

Infrastructure Support for Higher Degree by Research Candidates Policy

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Approval	University Research Committee 29 th April 2010 Vice-Chancellor's Group 12 th May 2010 Academic Board 12 th July 2010
Documents replaced by this policy	<i>Statement on Minimum Facilities for Postgraduate Research Students</i>
Procedures and/or guidelines supporting this policy	N/A

A. Introduction

Purpose

1. Infrastructure support for higher degree by research (HDR) candidates is an integral component of the University of Canberra's commitment to quality in its research degree courses. Completion rates, submission times, satisfaction with the HDR course and research outcomes are all closely related to the quality of infrastructure provision. This infrastructure includes physical facilities, financial assistance and participation in the research culture.
2. This policy outlines the University's minimum requirements with regard to the provision of infrastructure support for HDR studies at the level of the Faculty or University Research Centre (URC). The two schedules that accompany this policy provide guidelines to assist Faculties and URCs in the provision of the minimum requirements of the policy proper.

Scope

3. This policy applies to candidates enrolled in HDR courses at the University of Canberra, and to the staff involved in HDR supervision and administration at the University of Canberra.
4. A HDR course is defined by the Commonwealth Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) as an accredited course leading to a doctorate degree by research (including a Professional Doctorate) or a masters degree by research. At least two-thirds of the student load for the course is required as research work and not more than one third as coursework.

Legislation

5. This policy is governed by the *University Facilities Statute 1992*, the *Student Conduct Statute 1992*, the *Admission Rules 1995*, the *Student Conduct Rules 2009* and the *University Facilities (Information and Communication Technology Network) Rules 2006*.

B. Principles

General Principles

6. HDR candidates are regarded as full members of the academic research community. Their needs and requirements are considered with this principle in mind when resource allocation is negotiated.

7. HDR candidates are provided with infrastructure, facilities and resources appropriate to their role within the research community of the University.
8. Appropriate provision is made for the project-specific financial costs for each HDR candidate.
9. HDR candidates are involved in relevant research communities within their discipline areas and through attendance at national and international conferences.

Faculty/URC Responsibilities in the Provision of Infrastructure Support

10. It is the responsibility of the supervisors and relevant Faculty or URC to ensure that appropriate facilities are made available to candidates to undertake their research projects.
11. It is assumed that when a Faculty or URC recommends acceptance of a candidate into an HDR course, it has established that it has the appropriate facilities and resources to support the candidate's research project and its associated costs. The *Faculty Assessment of an Application for Admission (Section B)* makes explicit reference to funding for the project.
12. Faculties and URCs may provide infrastructure support beyond what is outlined in this policy. They may not offer less than these minimum requirements.
13. With HDR courses offered across a wide range of disciplines at the University, there is considerable variability in the project-specific needs of candidates across the institution. It is, therefore, important that Faculties and URCs clearly articulate what facilities and other support (such as travel funding) will be available to HDR candidates.
14. Each Faculty or URC is responsible for establishing written guidelines in relation to the infrastructure support that it offers its candidates. These guidelines will also set out how candidates can access resources available and apply for funding, and list the appropriate contact in the Faculty or URC. All Faculties and URCs must make this document available to all current candidates within the organisational unit. This document must also be provided to enrolling candidates as part of the Faculty or URC induction program.
15. Problems or concerns with regard to the provision of infrastructure support should be directed in the first instance to the supervisory panel then, in Faculties, to the Associate Dean Research (or delegate), followed by the Dean and, in URCs, to the Director. Concerns that are not resolved through Faculty/URC processes may be directed to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) through the Research Students' Office.
16. The University recognises that, in the case of URCs that are linked to a host Faculty, the responsibilities outlined in this policy might be shared (according to a particular demarcation of responsibilities) between the URC and the Faculty.

