

TAI PhD Program Code of Practice

Policy	PhD Program Code of Practice
Version	1.1
Date Approved	11/06/2025
Approval Body	TAI Academic Board TAI Research Board
Date Reviewed	
Applicable Programs	TAI PhD Program

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
1. Introduction.....	4
2. Program Overview	4
2.1 PhD Proposal Mentorship Program	4
2.2 Supervisor Selection.....	4
2.3 Dissertation.....	5
2.4 Oral Examination.....	5
3. Admissions.....	5
3.1 Research Candidacy	6
3.2. UTC Admissions.....	7
4. Enrollment	8
4.1 Program Status	8
4.2 Program Duration	8
4.3 Program Fees.....	8
4.3 Temporary Withdrawal.....	9
4.4. Change of Status	10
4. Study.....	10
4.1 Supervision.....	10
4.2 Dissertation Writing - Year 1	10
4.3 Differentiation.....	11
4.4 Dissertation Writing - Years 2-6.....	11
4.5 Dissertation Submission	11
4.6 Oral Examination.....	11
4.7 Master in Philosophy Exit Award	12
4.8 Doctorate in Philosophy Degree Award.....	13
5. Dissertation	14
5.1 Original Contribution to Scholarship	14
5.2 Length and Format	15
6. Research Board.....	16
6.1 Board Responsibilities	16
6.2 Board Members.....	17
6.3 Board Committees	17

7. TAI Research Fellowship	17
7.1 Student Membership	17
7.2 Resources and Events	17
7.3 Presentations and Publications	18
8. Formal Concerns.....	18
8.1 TAI Formal Concerns	18
8.2 UTC Complaints Procedure.....	18
9. Student Voice	18
9.1 Annual Program Review	18
9.2 UTC Student Voice	18

1. Introduction

The Alexandrian Institute (TAI) PhD Program is a 3-6 year non-residential doctoral program designed to teach rigorous research and writing skills at the most advanced level. The program is offered in partnership with Union Theological College, Belfast (UTC), who makes the degree award and determines all relevant policies and procedures for the program through the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice. The TAI PhD Program Code of Practice details the policies and procedures for the delivery of the program through TAI supervision and student participation in the TAI Research Fellowship in alignment with the requirements of the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice. Students and supervisors should be aware of all details of the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice when consulting the policies and procedures of the TAI PhD Program.

2. Program Overview

2.1 PhD Proposal Mentorship Program

The PhD Program requires a suitable research proposal for consideration of eligibility for admission by UTC and TAI. Students often struggle with narrowing their research focus and applying rigorous methodology to the scope of their proposed project at this stage in their development. Therefore, TAI requires mentorship and the development of research methods in a research community to support the student's production of a suitable research proposal.

The PhD Proposal Mentorship Program consists of monthly online seminars, mentorship in proposal development through a personal tutor who has specialization in the student's area of study, and experience conducting research in community with other scholars.

The program admits students at the start of each Spring and Autumn semester and is 4-6 months in duration. TAI will not consider students for admission to the TAI PhD Program through their partnership with UTC unless they successfully complete the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program or otherwise successfully demonstrate the outcomes of the program as determined by the TAI Research Board.

Upon completion of the program, students may submit their research proposals to the TAI Research Board for admission to the TAI PhD Program, and if accepted, the TAI Research Board will make formal referral of the student's proposal to UTC for full admission to the degree.

2.2 Supervisor Selection

An important step in the PhD Program application process is establishing a relationship with a potential supervisor. Students may initiate contact with potential supervisors from the TAI Research Fellowship directly, or may apply to the program and be referred to a potential supervisor by the TAI Research Board given alignment of interests and specialization with a potential supervisor's area of research.

It is good practice to establish rapport with a potential supervisor early in the process to determine if the supervisor has sufficient expertise in the student's prospective area of research, if the supervisor is willing to take on the supervision of the project, and any initial feedback the prospective supervisor might offer on the proposed direction for research.

Provisional confirmation of a supervisor is made by the TAI Research Board at the Research Proposal approval stage, with final confirmation issued by the UTC Research Committee upon issuing an award letter of acceptance to a student to the PhD Program.

2.3 Dissertation

The British PhD consists only of supervised research in the form of a research project that is subject to written and oral examination by the experts in the field. There is no taught component to the British PhD degree. Therefore, students must demonstrate strong skills in independent research and sufficient core knowledge of the research area to produce a project which makes significant advances to scholarship through new knowledge supported with evidence.

