TASKFORCE REPORT ON MKU POSTGRADUATE TRAINING
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Traditionally, the object of postgraduate training is to generate new knowledge and ideas. However, in a rapidly changing national, regional, socio-economic and political landscape, there is need for continued review of postgraduate training in order to make the training more accessible and to respond to the needs of employers by enhancing employability. Since skills garnered during postgraduate training are imperative for meeting socio-economic and political needs of our society, there is an urgent need for our institutions of higher learning to package postgraduate training in a manner geared towards responding to societal challenges and needs.

Mount Kenya University (MKU) reckons that realignment of universities to national, regional and global development agenda demands a paradigm shift in the mode of postgraduate level training, where high level expertise needs to be groomed to guide policy, relevant research and general development. It is in the light of the foregoing that the University Management Board appointed a Postgraduate Training Taskforce to *inter alia*, review the mode of current postgraduate training at the University, and recommend a model that satisfies national and international aspirations. The Taskforce observed that currently, MKU has inherited the Traditional Training Models that are biased to academic excellence with little training. Global trends indicate that innovative, demand-driven mode of postgraduate training is being adopted by institutions of higher learning, including Convention Doctorate, Joint Doctorate, Professional Doctorate, Status Doctorate International and Occupational Postgraduate Training Model.

The taskforce recommends the Occupational Postgraduate Training Model to be adopted by the University. The model is an integrated programme which combines research with a structured programme of advanced training in occupational-specific and generic skills and attitudes. The model has multipurpose structure covering a diversity of activities for core curriculum and practicum. The programme is holistic, retaining the core elements of the training programme and is augmented by additional formal occupational training to support the academic, professional and individual development of the students.

The taskforce recommended that all postgraduate curricula shall be modeled on the following components; course work and examination, field/ practicum / mentorship, thesis and publications arising from research outcome in the form of a book or articles in scholarly / scientific journal, bulletin. It is envisaged that this training model will increase the university competitive advantage in its delivery of postgraduate provision.

The taskforce recommends that there is need for MKU to develop a postgraduate training policy and a postgraduate training strategic plan. Further, there is need to review the University postgraduate handbook to incorporate the suggested corrections and to develop specific postgraduate training guidelines for schools and departments.
INTRODUCTION

The job market competitiveness and demand for better trained workforce equipped with adequate and relevant skills is increasing, prompting the demand for postgraduate training in the region. There is therefore need for institutions of higher learning to meet this demand by equipping the students with relevant skills to meet the emerging socio-economic needs of our society. For this reason, any university should aspire to be a leader in graduate training. When that is achieved, it will become a long-term study and research destination, perpetually providing attractive study environments and the preferred home for donor funded research and training scholarships.

Postgraduate training should confer satisfaction and such benefits as emotional and psychological wellbeing over a job well done for both the student and the supervisor. And this should be incremental to ensuring graduates that can take on positions of responsibility requiring decisions affecting us.

The challenge of graduate training is to ensure continued quality of work and persons trained. There is need to offer quality academic programmes, quality research and quality publications. Graduates need to be internationally competitive and equipped to provide the next generation of qualified high level human resource for the world.

Research outputs need to be more profound, directing solutions with more relevance to the socio-economic development than other academic establishments are today. We should be proud that our results contribute to the reduction of poverty, improve natural resource and general environmental management and boost industry, rural and urban development.

Observing that the urge to acquire graduate training for personal development is huge, we note that temptation to sacrifice quality for quantity will increase. Such gains will, however be short-lived: they will not pass the test set by society’s requirement for positive economic growth in both the public and the private sector that is internationally competitive. Hence, the demand in more postgraduate does not only relate to the number of graduates but increasingly also to the quality of the graduates and to the relevance of their research work and professional profile to the wider society. This is giving the existing establishment of universities in the region a lot of challenges and has created pressure for effective and efficient management of the graduate programmes that has no precedent. This calls for clear and focused training and examination regulations, administrative procedures, better quality and prepared students and constant review of training methods. It also will obligate the university to ensure that supervisors devote sufficient time to this duty. Future needs will not tolerate delays, prolonged studies, or avoidable failures. These bottlenecks are unnecessary waste of both human and financial resources.

A postgraduate training taskforce was constituted by the Vice Chancellor MKU to deliberate on various terms of reference as listed below and give its findings and recommendations. The following are the terms of reference (ToR):

(i) To consider global trends in postgraduate training and answer the following questions;

   (a) What are the objectives of the Mount Kenya University, MKU postgraduate training?

