

## **Ethics and Confidentiality of Participation in the Faculty of Humanities Higher Degrees Committee**

The HDC is a forum that requires diversity and freedom. HDC members need to be free to engage critically with the research proposals submitted for review, voicing a range of diverse views. It is for this reason that we have a diverse multidisciplinary committee. Experience has taught that different members of the HDC have different views on proposals – one proposal may elicit positive responses from one member and critical responses from another. This intersection of diverse views, freely expressed, strengthens our decision-making. There are also times when the collective (or the Chair) may regulate the views of members. For example, a member may raise a view on a proposal, which is subsequently rejected or modified by the committee, or through discussion the original member may change his/her view on the matter. There must be freedom within the committee to have these conversations.

In addition, the commitment of members of the HDC is within the meeting. Just because one member raises particular concerns about a proposal, which are endorsed by the committee, does not mean that member must be available for consultation to the student or supervisor, nor to defend her/his views. The responsibility for this lies primarily with the departmental representative, passing on information from the HDC to the supervisor. And in the case of queries, these should be directed to the Chair of the HDC, who will exercise discretion in consulting with the individual members of the committee who have specific insights into the proposal.

### **To enable these principles, members of the HDC (including ad hoc members who attend just a single meeting) are required to agree to the following practices:**

1. Only views that are agreed by the HDC are to be reported to supervisors. Views that are raised but discarded should not be reported, unless there is good reason to do so, as in the case of 'helpful suggestions' by the HDC.
2. The names of individual members who raised certain points should not be disclosed to members outside the HDC. The decisions of the HDC are decisions of the HDC as a collective, not of individual members.
3. In situations where supervisors or others wish to query the HDC's feedback, departmental representatives are responsible to explain the HDC's decisions. When the representative needs assistance, the Chair of the HDC should be consulted by the representative.

I, (staff number and name) \_\_\_\_\_  
hereby agree to the above practices.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date