

Higher Degrees by Research Candidature - Procedures



/about/policies-and-procedures/higher-degrees-by-research-candidature-procedures

1. Purpose of procedures

1.1 The University is committed to providing quality research training experiences for its higher degree by research candidates.

1.2 The purpose of these procedures is to articulate expectations of HDR candidates and the framework for HDR candidature management and support at the University. They should be read in conjunction with the Higher Degrees by Research - Academic Policy, and the following associated procedures and guidelines:

- Higher Degrees by Research Supervision – Procedures
- Higher Degrees by Research Thesis Submission and Examination – Procedures
- Higher Degrees by Research Admission and Enrolment – Guidelines
- Higher Degrees by Research Candidature Progression – Guidelines
- Higher Degrees by Research Support Grants – Guidelines
- Higher Degrees by Research Independent Academic Reviews – Guidelines
- Higher Degrees by Research Thesis Presentation – Guidelines
- Higher Degrees by Research Theses Examiners – Guidelines

Refer to

<https://www.usc.edu.au/research-and-innovation/research-students/hdr-candidature>

2. Scope and application

2.1 These procedures apply to higher degrees by research programs from admission to thesis submission. They apply to all higher degree by research candidates and University staff who make academic decisions regarding admission and candidature progression and administrative staff who facilitate, record and implement these decisions.

3. Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to these procedures and are critical to its effectiveness:

Candidate - a person admitted to a Higher Degree Research (HDR) program at the university (also known as a "student").

Candidature means duration of enrolment in a higher degree by research program. A Research student is considered to be a "candidate" for the higher degree by research program in which they are enrolled. All research and related work towards fulfilment of the requirements for a higher degree by research must be completed during enrolled candidature.

Confirmed candidature - period of enrolment in a HDR program after the successful completion of the Confirmation of Candidature milestone, up to the date of expiry of candidature for that program.

Co-Supervisor - a USC academic staff member who meets the criteria for and has been approved for registration as a USC HDR supervisor, but has not yet supervised a research student to successful completion of their degree. A registered co-supervisor may join an individual student's supervision panel as a co-supervisor only (i.e. may not be appointed to a student's panel as their principal supervisor).

Consultant supervisor - a person appointed to a student's supervision panel who does not meet the criteria for registration as a USC supervisor. Consultant supervisors are usually external to the university but may also be USC staff who do not meet the criteria for registration as a supervisor. Refer to the HDR Supervision – Procedures for a detailed description of a co-supervisor's roles and responsibilities.

Creative work - an original product designed, created or constructed by a candidate during candidature deriving from one or more of the creative arts including graphical and new media techniques.

Exegesis - a scholarly, critical commentary on the original creative work in dialogue with, and informing that original work or collection of works, resulting from research undertaken and produced during candidature. The exegesis also includes explicit reference to the research methodologies employed in the creation of the original creative work.

Head of Enrolling Unit - the Head of School or Director of Institute of a candidate's enrolment.

Incidental Leave - sick or recreation leave equivalent to employee entitlements. Incidental leave does not suspend candidature consumption or access to entitlements.

Leave of Absence - a voluntary and temporary suspension of the higher degree by research candidature, also known as "break from studies". Leave of Absence suspends candidature consumption and access to entitlements.

APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE MEMBER

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DESIGNATED OFFICER

Dean, Graduate Research

FIRST APPROVED

29 July 2014

LAST AMENDED

6 May 2021

REVIEW DATE

1 April 2026

STATUS

Active

[usc.edu.au/policy](https://www.usc.edu.au/policy)

Milestones are program requirements and periodic assessments of candidature progression including (but not limited to) Induction, Research Ethics and Integrity Training, Initial Plan and Progress Review, Conditions of Candidature, Confirmation of Candidature, subsequent Plan and Progress Reviews, Intention to Submit Thesis, Final Thesis Presentation, and Thesis Submission.

Monitored candidature - candidature that is placed under three-monthly review after being identified as not making satisfactory progress (or being at risk of not making satisfactory progress). Monitored candidature is designed to provide intensive support to a student to support achievement of their research goals and candidature milestones within maximum durations of candidature.

Principal Supervisor - a USC academic staff member who meets the criteria for and has been approved for registration as a USC Principal HDR supervisor. A registered principal supervisor may join an individual student's supervision panel as the student's principal supervisor or as a co-supervisor. Refer to the HDR Supervision – Procedures for a detailed description of a principal supervisor's roles and responsibilities.

