

Procedure for the Assessment of PhD Research Proposals at TST

PhD researchers cannot start their research at TST until their research proposal is approved by the TST Research Team. The Research Team consists of the Vice-Dean for Research and the research coordinators of the Departments, supplemented by the Heads of Department if necessary.

For the evaluation of proposals The following procedure is followed:

1. A research proposal is prepared according to the prescribed format, which can be found on the [website of the Graduate School for Theology](#). The format is in English, but the format may also be completed in Dutch when a Dutch-language thesis is intended.
2. A research proposal is submitted no later than two weeks prior to the Research Team meeting. A proposal will only be considered if it is fully completed.
3. The Research Team assesses the proposal based on its quality and feasibility and suitability of the candidate. This includes checking whether ERB (Ethics Review Board) approval is required for the proposed research.
4. If necessary, the Research Team may decide to have the content of the proposal reviewed by one or more reviewers. These reviewers provide their review according to a format.
5. If fewer than two members of the Research Team are not involved as intended supervisors, advice is sought from a staff member holding a PhD (or several staff members) outside the Research Team, so that, in all cases, in addition to the Vice-Dean for Research, at least two persons not involved in the supervision evaluate the research proposal or provide advice.
6. The Research Team assigns one of the following assessments to a proposal:
 - a. Approved; no adjustments needed;
 - b. Minor modifications needed; the Vice-Dean for Research can approve an adjusted version;
 - c. Major modifications needed; an adjusted version has yet to be approved by the Research Team;
 - d. Negative advice; it is expected that, even after adjustments, the proposal cannot be approved.

7. The assessment and any advice issued are shared with the intended supervisors after the discussion.
8. If a proposal receives assessment C, an adjusted version may be resubmitted for assessment. This adjusted version must show the adjustments with track changes, or a separate document listing the changes must be attached.
9. Upon approval, the PhD researcher receives further instructions from the Graduate School for the formal appointment of supervisors through Hora Finita.
10. This procedure is published on the website of the Graduate School.

This procedure was adopted by the TST School Board on June 14, 2023.