



Supervising Master's Theses & Research Projects

A Strategic Guide to Roles, Responsibilities, and Procedures (2026 Regulations)

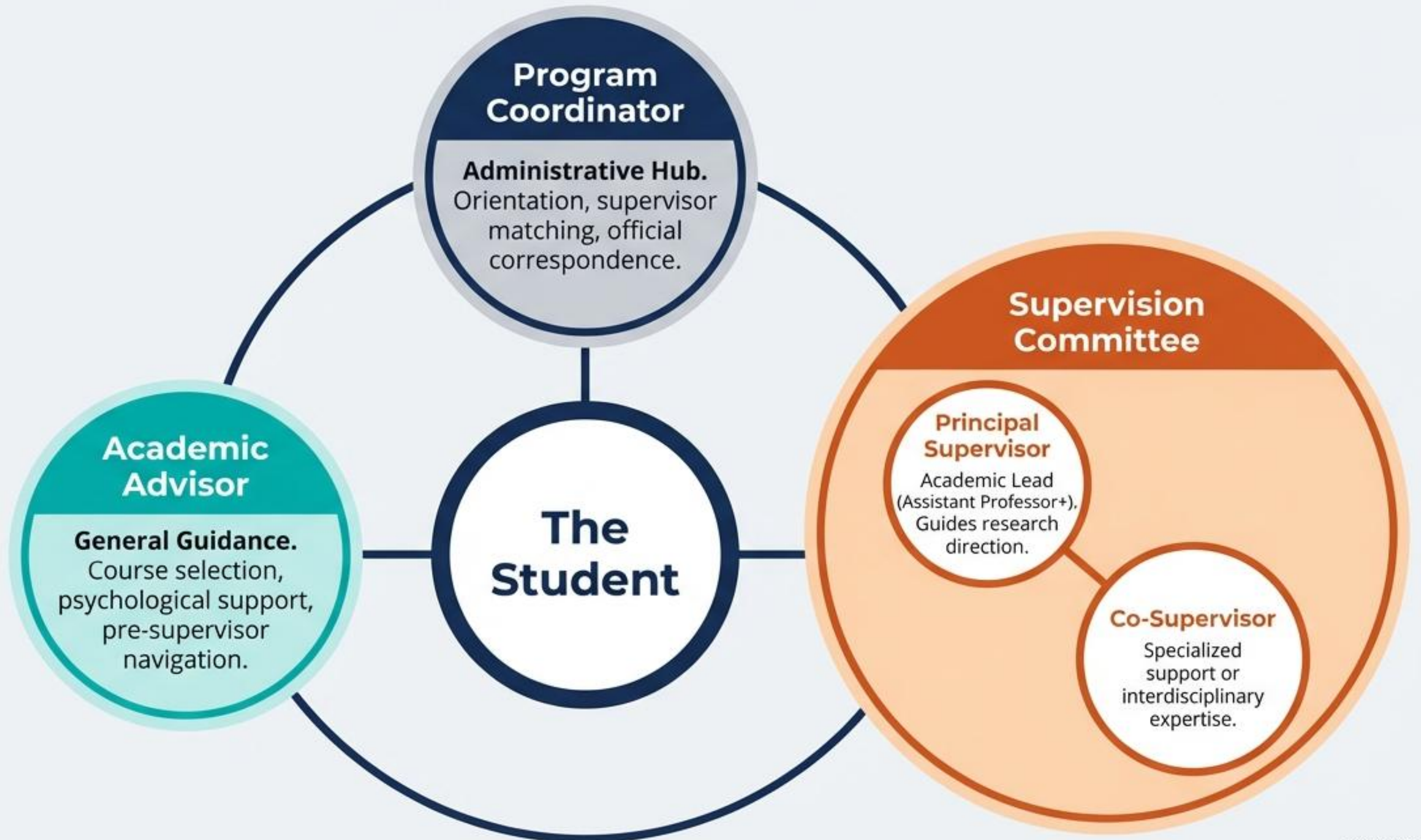
The Supervisor's Mandate

This guide standardizes the supervision journey, ensuring compliance with the 2026 Bylaws for both Theses and Research Projects.



Note: While this guide references the Comprehensive Exam (Section 12.0), this workshop focuses primarily on the Research Track (Thesis/Project).

Your Support Ecosystem



Duties of Key Roles



Programme Coordinator

- Oversees program administration & curriculum
- Manages student admissions & course scheduling
- Acts as first point of contact for program-level issues
- Ensures compliance with university regulations



Academic Advisor

- Guides student course selection & academic progress
- Discusses career goals & development
- Refers students to appropriate support services
- Monitors overall student well-being



Supervisor

- Guides research, thesis, or project development
- Provides regular, constructive feedback
- Ensures ethical compliance & methodology rigor
- Prepares student for final defense/presentation

Phase 1: Forming the Supervision Committee



Principal Supervisor

- Must be Faculty Member (Asst. Professor or higher)
- Must specialize in the research field (Articles 70 & 71)
- Workload Cap: Max 4 students
- Credit: 2 hours per student



Co-Supervisor

- Can be External or Interdisciplinary (Article 72)
- Workload Cap: Max 8 students
- Credit: 1 hour per student



Compliance Alert: Supervisors must have no family relation to the student up to the 4th degree and no conflict of interest.

