PROGRAMME REGULATIONS

Programme Regulations are the legally binding contractual obligations of staff and enrolled students. They are used by academic staff to guide delivery of the programme and its courses; and provide guidance on the relevant approaches to learning and teaching, and on assessment (against specified learning outcomes).

Doctor of Computing [DCOMP]

These Regulations are to be read in conjunction with Te Kawa Maiorooro | Educational Regulatory Framework and associated Policies and Procedures.

These programme regulations apply to the Doctor of Computing [DCOMP] programme, which leads to the award of the Doctor of Computing qualification (Level 10, 360 credits), [CA2311-1].

These regulations come into effect from Semester 1, 2025.

Admission Requirements

To be admitted to the Doctor of Computing all applicants must meet the following:

General admission requirements

Applicants must have at least three years appropriate professional experience relevant to the discipline in which the doctorate is to be undertaken, and have:

- Qualified for, or been awarded, a master's degree in the same or similar discipline with not less than upper second-class honours, or equivalent;

OR

- Been awarded an honours degree of four years duration in the same or similar discipline with at least an A- average, and which includes a research project;

OR

- Been awarded a postgraduate diploma in the same or similar discipline and be able to demonstrate, through substantial industry reports or other research publications, analytical and critical thinking skills and data interpretation.

English Language Admission Requirements

All applicants must provide evidence that they have the necessary English language proficiency required for Doctoral study at level 10.

- Domestic applicants must provide evidence that their achievement in any of the General Admission criteria noted above was undertaken in a programme that was taught primarily in English.
- International applicants must provide evidence that they have the necessary English language proficiency required for the Programme as demonstrated by an overall IELTS Academic score of 6.5 with no band score lower than 6 (from a single test report taken within the last two years), or an equivalent described in NZQA Rules and on the Unitec English Language Requirements for International Students Web-page.

Selection Criteria & Process

When the number of eligible applicants for admission exceeds the number of places available, the following selection criteria will be applied.

a. The relevance, nature and level of the applicants' professional computing experience;
b. Demonstrated excellence in tertiary study at level 8 and/or 9;

c. Research experience and publication in computing disciplines.

These criteria are not ranked in any order. Applicants who meet the greatest number of criteria will be the preferred candidates.

Selection will be made by qualified Unitec staff members with the delegated authority to offer places to applicants and to grant candidature. Applicants will be selected on the basis of written information supplied on the enrolment form. At the discretion of the staff members, an interview (face-to-face or electronic) may be required.

Recognising Prior Knowledge and Skills

Recognition of Prior Knowledge and Skills (RPKS) is available for taught courses only according to provisions described in Te Kawa Maiorooro | Educational Regulatory Framework.

No previously assessed work or prior learning shall be applied to the Thesis.

a. A student may be awarded credits or exemptions for taught courses in recognition of successful equivalent study, at the same or a higher level in the context of another programme.
b. Credits will not be awarded for successful study that took place more than 5 years prior to the date of first enrolment in the programme.
c. Assessment of Prior Learning (APL) is available for all courses in this programme with the exception of the thesis. APL decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis under the Unitec Assessment of Prior Learning Procedure.

Award Requirements

To be awarded the Doctor of Computing, a candidate must successfully complete a minimum of 360 credits from the courses set out in Table 1. The award shall be made without classification.

Table 1: Course Details

Course code	Course title	Credits	Pre-requisites
ISCG1001	Critical Issues in Professional Practice	60	
ISCG1002	Research Development	30	
ISCG1003	Advanced Scholarly Inquiry	30	
ISCG1004	Thesis	240	ISCG1001 ISCG1002 ISCG1003
	TOTAL CREDITS	**360**	

A candidate shall obtain approval from the relevant Academic Authority for the selection of courses to be undertaken in any 12-month period.

Registration Periods

The maximum period of registration for the Doctor of Computing will normally be 72 months from the date of commencement of study.

1. Candidates in the Doctor of Computing shall pursue their coursework and research as follows:

- Full-time for 36 months (three calendar years) in the first instance if enrolled on a full-time basis, or

- Part-time for 72 months (maximum of six calendar years) in the first instance if enrolled on a part-time basis.

  A revised registration period shall be determined for each candidate who changes their status between full-time and part-time during the enrolment period. This will be pro-rata based on the registration period already completed.

2. Where a candidate may be prevented by ill health, or other exceptional circumstances, from completing the degree requirements within the registration period set out in point 1 above, the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee may approve a suspension of enrolment for up to a maximum of 12 months.

3. Except as allowed for in point 2 above, a candidate must maintain his or her enrolment in each semester until the completion of study.

4. A candidate who fails to enrol within 6 calendar weeks of the commencement of each semester will be deemed to have terminated his or her studies unless the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee determines otherwise.

