**CARDIOTHORACIC SET TRAINEE THESIS PROPOSAL.**

The attached Thesis proposal form must be submitted to the Board of Cardiothoracic Surgery for its approval, prior to commencing your Thesis. It is a guide to help structure your research question and to facilitate the board approving your Thesis topic. Please complete your Thesis proposal within a maximum of two pages including a few key references.

Your current Surgical Supervisor must endorse your proposal prior to submitting it to the Board. The proposal will be reviewed by the BOCTS and the suitability of the topic confirmed. If it is felt the Thesis is not appropriate in its current form comments will be given and it can be resubmitted for approval following further discussion with your supervisor of training.

If, after approval of the Thesis the trainee needs to make significant changes to the Thesis topic it will require further approval prior to completion.

It is the responsibility of the trainee to ensure all locality and/or ethics and research requirements if applicable is completed prior to commencing the Thesis. The Thesis must include a statement to that effect in the methods including ethics approval numbers if required.

The Thesis once completed will be marked by a sub-committee, including at least one Board member, as well as members of the Cardiothoracic Surgery Science and Education sub-committee.

The Thesis must be on a Cardiothoracic Surgery topic and should be an original body of work that is produced to a standard that it can be published in a peer-reviewed publication. It should be an original dissertation of 5,000-10,000 words, including references.

It is anticipated that this work would be completed over a two-year period (usually during SET 3 and SET 4) and must be submitted within 4 years of commencing training. It should be completed during training and the trainee should not require time away from clinical attachments to complete the Thesis.

A pass mark is required to enable the trainee to present for the fellowship exam. If a trainee fails the Thesis, the trainee will be provided with feedback and given a further opportunity to resubmit.

In the unusual circumstance where the Trainee is enrolled in a higher degree, but they have not yet completed it, they must discuss this with their Supervisor as well as notifying the Board.

Trainees who have successfully completed a higher degree (PhD or Masters) are exempt from the Thesis requirement. Trainees must supply their Thesis title and acknowledgment of receipt from the University as proof of completion.

The attached Thesis proposal form is a guide for structuring your Thesis plan. Please complete it in consultation with your supervisor of training and submit it to the Board for approval.

Further details can be found in the cardiothoracic SET Training Regulations.

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL STRUCTURE.**

In one or two pages please state what you will do in the research project and how you will do it. It is important that you demonstrate how your Thesis topic is of interest to the Cardiothoracic Surgical community. Consider the following questions as a guide for framing your topic and for writing a successful Thesis.

1. **What is the problem, question or hypothesis you are interested in?**

State the key question or hypothesis that your Thesis aims to address. Spend time on this and be specific and focused in generating your question. A good hypothesis or research question is key to organising your thoughts and planning your project.

1. **What is the importance and relevance of your Thesis topic?**

Your Thesis must make an original contribution to knowledge in your chosen area. Indicate how your research may add to current knowledge or fill in gaps in knowledge where they might exist.

1. **What is the significance of any prior research in this area and how will your Thesis add to this knowledge?**

You should demonstrate that you are aware of the significant evidence and any areas of controversy or debate in your chosen research topic. Your Thesis should build on and add to prior research or opinion.

1. **What research methodology do you plan to use?**

The methodology section is one of the most important sections of your proposal. It demonstrates your understanding of the steps and skills necessary to undertake your intended research. It should be as explicit as possible, detailing how you will collect, analyse and present your data or research.

1. **What are the ethical considerations you need to address when completing your project?**

All research is expected to conform to acceptable ethical standards and proposals. The Trainee must be familiar with and comply with the local requirements for research - in particular, if collection or storage of patient data is required. Please indicate if locality or ethical approval is required for your Thesis and confirm that it has been granted.

1. **How will you analyse the information you collect of information?**

You should clearly describe how you can answer your research questions based on the information you have gathered. Be explicit. For example, if you plan to collect evidence by a questionnaire and subsequent statistical analysis, you should describe the proposed method of analysis.

1. **Are there any limitations or key assumptions you need to consider?**

This section defines the limits of your research. It is common to try to do too much. This section is useful in defining how much you will undertake and the key assumptions that you will follow in building your arguments, models, or experiments.

1. **References or bibliography**

This final section details the major readings cited in your proposal, or the literature that contextualises your proposed research.

If the Thesis topic is not suitable, the Trainee is required to discuss this with his Supervisor and resubmit a new Thesis topic.

If the Thesis topic is suitable, but the project is not approved, the Trainee is required to resubmit a proposal, taking into consideration the comments made by the reviewing BOCTS members, discuss the new proposal with their Supervisor and resubmit for approval.

**THESIS PROPOSAL**

**Trainee Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Thesis Topic / Title \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Trainee Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Name of Current Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Name of BoCTS Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Comments by BOCTS reviewer**  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Reviewer Recommendation**

**Proposal Approved Yes ⬜……. No ⬜**

**If not approved is the Thesis topic suitable? Yes ⬜……. No ⬜**

**Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_