Core Responsibilities: The Supervisor's Contract



ACTIVE DUTIES (Section 2.3.3)

- **Define Timeline:** Set a clear schedule (in weeks) for completion.
- **Resource Guidance:** Direct students to primary sources and essential references.
- **Feedback Loop:** Read drafts and provide constructive feedback promptly.
- **Availability:** Maintain regular office hours for supervision.



BOUNDARIES

- Do NOT assign work outside the thesis scope.
- Do NOT intervene in personal or private matters.
- Do NOT delay the student's progress unreasonably.

Phase 2: Registration & The Proposal



Complete coursework.
Min CGPA 3.0
(or 2.7 with conditions).

Submit research proposal (Appendix 5). Includes objectives, lit review, & methodology.

Mandatory presentation to Department. Outcome: Approval, Rejection, or Modification.

Official registration for Thesis/Project credits.



Key Requirement

Ethics Committee Approval required immediately if research involves human or animal subjects (Section 3.0).

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Monitoring Progress & Semester Reports



The Requirement

- Supervisor submits a Progress Report (Appendix 1/7) at the end of EVERY semester.
- Grading: Student receives 'Satisfactory' (Pass) or 'Unsatisfactory' (Fail).

The 'Red Flag' Protocol

- If a student receives 'Unsatisfactory', the report is escalated to the Department Committee.
- Consequence: Weak performance triggers Article 75 (Review by Sub-Committee).

Documentation is your primary tool for managing underperformance.

The Supervision Contract

Supervisor Duties

- Guide research methodology
- Ensure regular meetings
- Submit progress reports
- Assess readiness for defense
- Max load: (4 students for Principal supervisor & 8 for co-supervisor)