   (b) Are the objectives of the MKU postgraduate training being achieved?
(c) Are the best training practices being used in the training of postgraduate students at MKU?

(d) Are the benefits associated with postgraduate training achieved at MKU?

(ii) To study the current MKU regulations governing postgraduate studies and make recommendations on amendments that will promote implementation of best practices in the following areas;

(a) Project and Thesis format

(b) Project and Thesis processing

(c) Project and Thesis examination

(iii) To compare and contrast models of Postgraduate training and propose a Mount Kenya University Model that will meet national and international standards.

(iv) To study the current MKU university regulations governing academic linkages and make recommendations on amendments that will promote best practices in the management of academic exchange programmes.

(v) To deal with any matters related to enhancement of quality and relevance of MKU postgraduate training.

The Taskforce had first meeting on 13th October 2012, a second working session for two days on 18 and 19th October 2012 and third meeting on 12th November 2012.
SECTION A: OBJECTIVES OF POSTGRADUATE TRAINING AT MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY.

Terms of Reference (i) a

What are the objectives of the Mount Kenya University, MKU postgraduate training?

Are the objectives of the Mount Kenya University postgraduate training achieved?

The task force noted that the university had no documented postgraduate training objectives. The taskforce proposed the following objectives for strategic focus at Mount Kenya University:

(i) Promote excellence in teaching, research and community service
(ii) Undertake cutting edge research for generation of knowledge in a fast-changing technological world
(iii) Disseminate knowledge to the society
(iv) Contribute positively to the welfare of humanity and human advancement
(v) Train and impart individuals with problem-solving skills focused on self-reliance, self-actualization, specialization and development
(vi) Produce highly skilled individuals equipped to solve the socio-economic challenges of our society.

Postgraduate Training Practices at MKU

SECTION E: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

CURRENT STATUS OF POSTGRADUATE TRAINING AT MKU

MKU postgraduate programmes are run by Postgraduate Committee where Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Affairs serves as the chairperson.

The School of postgraduate studies is headed by a Dean and has an Assistant Registrar. Currently there are only 3 staff members.

The Dean acts as a link between all schools on issues of postgraduate training.

The School of Postgraduate Studies (SPS) receives theses and coordinates supervision and examination and defense of the same.

These are submitted to the respective schools before being submitted to the SPS who in-turn sends them to the internal and external examiners for review. Upon review, the SPS submits the thesis to respective schools who communicate with the student.

There have been several cases where the schools are not aware of the theses that originate from the schools since they are forwarded directly to SPS.
Current Challenges of the SPS

- Inadequate human capacity (workforce)
- Inadequate resources and facilities/infrastructure (office) necessary for execution of their mandate

Development of guidelines on Coordination of Postgraduate Training Programme

In developing the guidelines, the following approach was assumed:

1. Initiation of the Programme
2. Advertising of the Programme
3. Application process
4. Admission, Registration and Induction
5. Teaching / Training / Supervision
6. Examination
7. Graduation

1. Procedure for Initiation of the Programme

The Departments should establish market-driven courses and send them to the School for review before they can be tabled at the Curriculum Development Committee (CDC) and at the Senate for approval.

In formulating the programmes, the Departments should be guided by the following:

   i) The staff establishment / requirement
   ii) Physical facilities available
   iii) Administration of the programme
   iv) Coordination of the programme

2. Advertising of the Programme

After approval of the courses, the department will draft an advert which will be submitted to the Deans committee who will vet the advert and advise accordingly. The Director Quality Assurance will submit the advert to the Marketing Director for design works and fine tuning.
The Marketing Director will consult with the Department before it is printed. All adverts must include the course description and the minimum requirements.

3. Application process

The application forms and guidelines for applications will be uploaded on the University website and also made available in hard copies for easy accessibility. Minimum requirements of each programme must be clearly stipulated. All postgraduate applications will be received by SPS.

Duly filled application forms will be forwarded through the office of the Dean of the hosting School to the hosting department for evaluation and recommendation. After evaluation, the recommendations shall be forwarded back to the SPS through Schools. SPS shall forward a list of successful applicants to the Director, Admissions and Registrations.