Probationary candidature - period of enrolment in a HDR program up to and including the successful completion of the Confirmation of Candidature milestone, or the date of expiry of probationary candidature for that program (whichever comes first).

Significant research component - a substantial research project undertaken with appropriate research methodology.

Study Load HDR candidates are enrolled full or part-time. Full-time status is the equivalent of a standard five day working week, usually between the hours of 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday for at least 48 weeks per year with public holidays excepted. The actual pattern of research and study may vary depending on the candidate's personal circumstances and other commitments. The actual working hours are to be negotiated with the supervision panel. Part-time status is the equivalent of 50% of full-time status.

Study Mode - the location of a student's research that is whether it will be undertaken on a USC campus or at an external location,

Thesis - an original substantial piece of scholarly writing resulting from research undertaken by a candidate and produced during candidature to meet the requirements of the degree.

4. Entry requirements

4.1 Doctoral degrees

To be eligible for admission to a doctoral degree, an applicant must hold:

(a) a Bachelor Honours degree (AQF Level 8) with a significant research component with a minimum of Class IIA from a recognised higher education institution; or

(b) a Masters degree (AQF Level 9) with a significant research component equivalent to Honours degree research component from a recognised higher education institution; or

(c) a Bachelor degree (AQF Level 7) from a recognised higher education institution, and shall have achieved by subsequent work and study a standard equivalent to at least Class IIA Honours as may be approved by the Research Degrees Committee, or the Chairperson acting on behalf of the Committee; or

(d) a record of research or professional qualifications deemed by the Research Degrees Committee, or the Chairperson acting on behalf of the Committee, to be of a standard equivalent to at least Bachelors Honours degree Class IIA and providing a suitable background for the doctoral research the candidate is proposing to undertake.

In addition to this, an applicant for admission to the Doctor of Creative Arts must:

(e) provide a portfolio containing evidence of the applicant's own original work which is assessed by the Head of School, as providing evidence of very high levels of creativity, knowledge and skill in one or more creative areas.

4.2 Research Master degrees

To be eligible for admission to a research Master degree, an applicant shall hold:

(a) a Bachelor degree (AQF Level 7) with a Grade Point Average of 5.0 or higher on a seven point scale from a recognised higher education institution; or

(b) a Bachelor Honours degree (AQF Level 8) Class IIB from a recognised higher education institution; or

(c) a record of qualifications and/or professional research experience deemed to be equivalent to the standard of (a) or (b) as may be approved by the Research Degrees Committee, or the Chairperson acting on behalf of the Committee.

4.2.1 The prior study must be in an area of study relevant to the discipline area of the Master degree. If the prior study has not included an appropriate preparation in research methodology, the candidate will be required to undertake an appropriate research methodology course, as specified by the relevant Head of School, as part of their candidature.

4.2.2 The admission requirements for a specific Master degree may include additional requirements, such as a Bachelor degree in the relevant discipline, professional registration, a specified number of years of professional practice, or other requirements indicative of a suitable preparation to undertake a research program at Master level. Admission requirements for specific HDRs are available on the University website.

4.3 English language proficiency requirements

4.3.1 Proficiency in the English language is required for entry to all programs and courses. Any international or domestic applicant from a non-English speaking background must satisfy the University's standard and program specific English language requirements.

4.3.2 The University's standard and program specific English language requirements are approved by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) on the recommendation of the Dean Graduate Research. These must be readily available for all students and displayed on the University web site.

4.3.3 Any changes to the University's standard or program specific English language requirements must allow a sufficient lead time for the entry of students and must be approved through the appropriate channels. Test scores must be not more than two years old at the time of application. If the applicant has undertaken more than one test, then only the most recent test result will be considered.

5. Admission decision

5.1 The Head of enrolling unit or delegate will make a recommendation to the Dean, Graduate Research, who has the final decision-making authority for all decisions relating to admission to higher degree by research candidature.

5.1.1 Exceptional Cases and Special Offers

Provision is made to admit individual persons who may not meet the standard entry requirements but, based on other considerations, are persons who have a high probability of success in research and whose admission is considered to bring benefits to both the University and the applicant. Approval of exceptional cases must consider equity of admission in relation to other applicants.

Applications for entry under this category require the approval of the Dean, Graduate Research, upon recommendation by the Head of enrolling unit or delegate.

Prior research work undertaken as a candidate in a research higher degree undertaken at this or another recognised institution may be recognised towards the degree, provided that it has not been recognised for another award. Recognition of work done prior to admission, normally results in a change in the maximum thesis submission date. For students transferring between Australian institutions, the provisions of the Commonwealth's Research Training Program (RTP) apply.