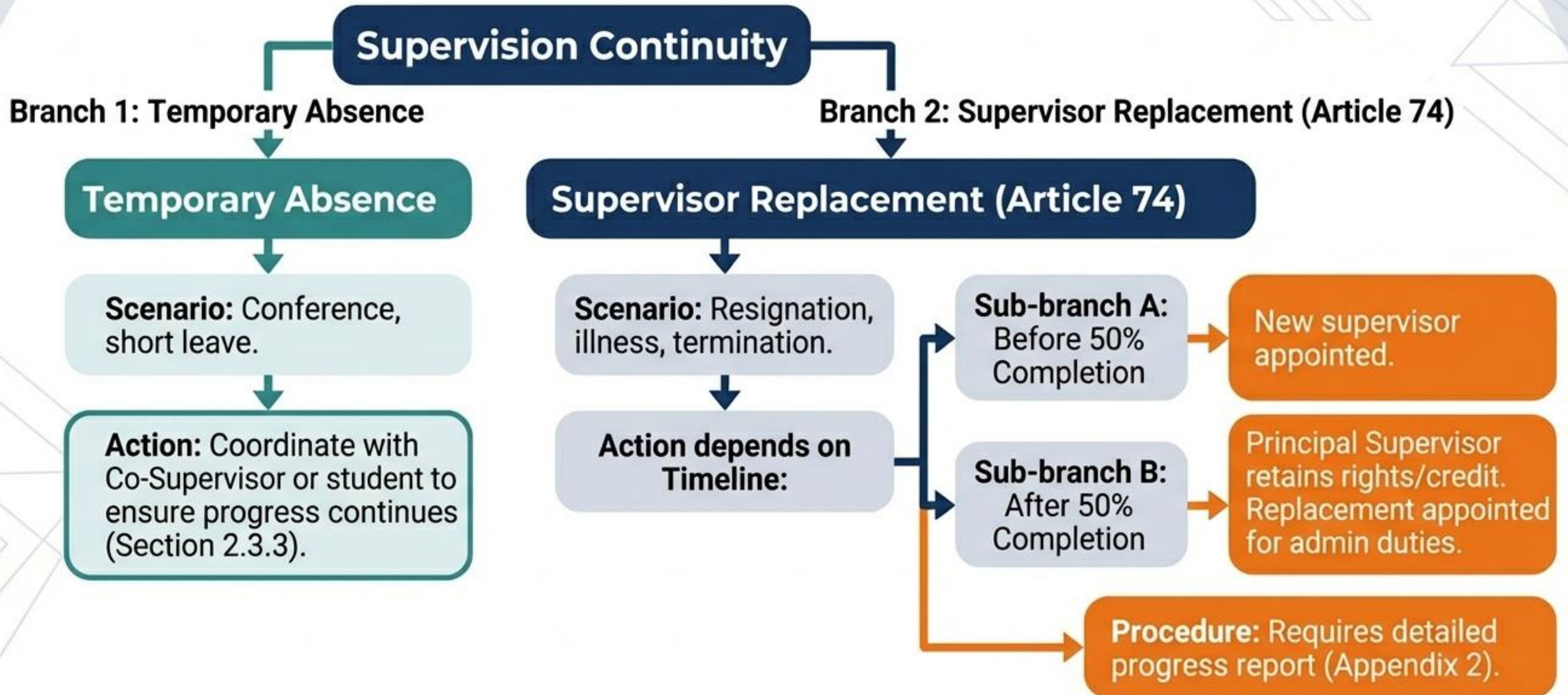


Student Duties

- Adhere to approved plan
- Maintain regular attendance
- Own the intellectual content
- Submit work on time.

Conflict Resolution: If the relationship breaks down, the Program Coordinator or Department Head intervenes. Supervisors can be changed via the 'Change of Supervisor' form.

Continuity of Supervision (Absence & Changes)





Phase 3: The Research Seminars

Seminar 1 (The Proposal)

- **Timing:** Before Registration
- **Focus:** Methodology, Objectives, Plan



Research & Supervision Phase

Seminar 2 (The Findings)



- **Timing:** After completion, BEFORE final defense
- **Focus:** Results, Analysis, Conclusions
- **Purpose:** A 'dry run' for Department feedback before External Jury.

Managing Change: Titles vs. Topics



Scenario 1: Title Change (Appendix 8)

- **Condition:** Minor adjustment; core research remains the same.
- **Process:** Approved by Department and Sub-Committee.
- **Result:** New title becomes final.



Scenario 2: Topic Change

- **Condition:** Major obstacles (e.g., data inaccessible, failure).
- **Consequence:** May require restarting the registration clock.
- **Restriction:** Total duration must not exceed University maximum study period (Section 8.0).

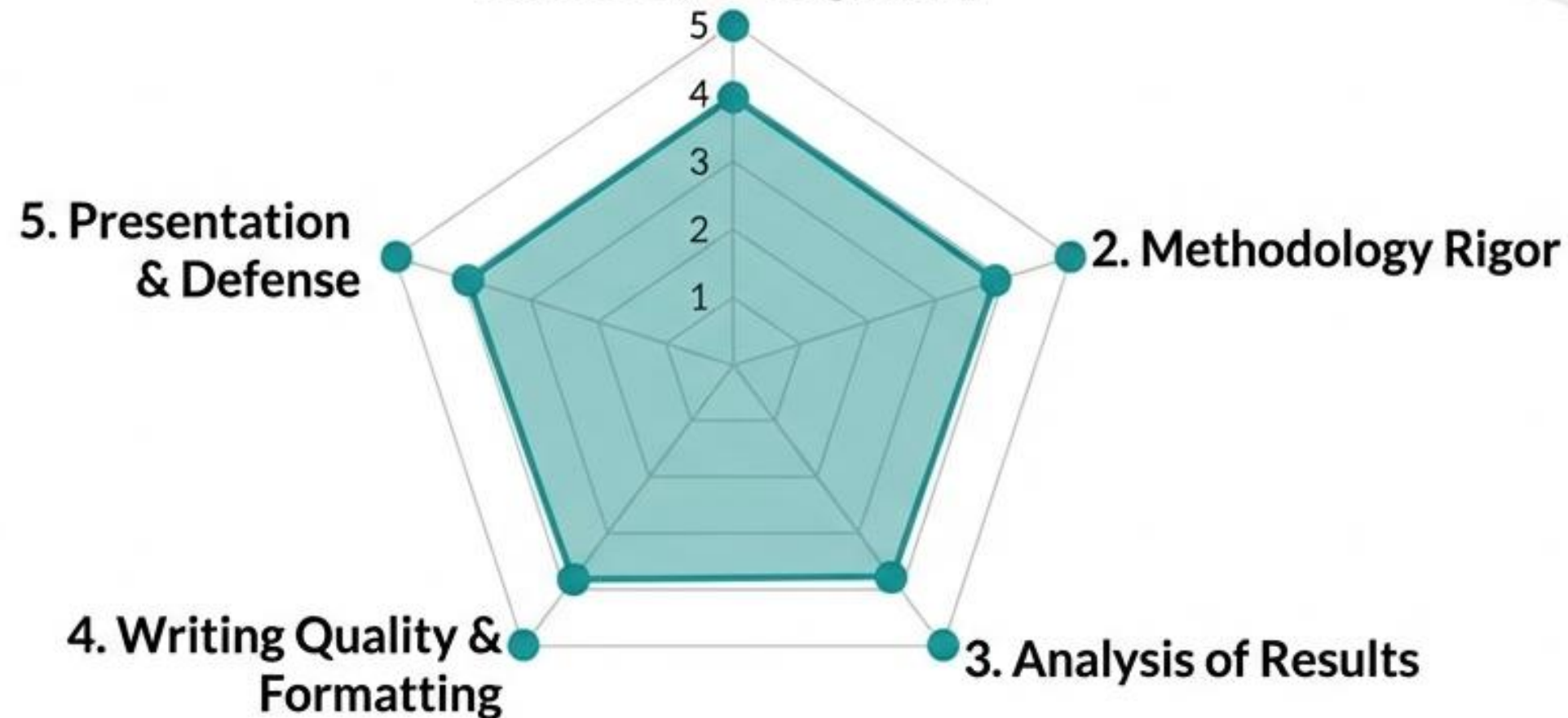
Phase 4: Submission & Evaluation Criteria