Minimum Resources

17. All full-time HDR candidates based on campus¹ will be provided with secure, shared office accommodation with guaranteed access to desk space. This accommodation must include lockable storage space and bookshelf facilities. This may take the form of lockers,

¹ The University recognises the importance of flexibility with regard to attendance status for HDR candidates, and understands that the attendance status of candidates may change throughout the course of study. In the interests of providing direction to users of this policy, 'on campus' attendance status may generally be understood as a situation where a candidate conducts 70% or more of the time spent on research work on campus.

lockable filing cabinets, bookshelves or other areas for the storage of digital or constructed objects and media. Infrastructure must comply with the applicable Occupational Health and Safety legislation² and the University's OH & S policy, procedures and guidelines. Faculties or URCs with significant numbers of part-time and off-campus candidates should arrange to have suitably equipped desk spaces and lockable storage areas which can be used by such candidates on a short-term basis as required and as arranged with the host Faculty or URC.

18. Access to suitably maintained laboratory, ward or studio facilities and technical equipment appropriate to the discipline and compliant with the applicable Occupational Health and Safety legislation and the University's OH & S policy, procedures and guidelines must be provided to full-time HDR candidates based on campus. Part-time and generally off-campus candidates are to be provided with laboratory, ward or studio space and time that are appropriate to their time on campus.
19. With due regard to the applicable Occupational Health and Safety legislation, the University's OH & S policy, procedures and guidelines and security procedures, there should be 24 hour access for HDR candidates to appropriate buildings and rooms, including 24 hour access to tearoom and washroom facilities.
20. Full-time HDR candidates must be provided with a desktop or laptop computer. HDR candidates must have access to on-campus computer facilities and support including networked printing; technical advice; help with academic software when required; and relevant enterprise systems. HDR candidates will have the same access as University academic staff to computer software provided by the University. Provision should be made for off-campus and part-time candidates to have guaranteed access to all the resources and support listed above, when required and as arranged with the host Faculty or URC.
21. HDR candidates will have the same level of access as University academic staff to communication tools such as
 - the WWW and e-mail, including the provision of a University of Canberra email account at the beginning of candidature;
 - an on campus postal address as required;
 - shared access to an internal phone extension with a reasonable level of free access; and
 - University stationery.

Part-time and off campus candidates are to be provided with access to these communication tools as appropriate to their time on campus. Provision must also be made for access to an operational and regularly serviced photocopier.

22. All candidates must be provided with full library services including appropriate access to inter-library loans, online journals and advice from Academic Planning librarians.

Financial Support

23. Faculties and URCs should each year determine the levels of general maintenance, project expenses and conference travel support that will be provided to support their HDR candidates and publish guidelines that inform candidates and supervisors accordingly.

² ACT legislation governing OH & S are the [Work Safety Act 2008](#) and the [Work Safety Regulations 2009](#).

24. The dollar amounts detailed in Points 25 and 26 below refer to minimum expenditure provision within a Faculty or URC budget, *not* a financial entitlement of HDR candidates. Faculties and URCs will detail in their guidelines the funds that candidates might access directly.

25. The University's minimum requirements for the support of a HDR candidate for the life of the candidature are a budgeted expenditure in 2011 of:

- \$13,000 for a candidate enrolled in 'high cost' PhD course;
- \$10,000 for a candidate enrolled in a 'low cost' PhD course;
- \$6,500 for a candidate enrolled in a 'high cost' masters by research course; and
- \$5,000 for a candidate enrolled in a 'low cost' masters by research course³.

The level of financial support budgeted for the life of candidature should not be less than the requirements set out above.

26. The total amounts listed in Point 25 may be pro rata for the period in which a PD or masters by research candidate is enrolled in thesis units.

27. *Schedule One (S1)* outlines a suggested funding distribution model for use by the Faculties and URCs. The University recognises that a different distribution model to that set out in *Schedule One* might be appropriate in some discipline areas. Faculties and Centres will detail in their guidelines their own distribution model which adheres to the University's requirements for minimum budget expenditure provision as outlined in Points 25 and 26 above.

28. HDR candidates are encouraged to present their work at appropriate national and international conferences. PhD or PD candidates should be assisted to participate in at least two national conferences or one international conference over the period of candidature. Masters by research candidates should be assisted to attend at least one national conference during candidature. *Schedule Two (S2): Guideline on National and International Conference Support during Higher Degree by Research Candidature* provides general principles that Faculties or Centres may follow in setting their own funding guidelines for conference travel.