5.2 An applicant who is approved for admission to a higher degree by research will receive a letter of offer.

5.2.1 The Dean, Graduate Research, has the right to withdraw an offer for admission or cancel enrolment of any person where an offer was incorrectly made on the basis of incomplete or inaccurate or fraudulent information supplied by the applicant or a certifying authority. Any such decision should take into account equity principles and the amount of time that has elapsed between the admission of the student and the identification of this error.

5.3 The Dean, Graduate Research has the authority to decline an application for admission.

5.3.1 An applicant previously enrolled in an HDR on the same or a similar topic at this or another institution who has failed the examination for the degree will not normally be admitted as a candidate.

5.3.2 An applicant who has been denied admission will be advised in writing of that decision and the reason for it.

6. Jointly conferred HDR programs

6.1 The University may offer a jointly conferred Higher Degree by Research (HDR) program which enables the candidate to be supervised jointly by academics from two different Universities and upon completion, to be eligible to receive a jointly conferred award. Candidates are normally enrolled concurrently at the two universities for the entire period of their award and must spend at least a total of one year (or one third) of their degree in each university. A candidate would be "on leave" from one university while active at the other.

6.2 Arrangements for admission and all other aspects of candidature, including supervision and examination, must be specified in a legally binding agreement between the University and the partner institution, as negotiated and approved at the time of the relevant program accreditation.

7. Fees

7.1 All candidates must pay the Student Services and Amenities Fee. Information about this fee, including payment options, is provided on the University website.

7.2 A candidate's offer letter for admission to HDR candidature will provide advice on their tuition fee liability. Where applicable, a subsequent scholarship offer letter will provide information about fee scholarship including scholarship value, conditions and duration.

7.3 Domestic candidates (Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens and Australian permanent residents) pay tuition fees in accordance with the standard tuition fee schedule, processes and due dates. Information about domestic tuition fees, including payment options, is provided on the University website. Student Services and Engagement (Student Central) provides advice to domestic candidates about their tuition fee liability, including payment options.

7.4 International candidates (candidates other than domestic candidates) pay tuition fees in accordance with approved international tuition fee schedule, processes and due dates. Information about international tuition fees is provided on the University website. International

students also pay for their Overseas Student Health Cover. International students on an externally funded scholarship are responsible for liaising with the funding provider for advice about extension to funding (if required).

7.5 Student Services and Engagement (Student Central) provides advice to all students about fee payment options, processes fee payments and follows up on outstanding fees. The student enrolment system provides advice to candidates about fee liability implications throughout candidature as appropriate (e.g. extension requests, change from full-time to part-time, leave of absence). Candidates are responsible for ensuring that they understand their fee liability at all times during candidature.

8. Standard of academic and research conduct

8.1 Candidates are expected to undertake their program in accordance with the accepted standards of academic conduct, including the Responsible Research Conduct – Governing Policy and the Student Academic Integrity - Governing Policy. Any form of conduct that is contrary to these standards is misconduct and may be penalised under the relevant policy. The Responsible Research Conduct – Governing Policy applies to all research activities. The Student Academic Integrity – Governing Policy applies to formal coursework components of a higher degree by research.

9. Candidate resources, support and services

9.1 HDR candidates are provided with essential information to undertake their HDR by their supervision panel, their enrolling unit and the Graduate Research School. Commencing candidates are provided with HDR induction which includes information about the expectations and responsibilities of supervisors and candidates, the degree requirements, progress procedures, research integrity and ethics, intellectual property, grievance procedures, health and safety procedures and the availability of resources and support services. In addition:

(a) international students commencing candidature are provided with an International Student Orientation;

(b) students utilising specialist equipment such as laboratories participate in relevant specific inductions as advised by their Principal Supervisor; and

(c) commencing candidates must participate in all relevant induction and orientation sessions as advised by their enrolling unit and the Graduate Research School.

9.2 The Enrolling Unit and Facilities Management manage the allocation of space for HDR students in accordance with the Space Management - Procedures. All full-time candidates who spend the equivalent of a standard working week on campus will have access to a workspace (subject to availability) which include University computing equipment, if requested. Part-time candidates have access to shared work spaces and computing equipment. All USC students have remote access to USC systems and software.

9.3 Student Wellbeing offer support to students including (but not limited to) confidential counselling, academic services and disability services.

9.4 Student Services and Engagement provides a range of support services to students including first-instance support to HDR students.