Supervisor signs
"Readiness for
Defense" Form
(Appendix 3)

The Rubric (Section 10.1)

1. Novelty & Originality



Ensure the thesis meets UTAS standards for academic integrity and formatting before submission.

Forming the Defense Committee (The Jury)



Chairperson

Head of Committee



Principal Supervisor

Member



Internal Examiner

From another college
or branch within UTAS



External Examiner

Must be from **OUTSIDE**
the University

Independence Rules

- Minimum 4 members (Article 78).
- No relatives up to the 4th degree.
- No conflict of interest.

The Defense Process (Viva Voce)

Review Period

- Thesis sent to Committee 30 days prior (Article 79).



The Defense Event

1. Presentation by Student
2. Q&A / Defense
3. Private Deliberation by Jury



The Decision

- Majority vote rule (Chair breaks ties).
- Attendance is mandatory. Absence without excuse = Fail.

Outcomes & Grading (Article 81)

1. Pass

Degree awarded immediately.

2. Pass with Minor Corrections

Time: 30 to 90 days.

Verification: Supervisor checks corrections.

3. Major Corrections (Re-Defense)

Time: Up to 180 days.

Action: Requires a NEW defense session.

4. Fail

Thesis rejected. Student dismissed and awarded Diploma.

Academic Integrity & Ethics



Non-Negotiables

- » **Plagiarism Policy:** Strict adherence to citation rules. Detection leads to failure/dismissal (Section 15.0).
- » **Intellectual Property (IP):** All IP follows University Policy (Article 17).
- » **Ethics Approval:** Must be obtained **BEFORE** data collection begins.

The Supervisor is the first line of defense against academic misconduct.

Summary: The Supervisor's Roadmap



Adhering to this path ensures student success and institutional compliance.

Supervising the Comprehensive Exam Track

Governance, Administration, and
Best Practices (2026 Guidelines)

Phase 1: Student Eligibility & Academic Advising

The Gatekeeper Checklist



24

Completed program coursework credits.

3.0

Minimum Cumulative GPA (CGPA) required.

2.7

Minimum grade allowed in any individual course.

The Advisor's Toolkit



Strategic Orientation:

Orient the student to higher-level testing expectations and specific exam formats.



Knowledge Integration:

Direct students toward specialized core references and advanced academic training.



Departmental Collaboration:

Partner with faculty to ensure comprehensive preparation across all domains.

Phase 2: Committee Governance & Exam Design



Phase 3: Administration, Contingencies, & Integrity



Logistics & Registration

- Exam is held once per semester.
- Student formally submits Form 13 to the Department Head.
- Specific Date, Time, and Location set within the initial 6-week window.



Contingencies & Absences

- Unexcused Absence: Automatic Failure.
- Excused Absence: If submitted within 1 week, recorded as Incomplete (IC) with makeup exam.
- Medical Emergency: If occurring during exam, a rescheduled date is granted.



Academic Integrity

- First Offense: Grade of 'F' (Fail) plus a strict registration ban for the following semester.
- Third Offense: Permanent expulsion from the University.

Phase 4: Evaluation, Outcomes & Appeals

1. Evaluation & Credit Mapping

- Equivalent to 6 Credit Hours.
- Clears student for graduation within a max 6-month window.

2. Failure Pathways

- Retake allowed once in the following semester.
- Failing twice results in a Postgraduate Diploma (Master's track withdrawal).

3. The Appeals Process

- Timeline: 2 weeks to request review (Form 16).
- Governance: VP forms high-level committee (Deans, field experts, Legal).
- Resolution: Decided by week 1 of next semester. System updated in 3 days.

**For specific procedural inquiries or administrative support, contact
the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies:**

postgraduate.studies@utas.edu.au