PG 4 Workshop
Key issues concerning PG 4 and all that…

Online materials for the workshop

Go to the address: http://dutmoodle.dut.ac.za/moodle/

Click on the category *RPS Research Capacity Building*, and click on the course *Higher Degrees Research Module*.

Workshop materials are posted there online.

To log in:

User ID: staff or student number (if you don't have a student number or didn't give your staff number, see the register for your User ID.)

Password: research

Find form PG 4a and save it on the hard drive, open in MSWord.

N.B. You don't need to log in to access materials.

PG4a

Form PG4a contains, combined, the forms for:

- the Research Proposal
- the Ratification of Research Proposal by the Higher Degrees Committee (old PG4c)

After approval by the Department and the Faculty Research Committee, the first 2/3 pages are detached and sent to the Higher Degrees Committee, which performs an oversight role.

Ethics submission to the Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC)

IREC requires the following documents:

- Latest PG4a
- Ethics checklist (attached as appendix, termed "PG4b")
- Info letter and consent forms
- Data collection tool (or draft)
- Letters to gate keepers if applicable

The first item is on the usual postgrad link to documents. The second and third are on the IREC website accessed off the postgrad page.

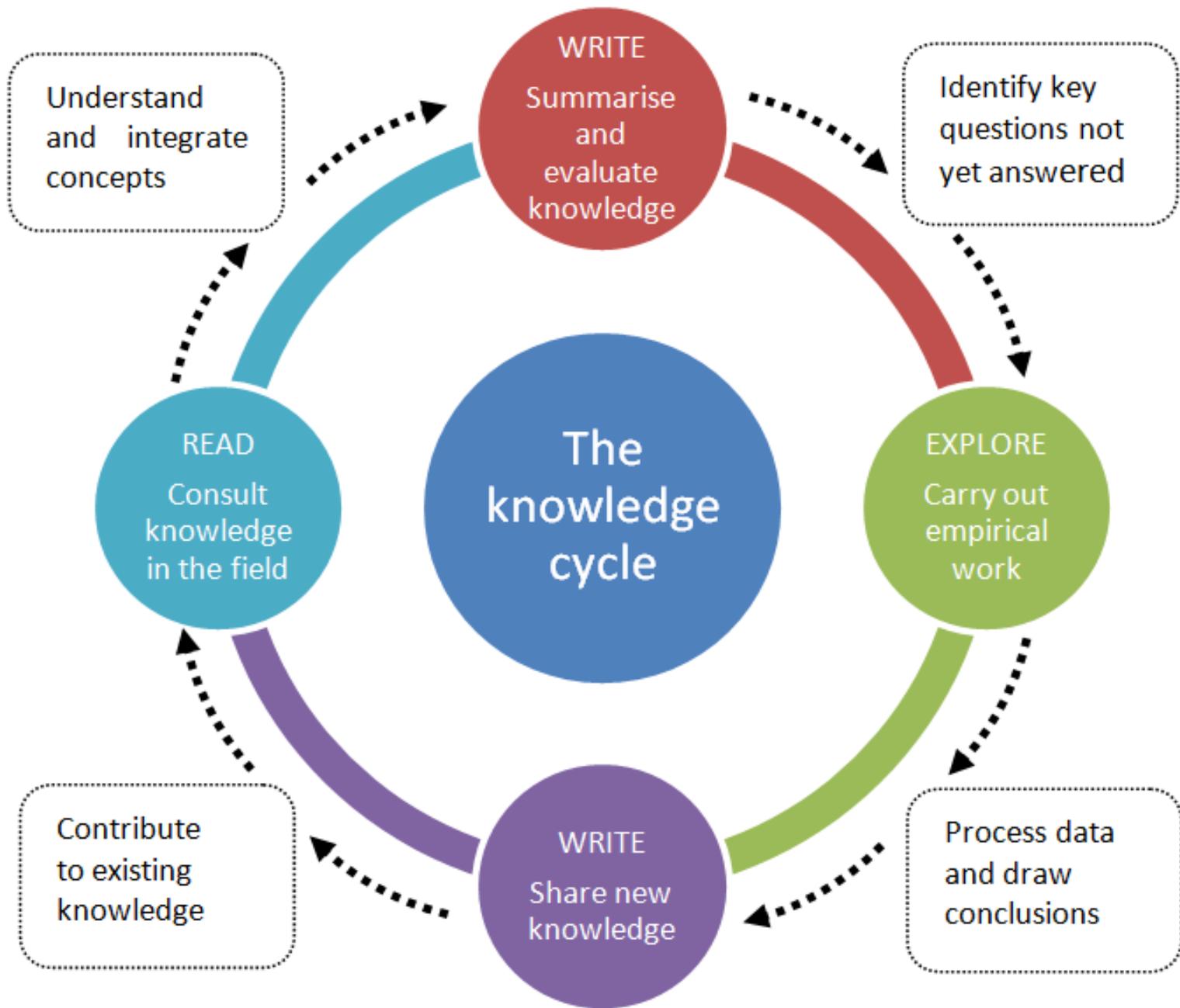After FRC approval, copies of the above are submitted to IREC.

