

## Rules for go/no-go decisions for PhD students

**Pre-ample: this is a semi-final version which at the moment (28 September 2006) lies for advice with the secretariat of the Research School (PE&RC) and with the Human Resource Management division of the Department of Environmental Sciences. The final version will be posted upon receiving their comments but the present set is important for those of you who face a go/no-go decision.**

*Month 0, day 1* – Candidate starts reading literature and starts working on his/her research proposal.

*Month 3* – Candidate gives her/his first talk to the group, outlining what her/his research is going to be. Feedback by the group is internalized, he/she must organise a scribe who takes notes of the comments during a scientific discussion about his/her proposal

*Month 4; week 1* - Candidate submits to his/her daily supervisor (co-promotor) and his promotor the written **first** draft of his/her research proposal.

*Month 4; week 2* - Candidate receives from her/his daily supervisor (co-promotor) and her/his promotor detailed comments on the first draft of his/her research proposal. All comments are used for improving the draft.

If deadline is not made and/or if comments have not been taken into account in sufficient details and/or if candidate is not making sufficient progress in (a) scientific thinking, (b) scientific writing, (c) speaking English or (d) writing English, the candidate gets a written warning.

*Month 5; week 1* - Candidate submits to his/her daily supervisor (co-promotor) and his promotor the written **second** draft of his/her research proposal on basis of (a) the first draft, (b) feedback and commentary, (c) new reading and thinking. The second draft **must** be in the WOTRO full research proposal format. The second draft **must** have an additional section describing the intended chapters of the dissertation; for each intended chapter there is a description of its aim, hypotheses to be tested, methods and analyses to be used.

If deadline is not made and/or if comments have not been taken into account in sufficient details and/or if candidate is not making sufficient progress in (a) scientific thinking, (b) scientific writing, (c) speaking English or (d) writing English, the candidate gets a written warning. If the candidate had been admitted with a low TOEFL rating, and if the candidate's progress in the use of the English language is insufficient, the candidate must take a new TOEFL test and pass with sufficient results in Month 6, week 1. The threshold is set by the University.

*Month 5; week 2* - Candidate must present a talk to the other PhD students of the group (or a PE&RC discussion group); he/she must organise a scribe who takes notes of the comments during a scientific discussion about his/her proposal. All comments are used for improving this **second** draft. This talk is not intended for the whole Research Ecology Group.

**Month 5; week 2** - Candidate receives from her/his daily supervisor (co-promotor), her/his promotor and a third member of the staff detailed comments on the **second** draft of his/her research proposal.

If deadlines in month 5 (weeks 1 and 2) and/or about the additional TOEFL test are not made and/or if comments have not been taken into account in sufficient details and/or if candidate is not making sufficient progress in (a) scientific thinking, (b) scientific writing, (c) speaking English or (d) writing English, the candidate gets a written warning.

**Month 6; week 1** – Candidate submits to his/her daily supervisor (co-promotor) his promotor, the third staff member mentioned above and a fourth staff member (“the committee”) the written **third** and final draft of his/her research proposal on basis of (a) the second draft, (b) feedback and commentary, (c) new reading and thinking. The third draft **must** be in the WOTRO full research proposal format. The third draft **must** have an additional section describing the intended chapters of the dissertation; for each intended chapter there is a description of its aim, hypotheses to be tested, methods and analyses to be used.

In the same week the committee will give its first assessment of the candidate on basis of (a) this final draft, (b) the presence or absence of previous warnings, (c) the scientific development of the candidate, and – if necessary – the result of the new TOEFL test. If this assessment is negative, the candidate will be told so in camera by the committee.

After a negative assessment, the candidate will get an additional three months to improve his performance. The next steps will then be taken exactly three months later than indicated below.

In case the candidate has an official appointment at the University, the HRM of the Department will be informed and the necessary steps to not renew the contract will be taken. All official rules of the University concerning contracts will apply, including the normal rules of appeal.

In case the candidate does not hold an official appointment at the University, but has received a Fellowship, the grantor of the Fellowship will be informed and the necessary steps to terminate the Fellowship will be taken. All official rules of fellowship termination will apply, including the normal rules of appeal.

**Month 6; week 2** – Candidate gives his/her second talk to the group on basis of the third draft and on basis of the feedback he/she has received from the Committee. She/he must organise a scribe who takes notes of the comments during a scientific discussion about his/her proposal. All comments are used for improving this **final** draft.

The committee will assess the candidate on basis of his/her presentation, the way he/she handles the question and the discussion, and on basis of the assessment mentioned before (month 6, week 1). The committee will withdraw for consultation after the discussion, and will inform the candidate in public of its final decision of “go” or “no-go” immediately after this consultation. For appeal procedures, see above.

In the weeks after the final “go”-decision, the candidate must produce a final version of her/his proposed thesis contents before month 7.