29. It is expected that candidates will provide a comprehensive project budget in their proposal for confirmation of candidature, detailing prospective research project expenses.

Participation in the Research Culture at the University of Canberra

30. Research culture is fostered primarily within the University's Faculties and URCs. It is the responsibility of the host Faculty or URC to provide a healthy, active research culture and to encourage their HDR candidates' participation in this culture.

31. The University will provide a central formal induction day, twice a year, for all enrolling HDR candidates. It is expected that the Faculties and URCs also implement formal induction procedures which provide the candidate with information on:

- Faculty or URC guidelines and operational rules, as applicable, including infrastructure support guidelines;

³ The University follows the allocation of high cost and low cost fields of study as per the Federal Government's Higher Education Student Data Collection and as represented in the Research Training Scheme (RTS) Process Calculations published by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research. See Appendix 1 in the RTS Process Calculations document for high cost fields of study: <http://www.innovation.gov.au/Section/Research/Documents/RTSProcessCalculations2010.pdf>

- University occupational health and safety policies and procedures, including evacuation procedures;
 - An introduction to relevant Faculty and URC staff;
 - Tour of the work area and building;
 - Advice on accessing resources; and
 - Guidance on applying for tutoring or other employment within the Faculty or URC.
32. Wherever possible, and subject to satisfactory Annual Progress Reports, suitable HDR candidates may be given the opportunity to apply to tutor, demonstrate or engage in other professional development activities, within the policy on work approved by Academic Board (see *Gold Book Part 6: Progress in Higher Degree by Research Courses Policy*).
33. HDR candidates should be encouraged to present at least one paper per annum at the Faculty's or URC's program of research seminars, work-in-progress seminars or at Faculty or Centre HDR events.
34. HDR candidates must be provided with reasonable access to distinguished visitors, either in group seminars or on an individual basis when possible.

Quality Assurance

35. With regard to policy compliance, the University Research Committee oversees quality assurance and compliance in research training.
36. Each Associate Dean Research of a Faculty or Director of a URC will report in writing annually to the University Research Committee regarding compliance with this policy.
37. Where a Faculty or URC is not complying with the policy then the report will include:
- A description of the area/s of non-compliance as well as a strategy to address non-compliance issues within the Faculty or URC;
 - Details of additional resources required to bring the Faculty or URC into compliance with the policy; and
 - Where compliance cannot be achieved, e.g. due to physical constraints, a request for time-limited exemption from compliance with specific aspects of the policy.
38. The satisfaction of HDR candidates with the level of infrastructure support provided through Faculties and URCs will be monitored through the annual Research Student Satisfaction Survey (RSSS).

Related Documents

39. Documents related to this policy are:
- *Gold Book Part 4: Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Candidates Policy*
 - *Gold Book Part 5: Admission to Higher Degree by Research Courses Policy*
 - *Gold Book Part 6: Progress in Higher Degree by Research Courses Policy*
 - *Network Access Policy*
 - *Network Access and Use Policy: Responsibilities and Obligations*
 - *Health and Safety Policy*

Schedule One (S1): Funding Distribution Model for the Provision of Financial Support for HDR Candidates

S1.1 Four areas of funding distribution

The University's minimum requirements for financial support for HDR candidates are categorised into four key areas with a suggested distribution model:

- Baseline costs;
- Computer provision;
- Project specific expenses; and
- Conference travel.

The dollar amounts detailed below refer to minimum expenditure provision within a Faculty or URC budget, *not* a financial entitlement of HDR candidates. Faculties and URCs will detail in their guidelines the funds that candidates might access directly.

S1.2 Baseline costs

Each Faculty/URC will budget an amount to cover baseline costs listed below. The University estimates that this will be in the order of \$3,000 – \$4,000 for a four year doctoral candidature and \$1,500 - \$2,000 for a two year masters by research candidature. This expenditure is budgeted to support the cost of access to the following facilities and resources:

- General maintenance and access to office/tearoom/washroom;
- Photocopying/printing (both in-house and an account within the University library);
- Access to communication tools, as outlined in Point 21 of the policy;
- Full library services including access to essential inter-library loans and document delivery;
- Appropriate software as well as the maintenance of software licenses; and
- Thesis printing, editing and binding costs.