In order to complete the PG form (a & b)…

…you must first have prepared thoroughly for your research project.

The PG form should contain only a fraction of what you have actually done: if you have prepared properly, you will battle to fit it into the form.

How does one prepare for a research project?

The knowledge cycle

WRITE — Summarise and evaluate knowledge

EXPLORE — Carry out empirical work

WRITE — Share new knowledge

READ — Consult knowledge in the field

Understand and integrate concepts

Identify key questions not yet answered

Process data and draw conclusions

Contribute to existing knowledge

Preparing for the research project

Go to the address:
http://dutmoodle.dut.ac.za/moodle/

Click on the category *RPS Research Capacity Building*, and click on the course *Higher Degrees Research Module*.

The *Higher Degrees Research Module* outlines the processes involved in preparing for the research project.

Filling in PG 4: details of the study

Page 1:

Details of degree for which registered, student and supervisor/s.

Changes (on latest PG4a, updated 16/05/2012):

Ethics clearance required

Summary of the study (150-200 words)

Filling in PG 4: research budget

Page 2:

Section A: Budget

Limit:

MTech – R10,000

DTech – R15,000

N.B. Items such as laptops, proof-reading and statistical analysis are now allowed. However, this means the laptop will be given an asset number and will belong to the Department in which the student is registered.

Page 3:

Section B (*Start on a new page.*)

1. Field of Research and Provisional Title

Field/area: e.g. Cost management, staff retention

Avoid the words "investigation" or "exploration" in the title.

N.B. All title changes after HDC approval must be approved by the HDC.

Filling in PG 4: Context of the research

2. Context of the Research

This section provides the general information regarding the research that will be undertaken and should make it clear why the problem is worth addressing. It sketches the background and, where appropriate, should provide a brief theoretical framework within which the problem is to be addressed. (Maximum length: 250 words)

Filling in PG 4: Context of the research contd.

Tip:

Give the social situation in which the issue is based, and show what is problematic about the situation. Back up what you say with evidence (i.e. citations).

Say why it is important that this problem is solved.

Explain the potential value of the research.

Give the research orientation (or theoretical framework) to be used and say *why* is it appropriate.

3. Research Problem and Aims

This section should either set out the specific question(s) to which the student hopes to find an answer, or the research problems which are to be solved or state any hypotheses to be tested. In the case of open-ended topics in the Humanities, outline the subject/area/field to be critically investigated. It should indicate clearly what the research intends to achieve and the intended products of the research.

Filling in PG 4: Research problem and aims contd.

Tip:

Give the general aim/s (i.e. what does the research set out to do?)

Give the specific objectives.

OR:

Give the research questions (*not* interview questions) which should be open-ended.

OR: Give the research hypothesis.

N.B. Keep it short and use bullets.