4. Admission and Registration

The Director, Admissions and Registration will be responsible for sending all admission letters. The PhD applicants will be given a 2-week provisional admission before their draft concept note is examined so as to obtain full admission. During admission, the following shall be highlighted:

i) The programme is to be completed in a timely manner

ii) Students may be allowed to choose an external supervisor provided they submit their latter’s résumé

5. Teaching / Training / Supervision

The training of the programme will be executed as stipulated in the course description of the programme.

The Department needs to identify its capacity to teach the programme before its inception

The SPS needs to ensure that staffs are enough to teach the programme
There is need to improve the infrastructure which include;

i) Library - e-books and e-journals

ii) Lecture Rooms

iii) Internet Accessibility

iv) Teaching Aids

Each School to identify the infrastructure required for each programme.

The university should establish exclusive postgraduate carrels (not for undergraduates) for private study in the Library.

6. Examination

Appointment of supervisors is initiated by the department since most appropriate to identify supervisors.

Thesis will be submitted to the departments and then submitted to the school where the Dean shall submit it to the SPS.

The Dean SPS shall send the thesis to the respective examiners.

Examiners of proposal will be given 4 weeks to examine thesis by master’s students and 8 weeks for PhD students.

Upon receiving the examiner’s report, the Dean SPS shall submit the report to the respective Dean of school.

The SPS is required to constitute a Board of Postgraduate Studies (BPS) within 2 weeks after receiving evaluation report from examiners.

Prior to graduation, all postgraduate students will be required to make a presentation at a postgraduate seminar of their work organized by BPS.
7. Graduation

Upon completion of the required courses and approval by senate the student will be required to graduate

Recommendations

i) The SPS should develop a database of all potential supervisors

ii) The students who face difficulty at any stage need to contact the Departmental Academic Board and appropriate assistance should be offered accordingly

iii) The responsibility of supervising students should be left purely with the Departmental Academic Board

iv) There is need to increase the number of qualified supervisors since the number from the university inadequate

v) The qualification of a supervisor needs to be considered before he can supervise a students (Area of expertise)

vi) Masters and PhD students should have proposal and progress report presentation from the department and school level before they can present at SPS.

vii) The Taskforce members unanimously agreed that both coursework and research can be done concurrently.

viii) It is recommended that certain cross-cutting postgraduate course units be offered viz.:

a) Research proposal writing and methodology;

b) statistical and computer applications in research,

c) qualitative data collection and analysis,

d) information competence and management and

e) scholarly writing and communication

f) Seminar Presentation skills and techniques

ix) There is need to develop unique programmes and coordination of the postgraduate programme to be able to attract more students

x) Punctuality in completion of the course work

xi) Timeliness in completion of the programme

xii) There should be mentoring of students rather than supervision

xiii) There is need to improve the infrastructure and other resource requirements for the SPS
xiv) The development of a work plan for each programme.

xv) That a department be established

In conclusion, like other universities in Kenya, Mount Kenya University has inherited the traditional postgraduate training models which are biased to academic education and not training. To meet the ever-increasing needs of our society, there is need to adopt innovative and competitive models that are tailored to the welfare, knowledge and professional requirements of the region. While postgraduate training degree models are globally being continuously devised or improved, those of the region are mostly pegged on traditional model, which is basically academic, and yet it is assumed to be demand-driven by needs in academia, professions and labour market. There seems to be a mismatch between objectives of the postgraduate training programmes in the region and needs of the labour markets. There is therefore need to amend current MKU regulations governing Postgraduate training so as to promote implementation of best practices that will facilitate the University’s role in training and equipping its postgraduate students with skills responsive to human resource needs of the region.
SECTION B: GLOBAL QUALITY STANDARDS FOR POSTGRADUATE TRAINING

Terms of reference (iii): To compare and contrast models of Postgraduate training and propose a Mount Kenya University Model that will meet national and international standards.

Universities, being centres of academic excellence, have largely been left to themselves; to define the meaning of quality and lay strategies to achieve that quality. Cooperation among universities has aided in ensuring broad guidelines in what is expected of universities by society. The cooperation consists mainly of three types: mutual moderation of examinations (external examination), staff and student exchanges and collaborative research. Recently, it has taken the form of shared training and assessment leading to joint certificates or double degrees.

