research approaches, methodologies and processes in the pursuit of a research objective?			
Does the candidate display critical and analytical thinking for problem solving?			
Brief comment if any:			

Provide a brief summary of the candidate's performance during the meeting of the oral defence panel.
Brief Summary:
Signature by Chairperson: ----- Date: -----
Signature by the Scribe : ----- Date: -----

10.6.9.2 No marks are allocated for a doctoral thesis. The panel must make one of the following recommendations by clearly marking in the relevant box by an X:

- (i) The oral defence is passed and the degree shall be conferred.
- (ii) The oral defence is not passed and the degree shall not be conferred.

The candidate and supervisor/s return to the session to be informed orally by the Chair about the outcome of the oral defence. The chairperson shall clearly state to the candidate that the outcome of the oral defence is not the outcome of the doctoral assessment in its entirety.

The final outcome of a thesis assessment is clearly stipulated by Rule G60.3: The doctor's degree is conferred on a student who, in the opinion of the assessment panel and Senate, has fulfilled the requirements of the degree.

11. Procedure for Conversion of a Masters Study to a Doctoral Study

- 11.1 Conversion of a Master's study to a Doctoral degree shall apply only to a Research Master's programme.
- 11.2 Subject to approval by Senate, the Faculty shall recommend conversion of a Master's study to a Doctoral degree only if this is done after the student has been registered for at least one academic year and if this is done within the maximum permitted stay of three (3) years in the Master's programme.
- 11.3 No marks shall be allocated for a Master's dissertation submitted for conversion to a doctoral thesis.
- 11.4 Upon approval for conversion, the PhD thesis shall be completed within three (3) years.
- 11.5 The candidate shall consent to the supervisor's intention to recommend upgrading of the Master's to a Doctoral study. In addition, the candidate shall complete the Master's Conversion Consent Form.
- 11.6 If the student de-registers the said Doctoral study, he/she may apply to submit his/her dissertation for assessment.

11.7 In the event of the student not de-registering the doctoral study yet with one of the two external assessors not recommending upgrading of the Master's study, the Master's dissertation shall then be submitted for external assessment by a new set of external assessors.

12. Support Resources for Postgraduate Studies

Library and Research Facilities Support for Postgraduate Students.

Each School has a dedicated Subject Librarian whom postgraduate students are encouraged to contact on all matters relating to library materials.

Table 11: Subject Librarian per School

Subject Librarian	School	Email
Rapau, M (Mr)	Social Sciences	mahlatse.rapau@ul.ac.za
Seabi, L (Mr)	Education	lucas.seabi@ul.ac.za
Senoa, K (Mr)	Languages and Communication Studies	koketso.senoa@ul.ac.za