9.5 International Office provides information about maintaining compliance with student visa matters.

9.6 Information Technology provides a range of technical services to HDR students including provision of University email address and a University network account with a access to a range of applications, access to data storage to support compliance with the Research Data Management - Procedures, USC networked hardware and software and ITS training resources. Students should also refer to the Acceptable Use of ICT Resources – Governing Policy.

9.7 The Library provides a range of research support services to HDR students as documented in the Library Research Support Strategy.

9.8 Mail and Print Services provides access to self-service online printing.

9.9 The Graduate Research School administers the HDR Support Grant. Refer to the HDR Support Grant – Guidelines for more information.

10. Candidate Responsibilities

10.1 HDR candidates have a responsibility to operate within policy and guidelines set by the University, respond to requests by the University, and to engage positively in their program and all members of the University and wider community.

10.2 Compliance with University Policy, Procedures and Guidelines and Funding body obligations

Specific examples include but are not limited to:

(a) following the University's rules, policies, procedures and guidelines pertaining to their degree and to any scholarships, grants or other financial assistance for their research candidature (see Related Documents at the beginning of this document and the Policies, Procedures and Guidelines in section 1 of these Procedures);

(b) reporting any change in circumstance that affects their eligibility to receive further support and raising any questions or concerns with their supervisors, the enrolling unit's HDR Coordinator, the Head of enrolling unit, or the Graduate Research School, whichever is appropriate in the context;

(c) complying with all regulatory requirements that affect their research;

(d) abiding by ethical approvals for the work wherever necessary, be aware of compliance issues, and abide by health and safety policies and procedures as required;

(e) complying with the University's policies and procedures regarding research data management and authorship under the Intellectual Property – Governing Policy, the Research Data Management - Procedures and the Authorship and Dissemination of Research Findings – Procedures; and

(f) fulfilling all reporting obligations to funding bodies as required.

10.3 Proactively engaging with support and information

10.3.1 The University provides a variety of support systems for HDR candidates focused on facilitating a successful and timely completion in accordance with program requirements. HDR Candidates are responsible for:

(a) taking an active, self-motivated approach to their research, HDR candidature and career development that leads to the production of a thesis and to the qualities, skills, knowledge and abilities set out in the Research Graduate Attributes;

(b) developing a research project of appropriate scope and working diligently to complete the thesis within the specified time;

(c) maintaining satisfactory progress through their candidature as demonstrated by attaining progression milestones on time;

(d) refraining from embarking on any significant variation to the topic unless agreed to by the supervisory team;

(e) ensuring that the thesis meets University requirements for preparation, presentation and examination of theses and follow the protocols of scholarly presentation appropriate to the discipline;

(f) seeking support to resolve problems in the supervisor-student relationship that cannot be resolved within the supervisory team;

(g) not engaging in conduct that disrupts the teaching, learning or research activities of other students and staff, or that interferes with others performing their duties.

(h) treating all members of the University with respect in both formal and informal contexts, according to the Student Charter and the Student Conduct – Governing Policy; and

(i) keeping abreast of the latest developments in the research field in order to be aware of any new parameters affecting their research project and maintaining a broad knowledge of the field;

10.4 Contribution to research culture

10.4.1 HDR Students make an important contribution to the University's research culture:

(a) contributing to the intellectual and social life of the enrolling unit by participating in activities such as meetings of postgraduate associations, and by attendance at research seminars and other academic functions;

(b) attending and presenting work at relevant conferences and disseminating work in appropriate scholarly outlets; and

(c) treating all University facilities and equipment used in research with due care and in an appropriate manner.

10.5 Positive engagement

10.5.1 HDR students should engage with the supervisory team and the University positively, including:

(a) demonstrating a professional attitude to their research and work cooperatively with their supervisors;

(b) engaging in academic discourse with their supervisor team and be receptive to discussion and guidance;

(c) submitting regular drafts of work/reports as agreed with the supervisor team, and negotiating with the supervisor team a reasonable amount of time to read and comment in detail;

(d) informing the supervisor of any personal or other difficulties (without necessarily specifying the details), which have slowed or may slow progress;

(e) establishing and maintaining a mutually-agreed level of contact with the supervisor team; attending meetings prepared to make clear statements about ideas, progress and problems; and continuing the agreed-upon schedule for contact and for submission of work when away from this University on field work, research trips, or while enrolled as a remote candidate;

(f) showing respect towards all persons including other members of staff, to students and to the general public, including those involving social media; and

(g) understanding expectations and responsibilities, contributing to fostering a respectful and safe environment as set out in the Student Charter, and behaving in a manner consistent with these expectations, including the University policies such as the Health, Safety and Wellbeing – Governing Policy, the Anti-Discrimination and Freedom from Harassment and Bullying (Students) – Governing Policy, the Equity and Diversity – Governing Policy and the

11. Period of candidature

11.1 Duration of program

TABLE O.1

	Doctoral Degree FTE Duration	Research Masters Degree FTE Duration
Maximum probationary candidature; Minimum program duration	1.5 years	1 year
Maximum program duration (including examination and revisions)	4 years	2 years

The duration of a part-time program is double the full-time equivalent.