The dissertation writing process takes place over 3-6 years, with regular supervision and evaluation of student's progress provided by the TAI and UTC faculty, including the student's assigned supervisor(s) and the Research Committees of each faculty. The dissertation is examined by a panel of scholars from the College faculty and external scholars as needed, in which students must give an oral defense of the project to demonstrate eligibility for the degree award of Doctorate of Philosophy.

The dissertation supervisor supports the student in the project, but it is up to the student to provide original insight to the chosen topic suitable for the standards of examination. The supervisor may attend the oral examination, but makes no evaluative contribution to the student's assessment by the examination committee.

2.4 Oral Examination

Upon submission of the dissertation and approval by the TAI Research Board to be referred for oral examination by the UTC faculty, a panel of examiners will be convened and a date set for the student's examination, typically within six months from submission.

Students will be examined by the UTC faculty and external examination panel members to assess the standard of work demonstrated by the student. The examination panel will issue independent and joint reports, and the decision to grant the degree or refer students for additional work or an exit award will be made by the UTC Research Committee.

3. Admissions

The admissions process for the TAI PhD Program is handled jointly between the TAI Research Board and the UTC faculty for PhD Program oversight. The TAI Research Board will make referral of research candidates it determines as meeting the TAI criteria for admission to the UTC Research Committee, who will then extend an offer letter to students it determines meet the College's admissions' criteria. The TAI Research Board or the UTC Research Committee may refer students to complete additional programs or requirements if they are judged to not be eligible for admission.

3.1 Research Candidacy

Students are admitted to the TAI PhD Program as Research Candidates upon their acceptance to the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program. Acceptance to the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program does not guarantee that students will be found to satisfy the admissions criteria for TAI PhD Program admission and referral to UTC for full admission. However, as the PhD Proposal is the most important element of the application process, students are admitted to the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program on a provisional basis in order to facilitate their development of a suitable PhD Program for acceptance to the program.

3.1.1 Admissions Criteria

Admission to the TAI PhD Program requires students undergo a Research Candidacy phase in the completion of the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program. To be admitted as a Research Candidate, students must meet the following criteria:

- Level 7 Postgraduate Degree in Biblical or Theological studies, or equivalent, with a classification of 2.1 or higher (equivalent to 3.5 GPA)*
- Demonstration of research and writing skills through a writing sample
- English Competency**
- Research Language Competency***
- Research Interest Form****

*Typically, students who have completed a vocational or ministerial degree (e.g. Master of Divinity) require an additional specialized study in a program which teaches specialized knowledge of the future research area and advanced research and writing skills. Examples of the programs students might be expected to complete to be sufficiently prepared for independent research in a British PhD program include a Master of Theology (MTh or ThM), Master of Arts (MA) with a high classification, Master of Philosophy (MPhil), or Master of Literature (MLitt).

**English language competency for the TAI PhD Program is evaluated in accordance with the standards set by UTC for postgraduate study. See the Programme Specification for the [MA Theology](#) or MTh Theological Ethics programmes for more details.

***Research language competency requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis according to the student's desired area of research. Students may be required to complete language training for research in Greek and Hebrew, Latin, German, French, Dutch, or other languages. Depending on the proposed topic for the dissertation, students may be admitted on the condition of demonstrating sufficient competency by the student's differentiation in the program (end of year 1) or by the submission of the dissertation. Other students seeking to conduct research in areas requiring advanced linguistic skills or translation competency may be required to demonstrate research language competency prior to admission to the program. Determinations are made by the TAI Research Board in consultation with the prospective supervisor.

****Students must submit a suitable research proposal to be considered eligible for admission to the PhD Program by the TAI Research Board and the UTC Research Committee. Entrance into the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program requires only that students identify their general area of research interest and prospective topics for their proposal. The successful completion of this program will equip students to develop a suitable Proposal in order to meet the UTC admissions criteria for the degree.

3.1.2 PhD Proposal Mentorship Program

Students begin the process of application to the TAI PhD Program by applying to the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program and are accepted as Research Candidates. Over the course of 4-6 months, students receive instruction in research methods and academic standards of the TAI PhD Program, as well as personal mentorship in the development of their particular PhD Proposal.