Selection and admission of students

The selection criteria of postgraduate students is tight and that the selection process is rigorous. This criteria was based traditionally on academic performance at undergraduate level, where the top 5% of a class was preferred to the top 25%. However, this was not enough. There was also need for their capacity to think, to be original and innovative and to work extremely hard without supervision be vouched for by eminent persons in academia. To cap it all a sort of interview was conducted to verify transcripts and have them personally vindicate themselves and probably verbally commit themselves to put in the necessary hours to the desired end. Sadly, some of the rigour has been slackened in many institutions seeking pecuniary gain, especially from potential Masters Students

The study

At the end of the training a graduate student should have complete knowledge and understanding of the old and the latest information in their subject. This should also be coupled with ability to judge the value of what others are doing in the subject and a conviction that they can make useful addition to the knowledge base in it. To achieve this level of competence, they must be responsible for the work, have independence in thesis formulation, preparation of complete and edited draft proposals, papers and thesis. They should drive their training, especially the latter part by arranging and attending meetings with supervisor, following the advice and suggestions given, supplying enthusiasm for continuation and completion and managing joint supervision. The course should direct them to this independence and responsibility.

Putting in the time
Ideally, the training process should offer opportunity for students to think, plan, carry-out and talk about their work and occasionally about themselves and their knowledge, their ideas and ideals. Students learn that their future is leading and teaching. They are taught to take advantage of meetings to make oral presentations and arrange seminars in their department. And especially to raise a sufficient audience to listen especially in small departments, which is sometimes difficult. Such occasions enable developing skills to respond to comments, to clarify as much of your work as understood and more important to note all arguments, advice, suggestions, criticisms, or oppositions to the work. This will minimize editorial criticism in the end during publishing and build self-confidence.

Students studying at home can be hampered by ordinary day to day domestic life. Personal, family and clan business takes its toll on thinking, organizing or planning capacity, although, most of this business is ordinary and can be handled effectively in their absence. Students need to be prepared to fight such distractions.

**The thesis**

A thesis is an argument about an idea, about something or a way of doing something meant to convince others and convert them to ones way of thinking or of doing something. A thesis is a journey into the unknown. It describes what is in place, criticizes it, suggests improvements, tries them out, reports the results of the “tries”; explains them, convinces others, concludes and gives direction on changes. Writing of theses gives students a command of what is happening in their subject and helps in identification of where they can make a useful contribution. Sometimes it is humiliating, exposing weakness in mastery of appropriate techniques and limitations of their knowledge. But it is an excellent tool to effectively communicate of results completely and in an unfettered manner showing the thinking process that led to the conclusions.

Development of a thesis must be carried out in an international context; the professional peer group is global. Only a very small step beyond the known is needed to have an ‘original’ work. But it may be wholly new “information”, technique, methodology, evaluation, interpretation, explanation, recombination of ideas, new discipline on an old subject, etc. But the student needs to be thoroughly convinced and convincing, write it quicker than the peers who may be carrying out exactly the same work and write it in easy readable language, avoiding jargon, but using technical terms as appropriate.

**Supervision of students**

The objective and goal of supervision is to certify and authenticate the student work. The object is achieved through guiding in asking and answering the right research question using correct methods and directing seminar preparations, presentations, papers and thesis writing on time.
To be effective, the topic selected or suggested should fall within the area of the supervisor's expertise, be suited to the background and aspirations of the students and feasible within resources and infrastructure available to give a fair chance of solving the problem to be tackled. The supervisor is motivated by opportunity to serve as “role models”, to research on an interesting problem, to publish and a chance to do their work. Supervision may also lead to recognition outside the University.

Students and supervisors frequently face difficulties beyond their resources to solve. They often need help that is rare to find. Fortunately, it is becoming more acceptable and common in the developed world to require that all charged with graduate training undergo training in supervision. This requirement has gone a long way in enhancing quality and quantity of graduate training.

Training evaluation

There is plenty of debate on the correct and practical assessment of graduate training. Traditional thesis and oral examinations has been assumed to provide adequate evaluation of both the student and their work. Where coursework is offered, and end of year examination and recently an end of semester one has also been used to assess impact of the course work on the student. Although this idea of terminal examinations is criticised by many, it also has its proponents.

Briefly, in addition to contributing to knowledge, graduate training should build certain competencies within the student. These are ability to read; think and determine the core problem; suggest alternate solutions and test them; analyse results and explain them; direct to the desired course of action. The training places the student in a position of leadership and responsibility in whatever situation they find themselves in.

