



Central University of
Technology, Free State

13 July 2020

WELCOME
TO THE
GRADUATE
SCHOOL

Graduate School e-Newsletter

4th Edition



Dear Colleagues and Postgraduate Students

We like to keep you updated on developments, accomplishments and upcoming events in the Graduate School.

It has been a busy and constructive few months. We had the pleasure of continue the first half of 2020 with our planned activities. Following the highly successful Masters' and Doctoral Academic Writing Programme, we are now moving towards a more virtual approach which focuses on blended learning. We trust that this integrated teaching and learning approach will ensure that you have access to the right skills and knowledge as well as greater learning mobility in the way that best suits your individual learning styles.

In this Edition, I will share news about the Masters' and Doctoral Academic Writing Programme. I'm going to share some valuable information, tips and memorable moments we've had during the online sessions and give you an overview of upcoming events.

Scroll down for all of this and more!

It would be great to see as many of you take part in the upcoming Graduate School activities. We look forward to the coming months with great excitement.

I wish you all the best of luck for the second half of 2020.

Eleanor Nel
Research Officer: Graduate Studies

Here are some of the challenging, but fun parts of our virtual Academic Writing sessions during lockdown.



"I was struggling with referencing prior to the course, I can now safely say that is behind me due to the assistance of this course".

We also asked participants what they found most beneficial about the programme. Here are some of the responses ...

"The handouts that were provided really helped a lot and gave me new insight with regards to the research process".



"Being able to connect and continue with classes even when there seemed to be limitations, so that we continue working on our write-ups instead of parking it in the parking lot".

"Learning to read critically".



(Consent obtained from parents)



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Feeling overwhelmed by Academia? You are not alone!

Embarking on a research journey can be very rewarding, but it often comes with a price tag of high levels of stress and anxiety. It might be due to the pressure of deadlines, writers block or perhaps the anxiety of not knowing what the future holds.

The doctoral journey has its own genre and, thus, requires academic, emotional, social, and psychological support. This is critical as one move into a new research community - striving to fulfil new demands while maintaining a balanced well-being suitable for the challenges of doctoral education (Elliot, Bengtsen, Guccione & Kobayashi, 2020, *The Hidden Curriculum in Doctoral Education*, Palgrave MacMillan).

**We asked a few Doctoral candidates how they manage doing a PhD with a family and a full-time job?
This is how they respond ...**

"I believe that time management is key. This is very hard I must confess. A supportive and understanding HOD definitely helps. Sticking to a routine and working either very early in the mornings or late at night".

"It's all about balance and patience. COVID 19 really does not make it easy to work from home and have an infant running around. I personally only get time at night to work, so my PhD progress isn't going as best it can".

"It is actually difficult to manage, but I make progress by including the study in my daily tasks. One or 2 hours three times a day helps."

**What would you
like your
supervisor/staff
development
trainers need to
know about you as
a researcher?**

"We need deadlines and small bitesize chunks of work to help the procrastinators amongst us. Please respect my opinion if it differs from yours".

"I want to do research with regards to my passion / what I love spending my time on most. Not being forced to research or investigate something that I'm not interested in. I also don't want to be constrained by time limits as I'm a family person, family comes first and everything else (including a PhD) can take a back seat 😊".

"They should appreciate people involve with research and not treat them lower than those that decided not to involve with research. The effort invested in research may reduce the total outputs in other areas".

Response from Postgraduate Survey (June 2020)

Scroll down to pages 5 and 6 to enroll for the Masters' and Doctoral Critical Reading and Academic Writing Programme

No repeats of previous participants are allowed. New enrolments with valid student or staff numbers only.

Quick tips from part-time researchers who have successfully completed their doctorate (may probably be beneficial to full time researchers too).



Keep work, study and ‘you time’ separate

If you are working from home, go through your diary with your partner, family or friends, and plan in the times you can spend with them and times when you need to work alone. Set aside chunks of time for your PhD to do it effectively.

There is no need to stress when you are not actively working on your PhD. Even if you don't think about it explicitly, your brain is working on the topics. Use a tool like Endnote to keep your sources well organised.

Remain connected with your research community



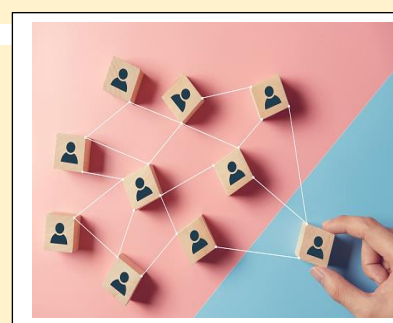
Maintain a good relationship with your supervisor. Try to have supervision meetings face to face or at least using Skype, Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Other collaboration tools may also be available.

If possible, attend and participate research days, research seminars, and talks on extensive research. Not only will you get input on your work, but you will also get practice in presenting and defending your research and more chances to build a network.

Get the support you need

Find out about training programmes, counselling services, and other resources for groups with specific needs that are available to you in your institution. If you are distant from your University, check on available seminars and training programmes and arrange to meet up with other (part-time) researchers.