3.1.2.1 Proposal Development and Submission for Admission to the PhD Program

The PhD Proposal Mentorship Program is completed with the submission of a final research proposal to the Program Mentor. Students are guided through the development of the proposal from the starting point of their submitted research interest form by a personal mentor and participation in the online seminars that provide instruction in research methodology, the integrative vision for scholarship in the Alexandrian Institute, and the values and commitments of the community of research TAI seeks to form. Students receive 4 months of seminars and guided mentorship in the drafting of the research proposal, and may receive an additional 2 months of mentorship as needed.

3.1.2.2 Deadlines

Deadlines for submission of the application to the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program are:

- a. Spring – December 15 for a January start date each year*
- b. Autumn – August 15 for a September start date each year*

*See TAI Academic Calendar for semester start dates.

3.1.3 Research Proposal

The research proposal should outline the key research questions students intend to investigate and a warrant for their significance to the current scholarship and prospect for advancing knowledge. Students should articulate the planned methodology for the study, identify the key interlocutors, and suggest a tentative thesis to be argued. The proposal should be 1,500-2,000 words excluding a bibliography of 30+ sources. For more information on writing a proposal, see the [UTC Guide to Writing a Doctoral Research Proposal](#).

The proposal is to be reviewed and approved first by the prospective TAI Research Fellowship PhD Supervisor, and secondarily by the TAI Research Board. Approved proposals will be included in the referral packet of student application information supplied by the TAI Research Board to UTC for consideration of a prospective student for admission to the PhD Program.

3.2. UTC Admissions

3.2.1 TAI Referral of Research Candidates to UTC for Admission

Admission to the TAI PhD Program begins the process of formal referral of prospective TAI PhD students to UTC for final admission to the program. The TAI Research Board will evaluate each student and their proposal before deciding to make formal recommendation for their admission to the UTC Research Committee. Students who apply directly to UTC may be eligible for admission to the PhD program with UTC supervisors, but will be ineligible for supervision by TAI Research Fellows and inclusion in the TAI research community.

3.2.2 Deadlines

Deadlines for submission of the application and PhD Proposal for TAI Referral to UTC

- a. Spring – December 15 for a January start date each year*
- b. Autumn – August 15 for a September start date each year*

*See TAI Academic Calendar for semester start dates.

4. Enrollment

4.1 Program Status

Students transition between three phases of the PhD Program which determine their program status:

- a. Research Candidate – Students accepted for admission to the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program.
- b. Probationary Research Student – Students accepted for admission to the PhD Program in their first year of study.
- c. Differentiated Research Student – Students who have completed the differentiation process through the submission of a research plan and sample of work.

4.2 Program Duration

- a. Full-Time – students have up to 3 years upon acceptance to the PhD Program to submit the dissertation. Full-Time students are required to have paid for a minimum of 3 years of enrollment fees. Students who successfully complete the dissertation and pass the oral examination and have not paid a total of 3 years equivalent of enrollment fees will be required to pay the remaining balance prior to the conferral of the degree award.
- b. Part-Time – students have up to 6 years upon acceptance to the PhD Program to submit the dissertation. Part-Time students are required to have paid for a minimum of 6 years of enrollment fees. Students who successfully complete the dissertation and pass the oral examination and have not paid a total of 6 years equivalent of enrollment fees will be required to pay the remaining balance prior to the conferral of the degree award.

4.3 Program Fees

4.3.1 Fee Rates

PhD Proposal Mentorship Program fees are paid to the Alexandrian Institute. The fee rates for the 2025/2026 academic year are:

\$6,000

Students may apply 50% of the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program fee rate toward the first-year fees of the PhD Program upon acceptance to the program. TAI will provide the equivalent fees to UTC on the student's behalf.

PhD Program fees are paid to UTC according to the posted fee rates. The fee rates for the 2025/2026 academic year are:

- a. UK/Republic of Ireland Students
 - a. Full Time: £6,375
 - b. Part Time: £3,190
 - c. Annual Registration Fee: £205

- b. International Students
 - a. Full Time: £16,710
 - b. Part Time: £8,355
 - c. Annual Registration Fee: £205

4.3.2 Late Payment

Students must complete full payment or the first payment of their payment plan for the academic year by the deadline of 2 weeks prior to the semester start date. Any payment made subsequent to this deadline will incur a late fee of \$500.

4.3.3 Failure to Make Fee Payments

Students who fail to pay their annual enrollment fee by 1 week after the semester start date will not be eligible for enrollment for that semester and must complete the Temporary Withdrawal process. They may re-enroll at the start of the next semester but will incur a \$500 late fee and a \$500 re-enrollment fee.