Training evaluation should therefore guarantee that appropriate skills and competencies are built in the student and that the resulting work is of sufficient quality to warrant the graduate award. Ideally, assessment should be continuous and thorough. However, end-term examination should be required to crown the preceding assessments.
Postgraduate Curriculum

Traditionally, postgraduate training was limited to research and dissemination. However, emerging trends have incorporated other aspects of training including taught course units such as research methods, information and knowledge management, transferable skills, publications in addition to compilation of a doctoral thesis. Postgraduate Curricula may assume the following modes; an education Curriculum, a training curriculum, or both education and training curriculum. The postgraduate training models that exists globally includes; Traditional doctorates, conventional doctorates, new route doctorates, joint doctorates, professional doctorates and status doctorate international.

To be in tandem with these global trends, and in line with Kenya’s socioeconomic and political framework, it is imperative to embrace novel training models that are competitive and meet local, regional and global job market. The training modes should be demand driven tailored to the needs of particular professionals and based on needs of particular labour market demand.

Proposed Postgraduate Training Model for Mount Kenya University

The taskforce recommends the Occupational Postgraduate Training Model which has an integrated Programme that combines research with a structured programme of advanced training in occupation specific and generic skills and attitudes. The model has multipurpose structures covering a diversity of activities for core curriculum and practicum. Generally, the Occupational postgraduate programme retains the core elements of the Traditional training programmes but is augmented by additional formal occupational training to support the academic, professional and individual development of the student.

Benefits of the Occupational postgraduate programme to students are:

a) In general, successful graduates of the Occupational Training programmes are:
   i) Equipped as independent researchers with professional and personal transferable skills required contributing significantly to their chosen fields of occupation.
   ii) Provided with high level of occupational training that is of a distinctive competitive edge when entering the job market.

b) Specifically, Graduates of the Occupational postgraduate programme have the following benefits:
   i) An individually occupational designed structure research programme.
   ii) Explicit occupational training in effective research skills and ethics.
   iii) Acquisition of occupationally specified and generic skills, including leadership, management, technology and enterprise.
   iv) High likelihood of completion of training within the set timeframe.
   v) Development as an independent researcher in a given field of occupation.

Benefits to the sponsor/other stakeholders

Specifically, students’ sponsors will benefit from:

i) Enhanced formal Occupational training of sponsored researchers.
ii) A broad range of skills for the work place.
iii) Trainee’s ability to network with the international research community.
iv) Quality assurance of programmes via University’s quality control systems and National quality assurance (The Commission for Higher Education).
v) High likelihood of completion within the set time period.

**Nature of Occupational Postgraduate Training Model**

**a) Programme:**

Occupational postgraduate

Programme is demand–driven postgraduate training degree programme, modeled contrary to other models,

(i) Academia, like Traditional Postgraduate. Programmes which are essentially academic programme. Like Postgraduate. In medicine, Business, Education, etc., offered mostly in public Universities in Kenya.

(ii) Professions like professional Postgraduate. Programmes, like Doctor of medicine (MD), Education, (Ed.D.)

(iii) Labour markets, Domestic and international diagrammatically, the Demand – driven of the occupational Postgraduate. Programme can be modeled as shown below:

![Diagram showing Occupational Postgraduate Training Model](image)

**Figure 1: Domestic, International Labour market needs requirements**
Where, denotes the core element in puts for development of the programme

\[ \rightarrow \] Denotes the utilization of the expected learning outcomes

(b) Elements comprised.

It is an integrated Postgraduate Programme Curriculum model comprising of educational, training and professional core elements in terms of teaching subjects and research as denoted in Figure 2.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 2: Elements of Integrated postgraduate programme

Hence the occupational Postgraduate programme curriculum composes of core elements of:

(i) Academic (educational) Programme Curriculum.
(ii) Professional Programme Curriculum.
(iii) Training Programme Curriculum.

(c) Components:

The occupational postgraduate Programme curriculum includes:

(i) General knowledge subjects component-Educational component
(ii) Transferable skills development Component-Training component
(iii) Professional activities specialization components-Professional activity practice components
(iv) Published work component-In form of books or articles in scholarly /scientific Journals-scholarly academic component
(v) Research and compilation/writing of a thesis-Educational value added or new knowledge /skills component.
Hence, it is a comprehensive and holistic programme, which generically, can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 3: Components of comprehensive and holistic postgraduate programme

(d) Composition:
Unlike other Postgraduate programme curricula, which are modeled on either:

(i) Thesis alone,
(ii) Course work, Examination and Thesis

(iii) Course work, Examination and project; the proposed occupational Postgraduate programme curricula shall be modeled on:

(i) Course work and examination
(ii) Field /Practicum/mentorship/practitioners/professional attachment and assessment
(iii) Thesis
(iv) Publications arising from research outcomes in the form a book or articles in scholarly/scientific journal, bulletin, etc.
SECTION C: POSTGRADUATE GUIDELINES STATUS

Terms of Reference (iii): To study the current regulations governing postgraduate (schedule II) and make recommendations on amendments that will promote implementation of best practices.