11.1.1 If a candidate is given credit for work undertaken prior to admission, the minimum and maximum submission dates are adjusted accordingly.

11.1.2 International students on a Student visa must complete program requirements by the program end date listed in their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE).

11.1.3 In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may be given permission by the Dean, Graduate Research to submit their thesis or exegesis and creative work prior to the minimum submission date.

11.2 Study Load

11.2.1 If a candidate changes between full-time and part-time study load, the minimum and maximum candidature dates are adjusted pro rata. The principal supervisor is the authority for approval for changes between part-time and full-time enrolment. Scholarship recipients must also comply with the conditions of their scholarship regarding study mode changes.

11.2.2 When the candidature is full-time, it is expected that only a limited amount of time will be available for undertaking paid employment. As a general guide, 18 hours of paid employment per week should be the limit. If the student holds a scholarship, the limitation on paid employment may be prescribed in the relevant scholarship conditions booklet. Students on a student visa must check their work rights attached to their student visa.

11.3 Study Mode

11.3.1 All candidates are assumed to be on-campus students unless approval has been granted by the enrolling unit for remote (i.e. external) study mode.

11.3.2 Where the research, study or creative work requires the resources or facilities of an external organisation, the candidate's access to such resources or facilities must be documented in written correspondence to the satisfaction of the Head of enrolling unit or delegate. In approving candidature wholly or partly at an external location, the Head of enrolling unit (or delegate) will appoint a consultant supervisor from the relevant organisation and may specify a minimum period during which the candidate must attend this University.

11.3.2 The Dean, Graduate Research may set conditions on minimum periods of attendance at the University.

11.3.4 To be approved for remote candidature, HDR candidates must:

- (a) maintain regular contact with their supervision panel, enrolling unit, and the Graduate Research School;
- (b) have access to all necessary facilities, such as equipment and library resources;
- (c) continue to make satisfactory progress.

11.3.5 To change study mode, candidates must submit a request to their Principal Supervisor and Head of Enrolling Unit or delegate in writing with an updated Plan and Progress Review including a detailed plan to manage remote candidature.

11.4 Concurrent Enrolment

11.4.1 A candidate enrolled in a HDR may not undertake concurrent coursework study in any program at this or other higher education institution without the permission of Dean, Graduate Research.

11.4.2 A candidate enrolled in an HDR may not undertake concurrent HDR study in any program at this or other higher education institution.

11.5 Candidature Extensions

11.5.1 Candidature extensions extend the total maximum duration of candidature. These requests are only approved where exceptional research related circumstances can be demonstrated and may incur further fee liability (including to students who receive an RTP Fee Offset Scholarship).

11.5.2 Requests for extension of candidature require the candidate and supervisor to provide an updated plan and undertake a progress review with the completed documentation submitted with the extension request.

11.5.3 Candidates who are unable to progress due to a change in personal circumstances (e.g. long-term illness, work commitments) should consider taking a leave of absence. Candidature extensions may not be approved on the basis of personal circumstances or work commitments.

11.5.4 International students must ensure that their visa conditions allow an extension to candidature and may not extend candidature beyond the CRICOS registered duration of their program. Applications for extension to candidature from international students are forwarded to International Office for advice regarding the student's visa status before the extension can be approved.

11.5.5 Students on an externally funded scholarship are responsible for liaising with the funding provider for advice about extension to funding (if required).

11.6 The Dean, Graduate Research is the approving authority for extensions to candidature.

11.7 Leave

11.7.1 Leave is categorised as two types. Unless a candidate has been awarded a stipend scholarship and under the conditions of the scholarship there is an entitlement for paid leave, both categories of leave are unpaid.

TABLE 0.2

Incidental Leave	Incidental leave does not suspend candidature consumption. It is expected that incidental leave will be managed by the candidate with their principal supervisor and is not reported to, or managed by, the Graduate Research School.
Leave of Absence	Leave of Absence suspends candidature consumption and access to entitlements.

