Schedule 1: University Policy on Courses: Research Thesis

1 Advice to professional doctorate thesis examiners and assessment criteria

1.1 Information about the professional doctorate
   a) Professional doctorates offered by The University of Western Australia differ from the PhD course in a number of ways:
      i. The degree program consists of both coursework (33.3%) and thesis (66.6%). Students must pass both components.
      ii. The doctorate is concerned primarily with professional practice and applications to that practice.
      iii. Students undertaking the doctorate are practitioners with at least two years of professional experience. They normally undertake doctoral studies on a part-time basis.
      iv. While professional doctorates may test theory, extend existing theory or develop new theory, the primary emphasis is on deducing implications of theory for policy and practice. Thus, while students must demonstrate an understanding of theories relevant to the thesis, it is not necessary for the thesis to be concerned with developing theory.

2. Examination Criteria

2.1 In order for students to pass the research component the thesis must:
   a) make a sound, rigorous and original contribution to research;
   b) demonstrate the student’s comprehensive understanding of the relevant literature;
   c) demonstrate the student’s ability to use appropriate methodologies and techniques;
   d) demonstrate the student’s ability to communicate the research and findings in a professional manner;
   e) question, analyse, critique and develop the profession and its practices.

3. Thesis Classification Categories

3.1 The following may assist in classification of the thesis:
   a) Passed with no requirement for correction or amendment.

   The student needs make no amendment to the thesis, but may be given the opportunity by the Governing Board to correct small typographical or grammatical errors noted by the examiners.

   b) Passed subject to minor revision

   Minor revisions usually involving minor corrections to the argument or small alterations to the text, such as correction of typographical or grammatical and/or formatting errors. They may also include improving and/or correcting referencing. Minor corrections may take only a few weeks to complete. The thesis is not re-examined.

   c) Passed Subject to Revision

Source: Academic Council Resolution - R152/11 3 August 2011 – Board of the Graduate Research School
Revisions involve more extensive corrections than the above category, do not require a candidate to re-enrol and complete further experimental work, or carry out more research. Examples of major revisions may include re-organisation of chapters, major re-editing of chapters and further explanation of results or conclusions. Major revisions may take three to six months to complete. The thesis is not re-examined.

d) Resubmit

A thesis which must be resubmitted requires alterations of such scale, complexity and/or conceptual significance that their adequacy should be reappraised again by an external examination. Thus, the thesis is sent for re-examination. In most cases, the thesis is sent only to the examiner/s who recommended the resubmit classification. In cases where the classification is a ‘re-submit’, we ask examiners to indicate their willingness to re-examine the thesis. Re-submission requires candidates to re-enrol and complete another 6-12 months’ work.

e) Fail

A recommendation for a classification of FAILED should be made if, in the view of the examiner, the thesis is so fundamentally flawed that no amount of correction could rectify the deficiencies.