Guidelines and regulations are needed to operationalize training that will deliver the desired quality. The instruments will ensure adequately prepared students, supervisors and administrative systems for the training implementation. Table 1 below shows the taskforce observations and recommended amendments in the postgraduate regulations.

Table 1: Proposed amendments on postgraduate regulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLAUSE NOTED</th>
<th>OBSERVED</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Project and thesis format     | The University has proper requirements for admission because this is where the problem could emerge from. For example, like every other local University a candidate is admitted to this program for a master’s degree if, they have a second Class Honours, Upper Division of Mount Kenya University or a degree of equivalent qualification or lower Division and who have a working experience of two years and above. | - That the issue of second Class lower division be re-examined since presently there are no jobs for these candidates and vetting seems to just dwell on the two years after graduation. Could staying at home after graduation for 2 years improve the quality of a student? It was noted that the caveat for that control was based on the support from universities based on staff development in early stages of university education in Kenya.  
- Second Class Honours (lower division) could be admitted immediately after the graduation. |
<p>| PhD degree programmes, on page 5, (schedule 11) | a candidate who holds a Bachelor’s degree and has at least three years postgraduate research experience in the subject area and can produce proven evidence in the form of papers, reports, manuscripts, portfolios or other published works is eligible. | - This requirement should be re-examined because the individual could have got a pass at undergraduate and just allowing them to come straight for a PhD on account of publication is risky. The practice in other established Universities is to invite them for an interview to decide on their suitability and this should be spelt out in the admission document. The applicant should have scored a first class in |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(page 7 clause 4.1)</th>
<th>Master’s degree programs will either be by; Coursework, Examination and project, or Coursework, examination, and thesis or thesis only. It is not clear who will decide the mode of study or what qualifications are required to decide on the mode of study</th>
<th>Clear guidelines should be put in place on this issue together with implications of what happens if one mode is chosen over the other two. The schools should decide on the mode of study.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On page 8 4.2 (3), that at the expiry of the study period any student who will have not completed the programme will automatically cease to be a bona fide student of Mount Kenya University. There is no monitoring mechanism in place for students’ progress other than progress reports.</td>
<td>Mechanisms be put in place to monitor students work with time lines on when certain information is expected.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Each candidate shall be assigned a minimum of two supervisors and a maximum of three supervisors</td>
<td>One or two supervisors with relevant specialization are recommended to supervise postgraduate students. The school to recommend on relevant qualifications and number of supervisors. However, academic staff whose highest qualification is Masters degree is not recommended to supervise the masters or PhD levels students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervisor responsibilities</strong></td>
<td>The supervisor must respond to any written material from their students within the shortest time possible. There is no definition of how short is short?</td>
<td>The time limit should be defined, and it was agreed to be at most two weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(pg 11 6.2):</strong> That the supervisors are required to certify at the end of each semester that the candidate has received adequate supervision.</td>
<td>That it should be the Board of Graduate studies to do so. The supervisors cannot judge themselves.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Observed (pg 12):</strong> The student is supposed to secure organize and present thesis contents professionally and</td>
<td>Project and thesis formats must be given for each school. One</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>accurately. Adhering to correct format for presenting quotations, footnotes etc. There was however no format for thesis or project given.</strong></td>
<td><strong>format cannot be acceptable for all schools.</strong></td>
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<td>Candidates should publish at least two academic papers from the thesis before it can be formally defended. This is a good requirement but is it achievable in the time given for the study of a master’s degree?</td>
<td>For the master’s degree at least one peer-reviewed paper should be published and at least two papers for PhD candidates before defense and encourage students to publish more later.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis format: (See also Ref. MKU/PG/F002 pg 21 and 22)</strong></td>
<td><strong>The following:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is no mention of number of characters of a thesis title. There are numerous items missing which should be included.</td>
<td>1. The number of characters must be given to avoid titles that are one paragraph long (See pg 38, MKU/PG/F010) where thesis Board of examiners report form does not include and does not even know how many character should be in a title. The abstract is good, but needs to spell out what an abstract is. The student should know that it is a summary of what is contained in the thesis. Explain how it should start, progress and end. <strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explain what is expected in the introduction. What is an introduction?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Do we need a problem statement?</td>
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<td>4. How about a justification?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Any conceptual frame work? When should we have a conceptual frame work?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. What is in the literature review? Is it just a list of related events?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. How should the referencing be done?</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. What kind of references are expected. Can we in 2012 use references of 1890? Under what circumstances can this be done?</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. What referencing style do we use? Give examples.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Materials and methods:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. What is it, and how should it look like?</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Should it have any references?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What should be in results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the work to be discussed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How should the reference look like?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Project:

| What are the differences between Thesis and project? | Masters project proposals and presentation of research findings are given in the IV semester (Ref. MKU.PG/F008). This looks too close

The project proposal be given earlier. For example in the third semester when the students are still undertaking course work. This will give them enough time to collect better data or information.

### Project and thesis

| the notice of submission must be given to the | The intention of submission contains a place for the external

20
<p>| processing | school of post graduate studies at least 90 days before a thesis is submitted | examiner. This form should include Area of specialization of the external examiner and the CV for vetting by Senate. |
| Thesis Examination: | After a report is given to the Chairman postgraduate studies board, the Chairman will convene an Examiners Board for oral defense | Consider modern Technology and include something on defense through social media. This might sound odd but some Universities in Developed countries are already doing it. |
| | The submitted thesis will be sent to examiners who will be instructed to submit their findings within five weeks. It would be helpful to see the instructions given to examiners. | It helps if examiners know the kind of reports you expect from them. It is true that there should be some flexibility but there are certain specific issues examiners must be asked to react to. |
| | Thesis Board of examiners report form (Ref. MKU/PG/F010 pg 39) (c) which states the thesis requires major corrections/revision but does not state the option given to this. Should it fall under category (d) or be on its own? If so how long is it given? | It should be given a longer time such as 6 months. It should state that the corrections can be done within six months but not less than 3 months. |
| | that projects submitted for examination are also taken to external examiners. It is not clear whether all or only a few will be taken for external examination | The school external examiners for moderation will examine the projects. |
| | Only Departments with the senate’s approval will be allowed to do their postgraduate degrees by projects. It is not clear if processing of projects will be handled by the Board of postgraduate studies. It is also not clear if copies of projects will be deposited with the | Due to the large numbers of masters’ students, it may be difficult to identify external examiners for all of them and therefore the taskforce recommend that project be submitted to school examiners for moderation rather than to independent examiners and project defense be held at the school level. |
| | The Board of Postgraduate studies should handle all postgraduate issues including postgraduate Diplomas and postgraduate certificates in order to ensure quality work is maintained by all schools and Departments. It is recommended that postgraduate school be responsible for central depository of projects, dissertations and thesis so as to forward them to the University | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board of postgraduate studies.</th>
<th>Library, Research Division and Departmental libraries.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis shall bear the inscription, “Work forming part of the requirements for the Degree of ………..” Should this also apply to work done by thesis only?</td>
<td>That where thesis only applies, the inscription should read “this is a full requirement for the award of degree of ……………”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When doing corrections, there will be cases when the Examiners Board will appoint someone else to help the supervisor oversee corrections. Some corrections could be minor or major. In some of the major corrections the non-supervisors do a lot of work and have wanted in the past to be included as supervisors</td>
<td>There should be a clear policy on the role of the non-supervisor, to avoid future conflicts. The Board of Examiners appointee to oversee corrections is not a part of the supervisory team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Field study/Attachment</strong></th>
<th>The postgraduate programmes should have a component of field/industrial/mentorship/professional attachment.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is noted from the student hand book page 20.</td>
<td>Although the guidelines for proposal and thesis format exist they have not considered postgraduate diploma and certificate. They have also not taken care of the maximum size for thesis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION D: MANAGEMENT OF ACADEMIC LINKAGES

Terms of reference (iv)

Partnership guiding principles

- Shared ownership
- Trust and transparency
- Clear division of roles and responsibilities
- Effective, regular communication
- Joint strategic planning and implementation
- Supportive institutional infrastructure
- Monitoring and evaluation

Levels of engagement and types of activity

- Individual level – undertaken as a routine
- Department/School level – commit only one of the departments or schools (E.g. collaborative research, internship, hosting conferences, collaborative academic programmes
- University level – instrument of engagement generally a MOA