11.7.2 Incidental Leave

Incidental leave does not suspend candidature consumption. It is expected that incidental leave will be managed by the candidate with their principal supervisor and is not reported to, or managed by, the Graduate Research School.

11.7.31 Sick Leave

11.7.3.1 In the event of illness, candidates may take up to 10 days of sick leave each year with the approval of their principal supervisor. The leave is accrued throughout candidature.

11.7.4 Recreation Leave

11.7.4.1 Full-time candidates are entitled to a maximum of 20 days per annum. Part-time candidates are entitled to a maximum of 10 days per annum.

11.7.4.2 Recreation leave is arranged by negotiation with the candidate's Principal Supervisor. This leave is accrued throughout candidature.

11.7.5 Leave of Absence

11.7.5.1 Leave of Absence suspends candidature consumption and access to entitlements.

11.7.5.2 HDR candidates can apply for a leave of absence to be approved by the principal supervisor and reported to and recorded by the Graduate Research School.

11.7.5.3 The total period of leave of absence accumulated in a given candidature will not normally exceed 12 calendar months. A total period in excess of 12 months may be approved by the Principal Supervisor in exceptional circumstances.

11.7.5.4 HDR candidates applying for parental leave can apply for a maximum period of 12 months for each instance of parental leave. Parental leave is approved by the principal supervisor and is reported to and recorded by the Graduate Research School.

11.7.5.5 Leave of Absence during the probationary candidature period will only be approved by the Principal Supervisor in exceptional circumstances.

11.7.5.6 Any Leave of Absence will be reflected in a variation to subsequent milestone due dates and the end date of candidature.

11.7.5.7 Requests for a Leave of Absence must be submitted to the Graduate Research School at least 3 weeks prior to the first day of the leave.

11.7.5.8 Retrospective applications will only be approved in exceptional circumstances and medical leave. Leave requests related to ill health must be submitted within 10 days of returning from leave.

11.7.5.9 Leave beyond 6 months will only be considered if it relates to ill health, significant caring commitments or exceptional circumstances.

11.7.5.10 Leave requested on medical grounds must be accompanied by a medical certificate.

11.7.5.11 Requests for parental leave must be accompanied by a medical certificate or an appropriate document containing proof of birth or adoption.

11.7.5.12 HDR candidates will be assumed to return from leave after an approved leave of absence has ended.

11.7.5.13 HDR candidates who wish to extend their leave must submit an additional leave request at least 2 weeks prior to their original return date.

11.7.5.14 Absence without leave may result in administrative withdrawal from the program.

11.7.5.15 A candidate may not undertake research, study or creative work for the degree during a leave of absence.

11.7.5.16 Student Services and Engagement provides advice to candidates about implications of leave of absence on fee liability.

11.7.5.17 International candidates must ensure that their visa conditions allow a suspension of studies (leave of absence can only be approved for compassionate and compelling circumstances). Applications for leave of absence from international students must be accompanied by relevant supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificates). Applications for leave of absence will be forwarded to Student Services and Engagement for advice before they can be approved.

11.7.5.18 Candidates on scholarship should refer to their Schedule of Scholarship Conditions for advice about impacts of leave on their scholarship payments. International students on an externally funded scholarship are responsible for liaising with the funding provider for advice about extension to funding (if required).

11.7.5.18 Leave of Absence Categories:

TABLE 0.3

(a) Medical leave	For periods of medical leave beyond the annual Incidental Leave allowance of ten (10) business days. A leave application must be submitted within ten (10) business days after return from leave with a supporting medical certificate which covers the entire period of medical leave.
(b) Family leave	This leave is used for parental leave and carer's leave. Candidates can take a continuous period of leave of up to 12 months for parental leave and up to 6 months for carer's leave. A medical certificate must be provided in both situations.
(c) Employment	To be used to undertake work commitments. 6-month limit per leave request. Not available for student visa holders.

12. Candidature Progression and Milestones

This section should be read in conjunction with the Higher Degrees by Research Candidature Progression – Guidelines.

12.1 Candidates are required to maintain satisfactory progress towards completion of their program which can be demonstrated via the attainment of milestones. Achieving each milestone supports:

- (a) candidate academic development and progress;
- (b) resource allocation (including but not limited to supervisory commitments); and
- (c) quality assurance

12.2 Each milestone includes formal and recorded interactions between the candidate and the supervisory team. Milestone components are open to the external scrutiny of members of the wider research community.