Filling in PG 4: Literature Review

4. Literature Review

This section includes a brief review of the main, seminal literature sources (mainly scholarly journals, but text books, media articles, Internet and other sources can be used). Use the Harvard Method of referencing. Show clearly how the literature is linked to your topic, the problem statement and the research objectives. (Maximum length: 500 words)

5. Research Methodology

In this section the student is advised to state the research paradigm; qualitative/quantitative or both. The research approach/strategy will also need to be stated.

e.g. Qualitative: Action research, developmental research, case study research, ethnographic research, grounded theory research, etc.

Quantitative: Mathematical, modelling and simulation, experimenting, testing, etc.

(Maximum length: 200 words)

6. Plan of Research Activities

Provide a summarised work plan for each year of the project giving information for each research activity per year, under the following headings:

Activity

Timeframes (target dates for the duration of the project)

7. Structure of Dissertation / Thesis Chapters

Briefly state the proposed content of each chapter in one clear sentence per chapter.

See the section on "TRADITIONAL THESIS STRUCTURE" in Unit 1. of *Research Matters*.

8. Potential Outputs

- Provide details on envisaged measurable outputs (e.g. publications, patents, students, etc.);

- Expected national and/or international acclaim for the research and contribution of research outputs to building the knowledge base;

- Exploitability of outputs, e.g. applicability to community development, improved products, processes, services in SA, region and/or continent;

- Expected effects of research results.

N.B. Use bullets and don't get carried away.

Filling in PG 4: Key References

9. Key References

List at least 20 key references which you have cited in the above sections using the Harvard referencing style (IEEE for Engineering students).

N.B. Use EndNote for this.

Filling in PG 4: Ethics

Section C: Ethics

Note: Ethics requirements are faculty specific. Kindly ensure that you are aware of and have complied with the relevant ethics requirements.

Most projects falls into:

2. Expedited review (minimal risk to humans, animals or environment)

Student Declaration

I, the undersigned, certify that:

- I am familiar with the rules regulating higher qualifications at Durban University of Technology, and understand the seriousness with which DUT will deal with violations of ethical practice in my research.

- Where I have used the work of others this has been correctly referenced in the proposal and again referenced in the bibliography. Any research of a similar nature that has been used in the development of my research project is also referenced.

- This project has not been submitted to any other educational institution for the purpose of a qualification.

- All subsidy-earning outputs (artefacts and publications) from postgraduate studies will be in accordance with the Intellectual Property Policy of the Durban University of Technology.

- Where patents are developed under the supervision of the Durban University of Technology involving institutional expenditure, such patents will be regarded as joint property entitling the Durban University of Technology to its share, subject to the Durban University of Technology's policy on the Management and Commercialisation of Intellectual Property.

- I understand that I am expected to publish an article based on my research results.

- I understand that plagiarism is wrong, and incurs severe penalties.

Checklist and Evaluation of Research Proposal

1. Research Topic

1.1 Is the research problem/question clearly stated?

1.2 Is the problem/question researchable?

1.3 Is the topic relevant?

1.4 Is the scope appropriate for the qualification?

1.5 Is the research appropriately delimited?

1.6 Are the research aims clear?

1.7 Are the assumptions stated (if any)?

1.8 Is the terminology adequately defined?

2. Literature

2.1 Is the literature relevant to the problem?

2.2 Has an adequate conceptual framework been developed?

2.3 Is the literature current, apart from seminal works in the field?

2.4 Has the relationship between the research topic and previous research been outlined?

2.5 Are textual referencing and bibliographic citation correct and consistent?

3. Methodology

3.1 Does the research design address the research problems/questions?

3.2 Are the data collection/production methods appropriate?

3.3 Are the data analysis methods appropriate?

3.4 Have ethical considerations been addressed? [1]

4. General

4.1 Is the proposal generally free of language/ typographical errors?

4.2 Is the proposal free of plagiarism? [2]

4.3 Is the research manageable in terms of timeframe?

4.4 Is the budget allocated realistic?

5. Funding

5.1 Is the proposal financially viable?

PG4b: Research ethics checklist

PG4b is derived from the Health Sciences form, and must be attached to PG4a.

Also attached are:

- Info letter and consent forms
- Data collection tool (or draft)
- Letters to gate keepers if applicable