Types of University level of engagement

- Institution -to- institution Collaborations
- Initiatives with overseas governments/ministries
- University student exchange programmes and study abroad initiatives
- University student exchange programmes
- University study abroad initiatives

Purposes of international linkages

- Exchange of lecturers and other research scholars
- Exchange of students
- Joint research and meetings for education and research
- Exchange of materials, documents and information
- Technical assistance
**Modes of collaboration**

- Twinning programme
- Joint academic programme
- Dual badging programme
- Credit transfer programme
- Articulation programme
- Collaborative research
- Staff exchange programme
- Study abroad programme
- Exchange of academic resource programme
- Collaborative curriculum development programme

**Observations made on Management of academic exchange programmes:**

(i) Each programme of exchange is unique and therefore the taskforce can only make generic recommendations.

(ii) Of the ten options of academic exchange programmes, Mount Kenya University should identify which of the options are most appropriate for each partnership.

(iii) Mount Kenya University should establish the resource base of the collaborative partner to ensure equity in the partnership.

(iv) Enhance the development of MKU postgraduate programmes curricula to ensure parity in such engagements.

(v) MKU to engage in regional postgraduate programmes development (being part of the team of consortium of universities).

(vi) The credit transfer system be closely evaluated to ensure compatibility of the programmes as well as to ensure quality standards.

(vii) MKU should always be the awarding and certifying institution, unless in unique situations.

(viii) In case of unique situations allowing two partnering institutions to either co-sign or co-crown the certificates, the residence period/percentage unit coverage should be well specified to ensure academic culture is acquired.

(ix) To ensure sustainability of the current and upcoming linkages, there is need for frequent training/workshops for the faculty and students at departmental and school.

(x) It is recommended that a directorate of linkages be established to spearhead, identify potential linkages and oversee actualization of the exchange programmes.
SECTION E: PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF THE PROPOSED PhD PROGRAMMES

The taskforce has proposed the implementation strategies of the recommendations if adopted as tabulated in the table 2 below.

Table 2: Proposed implementation strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TARGET GROUP</th>
<th>MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION</th>
<th>OUTPUTS</th>
<th>INDICATORS</th>
<th>TIMELINES (YEARS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of Occupational Degree programme</td>
<td>All postgraduate programmes</td>
<td>Change of mode of study</td>
<td>-Diverse programmes</td>
<td>-increased enrolment</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revise existing curriculum</td>
<td>-Students attachment</td>
<td>-marketable graduates in the job market</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establish academic linkages</td>
<td>-changed curricula</td>
<td>-number of new partnerships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-increased papers in peer-reviewed journals</td>
<td>-Improved university ranking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Number of papers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision of the Postgraduate Students handbook</td>
<td>School of postgraduate studies</td>
<td>Revise the existing handbook in accordance within the Taskforce’s recommendations</td>
<td>Revised contents</td>
<td>Operational handbook</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulation of guidelines for specific postgraduate programmes</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>- Sensitize Deans and HoDs on proposed change of postgraduate guidelines</td>
<td>- Sensitized Deans and HoDs</td>
<td>Guidelines for specific postgraduate programmes</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Impact Measure</td>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create awareness to students, lecturers and external examiners</td>
<td>Students, lecturers and external Examiners</td>
<td>- Formulate guidelines in line with the recommendations of the taskforce</td>
<td>Number of sensitized lecturers, students and external examiners</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulate guidelines and procedures for students attachment, mentorship and placement</td>
<td>HoDs</td>
<td>Formulate guidelines in line with the recommendations of the taskforce</td>
<td>Number of guidelines from the Departments</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulate guidelines for proposal and thesis format including the page numbers and font size</td>
<td>Deans of Schools</td>
<td>Formulate guidelines in accordance with the taskforce recommendations</td>
<td>Number of published guidelines</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulate guidelines for examination criteria</td>
<td>Dean school of Postgraduate Studies</td>
<td>Formulate guidelines in accordance with the taskforce recommendations</td>
<td>The number of published Guidelines</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Taskforce members

1. PROF. JOHN HURIA NDERITU  
   CHAIRMAN
2. DR. RONALD MAATHAI  
   MEMBER
3. DR. JOHN SHIUNDU  
   MEMBER
4. MADAM BIBIANNE WANJA  
   MEMBER
5. DR. KIMAMO GITHUI  
   MEMBER
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   RESOURCE PERSON
9. PROF. PAUL OKEMO  
   RESOURCE PERSON
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    RESOURCE PERSON
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