12.3 The format for each milestone must be compliant with the HDR Candidature Progression - Guidelines. There may be discipline-specific requirements as well, but this is at the discretion of the enrolling unit and will be communicated to students by the enrolling unit. In general, each milestone is comprised of work completed by the candidate which is assessed by the enrolling unit and recorded by the Graduate Research School on the student record. The student will receive feedback during or at the completion of each milestone.

12.4 Enrolling units must ensure that candidates receive appropriate support from their supervisory teams prior to and during each milestone.

12.5 Milestone definitions, requirements, timing and the consequences for failing to achieve or missing milestones and maintain satisfactory research progress are detailed in the Higher Degrees by Research Candidature Progression – Guidelines.

12.6 For each milestone, a review panel will provide feedback to the candidate on their progress and the Head of enrolling unit or delegate will determine the outcome.

12.6.1 The available outcomes and subsequent actions for each milestone outcome are specified in the Higher Degrees by Research Candidature Progression – Guidelines.

12.7 Where a candidate has not submitted a milestone or a request for variation to candidature within:

- (a) 3 months FTE of the milestone due date for the PhD; or
- (b) 1 month FTE of the milestone due date for Master by Research

the Graduate Research School will record an “unsatisfactory” result for the milestone, and will subsequently invite the candidate to show cause as to why their candidature should not be discontinued.

13. Transfer between Doctoral and Research Master degrees

13.1 Student Services and Engagement provides advice to candidates about implications of transfer between Doctoral and Research Master degrees on fee liability. International students on a student visa must ensure they maintain their student visa conditions.

13.2 Candidates who wish to change HDR program should submit an application for admission to their new program of preference following the process for HDR applicants described on the University website.

13.3 Master by Research candidates are expected to achieve confirmation of candidature in the Master by Research degree before applying for admission to a doctoral program.

13.4 The Dean, Graduate Research may approve an application to convert a doctoral candidature to a candidature in a research master program. The period completed as a doctoral candidate will be deducted from the candidature duration for the purpose of determining the minimum and maximum length of the master candidature.

14. Change of research topic and or thesis title

14.1 If a candidate wants to pursue a different research topic they can formally request this using the relevant form. This request must be approved by the Principal Supervisor and Dean, Graduate Research.

14.1.1 In making a decision to change the candidate's research topic, the Dean, Graduate Research will also determine whether the candidate is to be returned to probationary status and to undergo a standard or modified process for confirmation of candidature and must determine any adjustment to the maximum thesis submission date.

14.2 With the approval of the principal supervisor, a candidate may change the title of their thesis. Providing that the change of thesis title is not indicative of a significant change in the research topic, a change of thesis title does not require the approval of the Dean, Graduate Research.

15. Change of Supervision Panel

15.1 Candidates may request a change to supervision panel. This requires approval from the supervision panel and Head of the enrolling unit or delegate.

15.2 Refer to the Higher Degrees by Research Supervision – Procedures for more information on the requirements of HDR supervision panels.

16. HDR Publication

16.1 If a HDR supervisor wishes to use any component of a candidate's research (including data collected, materials presented in a thesis or throughout candidature) for further outputs after completion of the HDR, the supervisor(s) must make every effort to seek approval from the former HDR candidate to do so.

16.1.1 If the candidate cannot be contacted, in accordance with the Authorship and Dissemination of Research Findings – Procedures, the supervisors can put a case forward to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) for a research output to proceed provided there are no grounds to believe that the candidate would have objected to being included as an author. Each request will be considered by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation) on a case-by-case basis.

16.1.2 Note section 16.1.1 does not apply in the case of Creative Works, such as literary works, artworks, audio-visual presentations or performance rights.

16.2 Candidates are encouraged to seek independent legal advice before signing an agreement to assign their intellectual property to the University.

16.2.1 Supervisors and students are required to follow all relevant University policies and procedures including the Intellectual Property: Student IP – Procedures and the Authorship and Dissemination of Research Findings – Procedures, .

17. Withdrawal from candidature

17.1 A candidate may withdraw from candidature by informing the Graduate Research School using the appropriate form.

17.2 The withdrawal will take effect from the date of receipt of such notification.

18. Response to an invitation to show cause

18.1 A student who is invited to show cause as to why their candidature should not be discontinued should prepare a written response as described in Step 2 of the Student Review and Appeals – Procedures. A response to a request to show cause why candidature should not be discontinued may include (but is not limited to):

- (a) an updated plan and progress review document with revised goals and evidence of research training undertaken;
- (b) a statement summarising obstacles to progress, and the candidate's recommendation for a path forward; and
- (c) medical certificates (if applicable).