What is available on-line at your institution? Videos or slides from seminars or training programmes on a Virtual Learning Environment?



Manage your doctorate like a project

Appoint a family member, or someone you live with, as your project manager, if you do not see your supervisor very often. Tell them what you intend to accomplish on a given day or week. You will have someone who can check on you, motivates you, and celebrate with you when you have reached a goal.

Try to demonstrate progress to yourself.

Learn to say “no” to unrealistic demands on both your time at work and in research - don't be afraid to say no, each area of your life will take priority at different times.

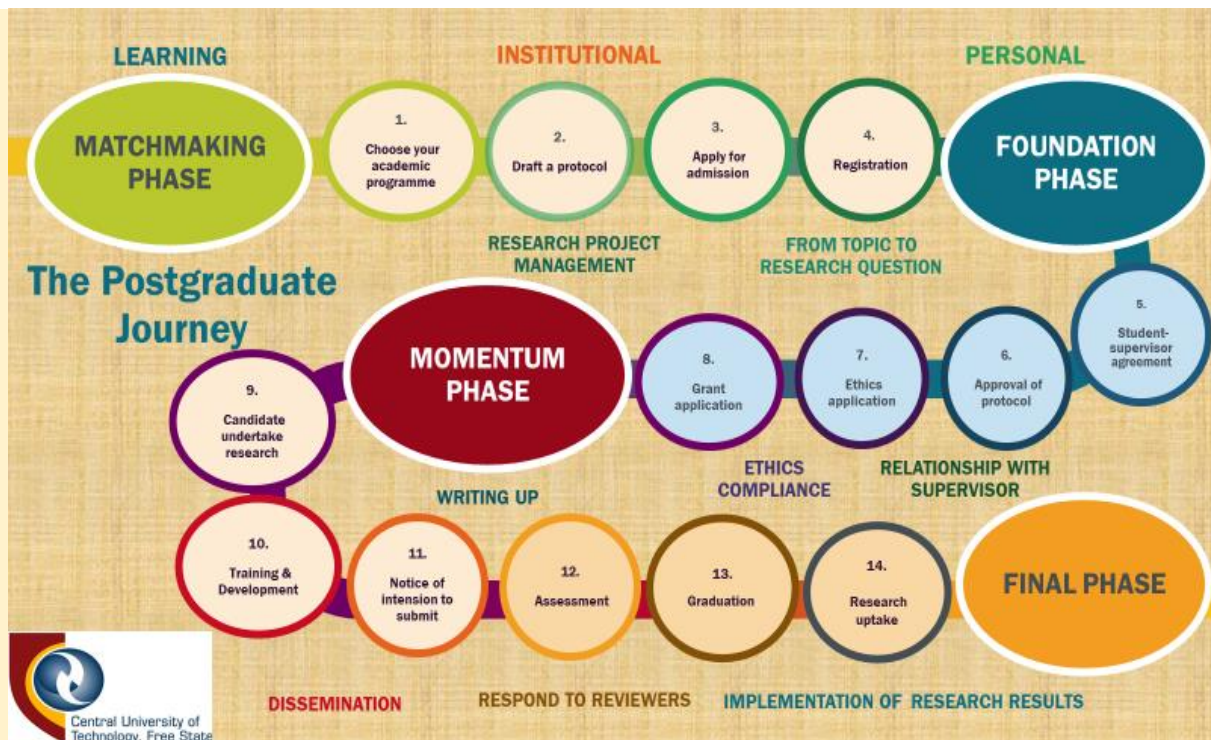
Introduce into your new life (as a researcher) the kind of self-organising and time-management techniques you have practised in your professional life.



An updated and electronic version of the Postgraduate Research Manual will be available soon!

The aim of this manual is to assist and guide researchers and postgraduate students through good practices linked with a research journey. The manual furthermore provides support to researchers and postgraduate students in doing their research.

Here is a quick preview of a research journey and the milestones that you may encounter.



Critical Reading and Academic Writing Masters' Programme

The Graduate School presents a series of Critical Reading and Academic Writing sessions particularly aimed at Masters' students. The objective of these 2-hour sessions is to enable you to effectively improve your academic writing skills. Practical sessions are included to support you in understanding and practically applying the theory. At the end of the programme a Language Practitioner will advise you on how to edit your writing.

If you would like to upgrade your critical reading and academic writing style, then this opportunity is just for you!