4.3 Temporary Withdrawal

Students must complete the program within the 3-years (Full-Time) or 6-years (Part-Time) requirements for their chosen program duration. In certain circumstances, students may need to be granted a temporary withdrawal from the program. In such cases, students' total duration and the deadline for program completion are placed on hold for up to 2 academic years, calculated from the start-date of the academic year in which the student is granted a Temporary Withdrawal. Upon re-enrollment in the program, students must pay a re-enrollment fee of \$500 and, if applicable, the next annual enrollment fee.

4.3.1 Request for Temporary Withdrawal

Per the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice, students may apply to withdraw voluntarily from their program on a temporary basis, subject to consultation with their supervisors and the approval of the TAI Research Board and UTC Research Committee. Students must submit the TAI Temporary Withdrawal Form, and upon approval by the TAI Research Board the student's request is referred to the UTC Research Committee for final approval.

Temporary Withdrawal status is granted on the basis of academic years. Students issued a Temporary Withdrawal will be considered withdrawn for the subsequent academic year and their required completion date adjusted accordingly.

4.3.2 Automatic Temporary Withdrawal

Students who do not complete the enrollment process for each academic year by the required deadline will be considered automatically temporarily withdrawn. Students may choose to re-enroll within that academic year, but will incur a late fee of \$500 and a re-enrollment fee of \$500. Additionally, such students will not be eligible for the extension of the total program duration.

4.3.2 Request for Re-Enrollment

Students may request re-enrollment through the submission of the TAI Re-Enrollment Form to the TAI Research Board and payment the \$500 re-enrollment fee and the relevant subsequent academic year enrollment fees.

4.3.3 Full Withdrawal

Students who are approved for Temporary Withdrawal from the PhD Program and who fail to complete the re-enrollment process within 2 academic years from the start of the Temporary Withdrawal will be considered fully withdrawn from the program and ineligible for re-enrollment. Students may opt to inform the TAI Research Board of their own decision to fully withdraw from the program, at which point they will be ineligible for re-enrollment in the program.

4.4. Change of Status

4.4.1 Change of Status Request

Students must designate on their application whether they prefer to be admitted to a full-time or part-time status. During the course of the program, students may opt to change their status only from full-time to part-time. Students must complete the TAI Change of Status Request Form

4.4.2 Change of Status Fee

Students must pay a Change of Status fee of \$500.

4.4.3 Change of Annual Enrollment Fee Rate

Students who are approved for a change of status will be adjusted from a full-time to part-time status fee rate and the total of fees already paid credited towards their total program fee expectations for a part-time student. Students who exceed the total part-time status fee expectations upon change of status are required to pay the annual part-time status enrollment fee until they have successfully completed the program.

4. Study

4.1 Supervision

Students are admitted to the PhD Program with a designated primary supervisor from the TAI Research Fellowship and a secondary supervisor from the UTC faculty. The primary supervisor provides all guidance to the student in the course of their research in accordance with the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice, including formal supervisory sessions. The secondary supervisor ensures alignment of the supervision process and dissertation writing to UTC PhD Program Code of Practice. See the UTC PhD Code of Practice for policies and procedures on supervisory meetings and annual progress reports.

4.2 Dissertation Writing - Year 1

Students complete a research plan and begin writing the dissertation in the first year of study. At the end of the first year of study, students undergo the differentiation process and submit a draft chapter of 4,000-6,000 words to the Supervisor and TAI Research Board for referral to the UTC Research Committee to schedule the differentiation process.

4.3 Differentiation

Students undergo an interview with a Differentiation Panel coordinated by the UTC Research Committee, in which the panel evaluates the student's research plan and draft chapter (see UTC PhD Code of Practice). The panel issues a determination to upgrade the student's status from probationary research student to differentiated research student. At the discretion of the Differentiation Panel, students may be required to complete a subsequent differentiation process. Students are not permitted to complete more than two differentiation processes, and upon failure to differentiate after one subsequent attempt students will not be allowed to continue enrollment in the program.

4.4 Dissertation Writing - Years 2-6

After differentiation, students proceed in their research and writing according to their research plan, under the guidance of their supervisor(s). Supervisors complete annual progress reports and keep record of the supervisory sessions conducted with students.