Assessment and Granting of Credits

Coursework

The due dates for all summative assessment work in course work shall be notified in course information.

No late work will be accepted for marking unless special circumstances apply.

A candidate who has failed a course shall not be permitted to re-enrol for that course except with the permission of the relevant Academic Authority.

Course grades

Assessments for course work (ISCG1001, ISCG1002, and ISCG1003) are achievement-based using an 11-point grading scale. Final grades are calculated by the mathematical aggregation of weighted summative assessment grades. No restricted passes shall be awarded.

Thesis assessment (ISCG1004) employs a pass/fail grading scale.

Enrolment in Thesis

Progression to Thesis

Except with the permission of the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee, a candidate must achieve the following in order to proceed to the thesis component of the degree:

- at least a pass in ISCG1001 (Critical Issues in Professional Practice), and
- at least a B- in ISCG1002 (Research Development), and
- at least a B- in ISCG1003 (Advanced Scholarly Inquiry), and
- the successful registration of the research proposal within 15 months of first enrolment for a full-time student and within 30 months of first enrolment for a part time student.

Residency

Candidates for the thesis are normally expected to complete the advanced study and research for the thesis at Unitec.

Where a candidate intends to be absent from Unitec in pursuit of his or her research, the Academic Programme Manager will submit suitable plans for the supervision of the candidate

during his or her absence to the Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee for its approval.

Supervision of student work

Prior to commencement of the thesis, the Director, Research and Enterprise shall appoint supervisors for each candidate according to the process outlined in AC4.2.1 Supervision and Advisement of Student Research Guidelines

A candidate undertaking a thesis shall have a minimum of two supervisors, as follows:

    a.   At least one supervisor shall have experience of supervising candidates to the successful completion of a doctoral degree;

    b.   One supervisor shall be the principal supervisor with responsibility to supervise the candidate on a regular and frequent basis;

    c.   The principal supervisor shall be registered on the Unitec Register of Supervisors.

If a supervisor is absent for an extended period an appropriately qualified replacement supervisor shall be appointed following approval by the Director, Research and Enterprise.

In the case of candidates whose work is not proceeding satisfactorily due to an ineffective working relationship with their supervisor(s), the Director, Research and Enterprise may, where necessary, arrange for a suitably qualified replacement supervisor to be appointed.

Progression through the Programme

Progress Reports

Written progress reports shall be submitted at six monthly intervals from the beginning of candidature. Following review of the progress reports, the supervisor will request the Director, Research and Enterprise to continue the candidature, vary the conditions of candidature, or consider the termination of the candidature.

Where the candidate has undertaken part of his/her study external to Unitec, the candidate shall be required to provide the Principal Supervisor with a report of the work completed, within two months of returning to Unitec.

At least annually during the period of candidature, the candidate shall give an interim presentation of findings to peer groups and other researchers. Formative feedback shall be provided to the candidate.

Suspension

Enrolment for the Doctor of Computing will normally be continuous. The Director, Research and Enterprise may, on the receipt of an application from a candidate, approve a suspension of enrolment for up to a maximum of 12 months. In such cases the period of suspension will not count towards the registration period of the degree.

Termination

The candidature may be terminated if the Director, Research and Enterprise considers the supervisor's report indicates that a candidate's progress is unsatisfactory, but not before the candidate is invited to show cause, by a date communicated in writing, why candidature should not be terminated.

A candidate whose candidature has been terminated under the above may apply to be re-enrolled as a candidate, and the Director, Research and Enterprise may approve such re-enrolment on such conditions as considered appropriate.

Thesis Examination Regulations

Submission of thesis

Subject to fulfilment of the requirements of these regulations, the candidate may apply at any time to the Director, Research and Enterprise to have his/her thesis examined.

The thesis shall represent the work of the student and may consist of either published or unpublished work, or a combination of both. The candidate shall indicate in the thesis, or as an appendix, any part that s/he has published or presented prior to submission of the thesis, together with reference to the source of publication or presentation. This shall be accompanied by a statement signed by the candidate identifying the candidate's own contribution, where work is done jointly.

The candidate shall, with the approval of the principal supervisor, submit copies of the thesis embodying the results of the research according to the requirements of the *Presentation and Publication of Student Research Guidelines*. This shall be accompanied by statements from both the principal supervisor, certifying that the work described in the thesis was carried out under his or her immediate supervision, and the candidate, certifying that the thesis is his or her independent work.

Where a candidate undertakes a thesis for which the principal outcome is the preparation of a scholarly edition of text or texts, or original artefacts, the completed submission shall include:

a. a copy of the edited text(s) or collection of artefacts, and appropriate textual and explanatory annotations; and

b. a substantial critical commentary which sets the text(s) or collection of artefacts in the relevant historical, theoretical or critical context.

Examination Process

On receipt of the thesis the Director, Research and Enterprise shall appoint a senior Unitec academic staff member as the Convenor of the thesis examination process.