18.2 Candidates are encouraged to seek advice from academic skills advisors available via Student Services and Engagement (Student Central), to discuss their situation and to develop their response. Candidates may also seek counselling from Student Wellbeing, advice on the processes from the Student Ombudsman, and/or assistance from the Student Guild.

18.3 The Head of enrolling unit considers the representations of the candidate in response to the show cause request and determines whether to:

- (a) continue candidature, with any subsequent conditions; or
- (b) recommend discontinuation of candidature to the Dean, Graduate Research.

18.4 All completed documentation is sent to the Graduate Research School for quality assurance and to report all outcomes of invitations to show cause to the Research Degrees Committee, or Chairperson acting on behalf of the committee, as part of regular candidature progression reporting.

18.5 In the case of international students on a student visa, the University is obliged to advise students that discontinuation of their candidature will result in them being reported to the relevant Government departments for unsatisfactory progress and may result in the cancellation of their student visa, unless they can demonstrate compassionate or compelling circumstances. The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 (the 'National Code') requires that when the University notifies a student of its intention to report the student for not achieving satisfactory academic progress, the student must also be informed that they are able to access the University's 'complaints and appeals process'. Responding to the show cause is deemed to be accessing this process, as per the Student Grievance Resolution – Governing Policy.

19. Discontinuation of candidature

19.1 The Dean, Graduate Research considers the representations of the candidate in response to the show cause request together with the recommendation to discontinue candidature made by the Head of enrolling unit. The Dean, Graduate Research may discontinue candidature if:

- (a) the student has failed to:
 - (i) respond to the invitation to show cause within the specified timeframe; or
 - (ii) make satisfactory progress or meet any candidature requirements; or
 - (iii) comply with any other condition imposed by their Head of enrolling unit or Dean, Graduate Research; and
- (b) the principal supervisor and the Head of enrolling unit or delegate have ensured and demonstrated that the student has been:
 - (i) clearly warned of shortcomings in performing the research and/or in meeting candidature requirements; and
 - (ii) advised of ways in which such shortcomings might be remedied.

19.2 The Dean, Graduate Research will determine whether to:

- (a) permit the student to continue under specified conditions; or
- (b) discontinue the candidature.

19.2.1 A Doctoral student may be offered the opportunity to be admitted to one of the University's research Master degrees.

19.3 The Dean, Graduate Research will provide advice to the student and the relevant Head of enrolling unit within five (5) business days of the determination.

19.4 A student whose candidature is discontinued may lodge an internal appeal under the Student Grievance Resolution - Governing Policy, via the Student Review and Appeals – Procedures, where they can show grounds as to why an appeal should be considered (i.e. new information, evidence of failure of process).

19.5 The student's enrolment will cease at the end of the appeal period or if an appeal is lodged, when the outcome of their appeal is determined.

20. Grievances

20.1 Refer to the Student Grievance Resolution – Governing Policy and associated Procedures.

20.2 Candidates experiencing difficulty with any aspect of their enrolment or program of study should discuss the problems with their principal supervisor or a co-supervisor in the first instance.

20.3 Where the issue cannot be resolved at the supervisor level, or where the candidate does not wish to discuss the matter with their supervisors (e.g. in the event of a breakdown in the supervisory relationship), the matter should be brought to the relevant Head of enrolling unit for resolution.

20.4 A candidate who has a grievance concerning any action or decision of a supervisor, or any other member of staff, and is unable to reach a satisfactory resolution through informal discussions and conciliation, may lodge a formal grievance under the Student Grievance Resolution – Governing Policy and associated procedures.

20.5 Candidates will be invited to provide anonymous feedback each year via the annual HDR Candidate survey.

END

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Authorship and Dissemination of Research Findings - Procedures
Higher Degree by Research Program Accreditation - Procedures
Higher Degrees by Research - Academic Policy
Higher Degrees by Research Scholarships - Procedures
Higher Degrees by Research Supervision - Procedures
Higher Degrees by Research Thesis Submission and Examination - Procedures
Intellectual Property: Student IP - Procedures
Managing and Investigating Breaches of Responsible Research Conduct - Procedures
Research Training Program Scholarships - Operational Policy
Responsible Research Conduct - Governing Policy
Selection of Students for Commonwealth ISSP Scholarships - Procedures
Student Conduct - Governing Policy
Student Fees and Charges - Governing Policy
Student Grievance Resolution - Governing Policy
Student Review and Appeals - Procedures

LINKED DOCUMENTS

Higher Degrees by Research - Academic Policy

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENTS

Higher Degrees by Research - Procedures

RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)
Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)
Australian Qualifications Framework
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017