4.5 Dissertation Submission

Within no more than 3 months from the date of intended submission, students make formal notification of their intention to submit the dissertation to their supervisor and the TAI Research Board through the submission of the Notification of Intention to Submit form. The TAI Research Board reviews and approves the Notification of Intent and provides the form to the UTC Research Committee on the student's behalf. Students upload the final dissertation file to the VLE by the agreed submission deadline confirmed in the Notice of Intention to Submit form.

Upon completion of the dissertation, students' final dissertation files are reviewed by their supervisor, who confirms the dissertation's suitability for final submission through completion of the TAI Recommendation for Submission form and the final dissertation file, submitted on the student's behalf to the TAI Research Board. The TAI Research Board reviews and confirms the dissertation is ready for examination. Dissertation files are provided to the UTC Research Committee on the student's behalf.

4.6 Oral Examination

The oral examination typically is scheduled by the UTC Research Committee 4-6 months subsequent to the receipt of the Notification of the Intention to Submit, and 6-8 weeks after submission. The final dissertation file is submitted to the VLE and arrangements made by the UTC Research Committee for the Examination Panel.

4.6.1 Oral Examination Panel Selection and Scheduling

The Oral Examination Panel consists of two examiners selected by the UTC Research Committee, usually consisting of one UTC faculty member and an external scholar with expertise in the area of research of the student's dissertation. TAI supervisors and the TAI Research Board may provide recommendations for an external examiner. The UTC Research Committee will notify the student and the TAI Research Board of the date for the oral examination and the selected examiners 6-8 weeks prior to the examination. TAI supervisors may attend the oral examination, but will provide no evaluation of the dissertation for the degree award.

4.6.3 Preparation for Oral Examination

Coordination of the oral examination, including instructions for the examiners, is made by the UTC Research Committee. Students must have no contact with the examiners during this time. Examiners prepare independent reports prior the examination on the basis of their evaluation of the written dissertation.

4.6.4 Examination

The examination is normally conducted online and led by the UTC faculty examiner. It may serve a number of different functions including the following:

- i. It provides the student with the opportunity to defend the thesis through high-level debate with experts in the subject.
- ii. It gives the examiners an opportunity to explore any doubts they may have about the material presented in the thesis.
- iii. It can be used to determine that the student is the author of the written materials submitted.
- iv. It enables the examiners to check that the student has a thorough understanding of the theoretical framework, issues, methods and statistical analysis involved.

4.6.4.1 Examiners

Policies governing the selection of examiners and their preparation are determined by the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice.

4.6.4.2 Determinations of the Examiners

After the oral examination, the examiners provide to the UTC College Office their independent reports plus a joint report which includes one of the following decisions:

- i. The Doctoral degree be awarded as the thesis stands.
- ii. The Doctoral degree be awarded subject to corrections* being made to the thesis that must be completed within three months.
- iii. The Doctoral degree be awarded subject to corrections* being made to the thesis that must be completed within six months.
- iv. The thesis be revised and re-submitted** for the Doctoral degree within twelve months. Students are only permitted to revise and re-submit a thesis once, not counting corrections outlined in ii or iii above. When making this decision, examiners may also propose one of v, vi, or vii below as a possible alternative. The student must confirm the preferred option.
- v. A Master's degree be awarded as the thesis stands.
- vi. No degree be awarded.

4.6.5 Communicating the Result of the Oral Examination

Results of the oral examination are made available to students and the TAI Research Board by the UTC administration on behalf of the Examination Board (see UTC PhD Code of Practice).

4.7 Master in Philosophy Exit Award

4.7.1 Degree Award

The degree award for Master in Philosophy is issued by the PhD Examination Board on the recommendation of the Examiners.

4.7.2 Requirements for the Master of Philosophy¹ (as an exit award available to examiners following a PhD viva)

4.7.2.1 Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of an academic discipline, field of study, or area of professional practice.

- a. A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship.
- b. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.
- c. Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
- d. To evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline.
- e. To evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

4.7.2.2 Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- a. Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- b. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.
- c. Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

4.7.2.3 Holders will have:

- a. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
- b. The exercise of initiative and personal responsibility.
- c. Decision making in complex and unpredictable situations.
- d. The independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

4.8 Doctorate in Philosophy Degree Award

4.8.1 Degree Award

The degree award for Doctorate of Philosophy is issued by the PhD Examination Board on the recommendation of the Examiners.