The Director, Research and Enterprise shall appoint examiners on the recommendations of the Programme Academic Quality Committee.

a. A thesis shall be assessed by a minimum of three examiners of international standing in the relevant field or discipline, a majority of whom will be external to Unitec, and at least one of whom will be from a university or similar institution outside New Zealand.

b. Except in exceptional circumstances a supervisor shall not be an examiner. If the supervisor is an examiner a fourth examiner will be appointed.

c. An external examiner for a thesis shall be appointed on the basis of postgraduate qualifications, experience in research or independent scholarship and practice in the general area of the candidate's study and, where practicable, have experience as a specialist in the area to be examined.

d. At least one examiner for a thesis shall have substantial experience of examining postgraduate degree candidates.

e. Each examiner for a thesis shall read and examine the submitted work and present an independent and confidential report to the Director, Research and Enterprise. In completing the report, each examiner shall consider whether the work satisfies the requirements of the degree and shall make an appropriate recommendation in accordance with guidelines to examiners.

f. In circumstances where the research undertaken for a thesis has commercial sensitivity, the candidate and the principal supervisor may, on application, be permitted by the Director, Research and Enterprise to treat all or part of the thesis as a confidential

document for such a period as deemed appropriate. In such cases, access to the confidential material shall be restricted to the supervisors, candidates and examiners, and the intellectual property policy of Unitec shall be followed.

Assessment of Thesis

An oral examination on the thesis will be held only if deemed necessary by the examination Convenor and at their discretion. The oral examination shall be arranged by the Convenor and shall be conducted by a minimum of two of the thesis examiners, at least one of whom is external to Unitec and who has the responsibility of posing the questions from the overseas examiner.

The examiners may recommend that the thesis be:

    a.   accepted and the degree awarded;
    b.   accepted and the degree awarded after minor amendments have been made to the satisfaction of the convenor of the examination;
    c.   rejected in its current form but be revised and resubmitted;
    d.   rejected with no right of resubmission.

In the event of serious disagreement in the recommendations among the examiners, which is not resolved by an oral examination, the Director, Research and Enterprise may:

    a.   appoint one or two further examiners to report on the area of contention; or
    b.   invite Academic Committee to arrive at a decision after consulting an independent referee external to Unitec.

The Director, Research and Enterprise shall decide one of the following:

    a.   accepted and the degree awarded; or
    b.   accepted and the degree awarded after minor amendments have been made to the satisfaction of the convenor of the examination; or
    c.   rejected in its current form but may be revised and resubmitted; or
    d.   rejected with no right of resubmission.

Resubmissions/Revisions

When a candidate is required to revise the thesis for resubmission, the following provisions shall apply:

    a.   The Director, Research and Enterprise shall determine the date by which the thesis is to be resubmitted.
    b.   Upon resubmission the revised thesis shall be examined as a whole by the examiners appointed for the initial assessment. If one of the original examiners is not available, the Director, Research and Enterprise may appoint an alternative examiner.
    c.   In their reports on the revised thesis, the examiners are to recommend whether or not another oral examination is to be held.

Except in exceptional circumstances, a candidate may not:

    a.   resubmit a thesis more than once; or
    b.   resubmit a thesis which has been failed.

Appeals Against Decisions for Thesis

Candidates may appeal against a decision of the Director, Research and Enterprise in accordance with provisions described in Te Kawa Maiorooro | Educational Regulatory Framework.

Definition of Terms

In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions shall apply:

a. 'Candidate' means a person whose application has been approved and is enrolled in the appropriate course. Such a person is granted candidature.

b. 'Convenor' means a person appointed by the Director, Research and Enterprise to convene the oral examination of a doctoral candidate. The convenor will be a senior academic from a School other than that in which the candidate is completing studies and will have no relationship with the candidate.

c. 'External Examiner' means a person external to Unitec appointed to assess student work.

d. 'Full-time' refers to someone who is not in paid employment for 45 weeks or more of any year while engaged on study and research for the degree. With the approval of the Principal Supervisor a full-time candidate may engage in paid employment for up to 400 hours during any calendar year.

e. 'Part-time' refers to someone who, because of employment, health or family or other reasons, is unable to devote his or her full time to study and research.

f. 'Relevant academic authority' refers to an individual or role holder, or in some cases a committee, who have been delegated the authority to make a decision within a specific circumstance. A schedule of the various relevant academic authority delegations is maintained by the Programme Academic Quality Committee responsible for the Programme.

g. 'Supervisor' means an academic staff member who fulfils the role of adviser, mentor and motivator, thereby guiding the academic progress of the candidate to reach his or her research potential.

h. 'Thesis' means a record of sustained independent research in which the candidate's own work forms, as a point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry of an appropriate topic. It is 240 credits at Level 10.