A maximum of 30 participants can be accommodated. If you enroll for the programme, then the attendance of all seven (7) sessions is compulsory. Join this short programme and become a better academic writer. To register for the programme, please contact Ms Mary Mokhoa at Lmokhoa@cut.ac.za.

| PROGRAMME | |
|---|---|
| Registration deadline: 23 July 2020 | |
| Delivery mode: Microsoft Teams | |
| Facilitator: Dr Mardi Delpont | |
| Date & Time | Topic |
| Wednesday, 29 July (10:00 – 12:00) | Introduction to Academic Writing Overview of a research dissertation, requirements for scholarship, quality assurance, characteristics of a good scientific text, general problems with a thesis, reading for writing, graduate attributes, planning and time-management. |
| Wednesday, 5 August (10:00 – 12:00) | Houston ... we have a problem ... Development of the argument, formulation of the problem, formulating the hypothesis, formulating the: aim, objectives and research questions. |
| Wednesday, 19 August (10:00 – 12:00) | The composition of information Structure and sequence, being critical, organizing a paragraph, cohesion and coherence, topic and support sentences, summarising, paraphrasing, direct quotation, academic writing vocabulary: linking words, spelling, punctuation, grammar. Plagiarism What is plagiarism, causes of plagiarism, examples of what constitutes plagiarism, academic integrity, ethical considerations. |
| Wednesday, 26 August (10:00 – 12:00) | The importance of "own voice in writing" Useful hints in academic writing, introducing a new chapter, generalizations, summary sentences, concluding a chapter/paper, concluding statements. |
| Wednesday, 7 October (10:00 – 12:00) | Scientific style & referencing (definition of style, dimensions of style, referencing methods, referencing different types of sources, reference list) |
| Wednesday, 14 October (10:00 – 12:00) | The research product Language Editing – advice from an accredited Language Practitioner |
| Wednesday, 21 October (10:00 – 11:00) | Reflective session |

Critical Reading and Academic Writing Doctoral Programme

The Graduate School presents a series of Critical Reading and Academic Writing sessions particularly aimed at Doctoral students. The objective of these 2-hour sessions is to enable you to effectively improve your critical reading and academic writing skills. Practical sessions are included to support you in understanding and practically applying the theory. At the end of the programme a Language Practitioner will advise you on how to edit your writing.

If you would like to upgrade your critical reading and academic writing style, then this opportunity is just for you!

A maximum of 30 participants can be accommodated. If you enroll for the programme, then the attendance of all seven (7) sessions is compulsory. For more details and to register for the programme, please contact Ms Mary Mokhoa at Lmokhoa@cut.ac.za.

PROGRAMME

Registration deadline: 23 July 2020

Delivery Mode: Microsoft Teams

Facilitator: Dr Brenton Fredericks

| Date | Topic |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Friday, 31 July (10:00 – 12:00) | Introduction to Academic Writing What do we mean when we refer to academic writing, overview of a research, proposal (guidelines), active reading, planning: procrastination & writer's block, graduate attributes |
| Friday, 14 August (10:00 – 12:00) | Craft your Academic Writing Conceptualizing your research, being critical Coherency and sequencing Structuring an argument (words, phrases, counter argument, spelling), organizing a paragraph, topic sentence, supporting ideas, linking words, transitions |
| Friday, 21 August (10:00 – 12:00) | Writing your thesis: Thesis Essentials Words commonly confused, writing clear, grammatically correct sentences Paraphrasing: ideas on how to paraphrase, direct quotations, finding your voice Summarizing: extracting the important information, examples of summarizing, texts/arguments, punctuation, academic writing vocabulary, sample writing, assessing student writing-pitfalls |
| Friday, 28 August (10:00 – 12:00) | Writing your thesis: Ethical Considerations Plagiarism What is plagiarism, causes of plagiarism, examples of what constitutes, plagiarism, academic integrity, quality assurance |
| Friday, 9 October (10:00 – 12:00) | Writing your thesis: Academic writing-acquisition of the skills set for success and consolidation Generalizations, summary sentence, introducing a new chapter, concluding a chapter, concluding statements |
| Friday, 16 October (10:00 – 12:00) | Completing your thesis: Language Editing Advice from an accredited Language Practitioner |
| Friday, 21 October (11:00 – 12:00) | Reflective Session |

Are you a postgraduate supervisor interested in postgraduate attributes, publication, new modes and models of postgraduate supervision?



Then diarise Wednesdays 14:00 to 15:00 on:

- **22 July 2020**
- **29 July 2020**
- **5 August 2020**



37% increase in research outputs

The Central University of Technology (CUT) was awarded **170.2 credit units** (journal articles, published conference proceedings and books/chapters in books). The 2018 outcome is an increase of 62.98 credit units compared to the 107.22 credit units awarded for 2017. This represents a 37% increase in credit units from 2017-2018.



Get ready for more upcoming workshops during August to October 2020

MORE INFO WILL FOLLOW SOON!!!

- **Public Speaking and Presentation Skills Seminar**
- **Virtual Three Minute-Thesis (3MT) Competition**

We aim to improve communication between the Graduate School, researchers, supervisors and postgraduate students to keep you informed about activities and opportunities offered by the Graduate School.



CUT GRADUATE SCHOOL

Tel: +27 51 507 4320 | **E-mail:** enel@cut.ac.za
Central University of Technology, Free State (CUT)
Private Bag X20539, Bloemfontein, 9300, South Africa
www.cut.ac.za