¹ UK Quality Code for Higher Education: The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (2014)

4.8.2 Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy²

4.8.2.1 Doctoral degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a. The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline and merit publication
- b. A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.
- c. The general ability to conceptualise, design and implement a project for the generation of new knowledge, applications or understanding at the forefront of the discipline, and to adjust the project design in the light of unforeseen problems.
- d. A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

4.8.2.2 Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- a. Make informed judgements on complex issues in specialist fields, often in the absence of complete data, and be able to communicate their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- b. Continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level, contributing substantially to the development of new techniques, ideas, or approaches.

4.8.2.3 Holders will have:

- a. The qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and largely autonomous initiative in complex and unpredictable situations, in professional or equivalent environments.

5. Dissertation

5.1 Original Contribution to Scholarship

In accordance with the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice and standards determined by UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Research Degrees (2018) and the QAA Doctoral Degree Characteristic Statement (2015), the degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded on the basis of a dissertation which demonstrates:

1. The creation and interpretation of new knowledge, through original research or other advanced scholarship, of a quality to satisfy peer review, extend the forefront of the discipline, and merit publication.
2. A systematic acquisition and understanding of a substantial body of knowledge which is at the forefront of an academic discipline or area of professional practice.
3. A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.
4. A detailed understanding of applicable techniques for research and advanced academic enquiry.

² UK Quality Code for Higher Education: The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (2014)

5.2 Length and Format

5.2.1 Word Count

The dissertation is to be a minimum of 75,000 words and not to exceed 90,000 words, including footnotes, but excluding the title page, abstract, table of contents, dedication and acknowledgements, and bibliography sections.

5.2.2 Organization

5.2.2.1 Introductory Material

Students will provide a title page with the dissertation title, the student's name, the qualification to be earned in the submission of the dissertation, the degree awarding institution (Union Theological College), and date of submission. The next page should be an abstract of no more than 500 words summarizing the argument and methodology. A table of contents detailing chapter and section/sub-section titles and page numbers should follow.

5.2.2.2 Chapters

The dissertation is to be organized by the use of distinct chapters. Typically, a dissertation of 90,000 words will consist of 4-6 chapters. Students must provide an introduction to the project in which they detail the research question(s), thesis to be argued, methodology employed, and an overview of the project. A short conclusion chapter should complete the project.

5.2.2.3 Dedications and Acknowledgements

Students may provide a dedication page and an acknowledgements section (no more than 1,000 words) which do not contribute to the word-count parameters. These elements are to be included after the title page and table of contents.

5.2.2.4 Bibliography

Students must provide a comprehensive bibliography of works cited and additional literature relevant to the research at the end of the dissertation. Bibliographical entries should be organized alphabetically according to author surname.

5.2.3 File Type

All dissertation file submissions must be submitted as a MS Word document. PDF, Google Docs, Pages, or other file types will not be accepted. The TAI Research Board will provide final versions of the submission to the UTC Research Committee as both MS Word document and PDF format on the student's behalf.

5.2.4 Style

Dissertations must be formatted in Oxford Style in accordance with the PTFI Style Guide, including footnote citations, bibliography citations, chapter and section headings, and Scripture references. Quotes from Scripture using biblical languages must be formatted according SBL Manual of Style requirements and be in SBL Greek or SBL Hebrew font. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure alignment with the style guide. Students may inquire about proof-reading services provided by TAI at additional cost.

6. Research Board

The PhD Program is offered under the direction and review of the TAI Research Board in coordination with the UTC Research Committee and all relevant policies and procedures determined by UTC for the PhD Program partnership.

6.1 Board Responsibilities

6.1.1 Research Candidacy Admissions

Through the Applications Committee, TAI Research Board receives and evaluates all applications to the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program for consideration of the approval of Research Candidates. Upon completion of the PhD Proposal, the TAI Research Board evaluates and provisionally approves Research Candidates for admission to the PhD Program and makes referral on the student's behalf to UTC for final PhD Program admission approval. The TAI Research Board may refer prospective students for additional degree completion or coursework to bolster their research and writing skills or to establish needed knowledge and competency in the prospective area of research.

6.1.2 PhD Program Admissions Referral

The TAI Research Board makes referral of approved PhD Proposals and application packets to the UTC Research Committee twice a year in advance of the UTC PhD Program admissions deadline. The UTC Research Committee reserves the right to require additional degree completion or coursework in instances where students do not meet admission criteria or submit unsatisfactory research proposals.

Once approved by the UTC Research Committee, UTC will issue an award letter of admission to the PhD Program, confirming the student's status as a Probationary Research Student.

6.1.3 Differentiation

Through the Review Committee, the TAI Research Board evaluates students' readiness for sitting the Differentiation Process with the UTC faculty and approves students by the submission of the Intention to Differentiate form to the UTC Research Committee on the students' behalf. The TAI Research Board reserves the right to defer students' Differentiation with instructions for further development to their research plan or edits to the writing sample.

6.1.4 Annual Progress Review

Through the Review Committee, the TAI Research Board receives and evaluates the students' annual progress review completed by the TAI Supervisor and may require specific steps to be taken to foster students' research methodology skills.

6.1.5 Notification of Intention to Submit

Through the Review Committee, the TAI Research Board receives and reviews the students' Notification of Intention to Submit before submitting the form to the UTC Research Committee on the students' behalf. The TAI Research Board reserves the right to require specific steps to be taken to strengthen or amend the students' submission plan.

6.1.6 Final Submission

The TAI Supervisor approves the final dissertation submission through the submission of the Recommendation to Submit form to the Review Committee of TAI Research Board. Through the Research Committee, the TAI Research Board receives and reviews the students' final dissertation submission and reserves the right to require edits or revisions to the dissertation before final submission is made to the UTC Research Committee. Once approved by the TAI Research Board, the final dissertation is provided to the UTC Research Committee on the students' behalf.

6.2 Board Members

The TAI Research Board consists of the TAI Director of Postgraduate Research (chair), the TAI Assistant Director of Postgraduate Research, and the TAI Dean. Additional members may be appointed as needed in accordance with the TAI Research Board Terms of Reference.

6.3 Board Committees

The TAI Research Board meets twice per year and delegates its procedures and review processes to the following subcommittees:

- Admissions Committee: reviews and approves applications to the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program and the TAI PhD Program, meeting monthly or as necessary.
- Review Committee: reviews and approves referrals for differentiation and dissertation final submission, reviews and submits annual student reviews on behalf of TAI to UTC Research Committee, and prepares an annual program review.

7. TAI Research Fellowship

The TAI Research Fellowship consists of faculty and doctoral students of the Alexandrian Institute. It aims to foster a unified research culture under the leadership of the TAI Director of Postgraduate Research. It provides students with a scholarly community in which they may participate in lectures, colloquia, or events, contribute towards projects undertaken by the community, and mentorship through the modeling of rigorous scholarship provided by the Research Fellows in alignment with the goals and vision of the Alexandrian Institute.

7.1 Student Membership

Students are admitted to the Research Fellowship upon their approval as Research Candidates in the PhD Proposal Mentorship Program. Students remain members while enrolled as students in the PhD Program. Students are invited to attend all research-focused events of the Research Fellowship unless determined by the Research Committee.

7.2 Resources and Events

The Research Fellowship hosts regular seminars in research methodology, lectures on specialized topics, and collaborative research colloquia. Students are invited to attend all such events and are expected to attend and participate in them regularly in support of their research and writing skills.

7.3 Presentations and Publications

Students may be invited to contribute to the research culture of the Research Fellowship through opportunities to give presentations or contribute towards publications or other projects.

8. Formal Concerns

8.1 TAI Formal Concerns

Students may raise concerns or lodge complaints regarding specific issues encountered in their supervision by completing the Formal Concern Form according to the policies and procedures detailed in the TAI Student Handbook.

8.2 UTC Complaints Procedure

Students may submit a complaint or formal appeal regarding academic and progress matters to the UTC Research Committee according to the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice policies and procedures.

9. Student Voice

9.1 Annual Program Review

The TAI PhD Program undergoes an annual review in alignment with the policies and procedures detailed in the TAI Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Policy. An important element of the review process is the consideration of student voice. Students will be invited to complete a survey offering feedback on their supervision, the quality of the program, and suggestions for improvement, which will be reviewed by the TAI Research Board and TAI Academic Board, with steps taken to address particular issues as needed. Additionally, particular students may be invited to represent student voice through participation in a student advisory panel who represent student voice to the TAI Research Board.

9.2 UTC Student Voice

UTC considers student voice an important element in their quality assurance measures and collects feedback from students informally and through questionnaires in accordance with the UTC PhD Program Code of Practice.