S1.3 Computer Provision

Each Faculty and URC will provide an own-use desktop or lap top computer for each full-time HDR candidate and a bank of computers for use by part-time and off campus candidates while on campus. The University recommends provision of budgeted expenditure of \$650 per HDR candidate per annum for the life of candidature (four years FTE for PhD/PDs, two years FTE for masters).

S1.4 Project Specific Expenses

Each Faculty and URC will budget for project specific expenses relevant to the discipline requirements in the Faculty/URC. The University recommends a minimum of \$4,000 for high cost and \$2,000 for low cost PhD degrees for the life of candidature (pro rata for masters by

research and PDs). This expenditure is budgeted for the support of research project expenses, and can include:

- Fieldwork expenses appropriate to the research project;
- Access to laboratory, ward or studio space, equipment and specialist consumables as required for the research project;
- Access to external specialist facilities as required by the research project;
- Support towards specialist software packages (such as data analysis software) appropriate to the research project; and
- Support towards specialist training programs as appropriate to the research project; and

S1.5 Conference Travel

Each Faculty and URC will budget a minimum expenditure of \$2,000 per PhD and PD candidature and \$1,000 per masters by research candidature to provide support towards the costs of conference registration, accommodation and travel to conferences during the life of the candidature.

Schedule Two (S2): Guideline on National and International Conference Support during Higher Degree by Research Candidature

A. Introduction

This document provides general principles that Faculties and University Research Centres (URCs) may follow in the development and review of their own funding guidelines for conference travel support for Higher Degree by Research candidates. Faculties and URCs are responsible for ensuring that all higher degree by research candidates are made aware of their current guidelines and thus the funding opportunities available to them with the Faculty and URC.

B. General Principles

1. The University of Canberra considers it an important part of the research education and training process to provide the opportunity for each candidate to present their research at national and/or international conferences.
2. Candidates should be encouraged by supervisors to submit applications to present at conferences at an appropriate point in their candidature and assistance should be provided in the preparation of the application. Candidates are also encouraged to submit their paper to a publication (such as conference proceedings) that satisfies the research publication categories acceptable under the Commonwealth Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) guidelines.
3. Financial assistance should be given for active participation in a conference, for example, the presentation of a paper or poster as senior author. Support may be available to candidates for conference attendance only, if there is a compelling evidence of the importance of this attendance to the ongoing research work. In the latter case, it is at the discretion of the Faculty or URC to set the guidelines for conference attendance.
4. Faculties and URCs are asked to develop a mechanism to assess applications for conference funding in an accountable and fair manner, according to clear, merit-based criteria.
5. Candidates who have been previously successful may apply for subsequent funding during candidature. However all decisions made by the Faculty or URC when assessing conference travel applications should be done equitably.

C. Criteria for Conference Support Funding

1. In order to apply for conference funding, candidates must be currently enrolled (not on a period of intermission).
2. Candidates who have exceeded the time limits allowed for their courses (PhD and PD – 4 years full-time equivalent, masters by research – 2 years full-time equivalent) are not eligible.

3. Candidates who have failed to submit a satisfactory Annual Progress Report from the previous year are not eligible.
4. Candidates who are academic staff members at University of Canberra may not apply if they are also eligible for staff travel funds.
5. The application for funding must clearly indicate that it is for a recognised national or international conference within the field of current study.
6. The candidate should normally be presenting a conference paper or poster (usually first author) that is appropriate to the discipline.
7. Faculties and URCs should encourage candidates to seek supporting funds from external sources. In the case where some funds towards the cost of conference travel are allocated from research grants or other internal or external sources, these amounts should be clearly indicated on the application.
8. Retrospective applications will not be considered.

D. Assessment of Applications

1. Applications should be assessed within the Faculty or URC on a prescribed basis (e.g. annually, twice-yearly, case-by-case) and the criteria and dates for conference applications should be communicated each year to all HDR candidates enrolled in the Faculty or URC.
2. In the process of allocating travel funds, the criteria taken into account may include the candidate's level of participation and contribution to the conference; the benefits of the candidates' participation to their research project; suitability of the conference for the candidate (including stage of candidature and performance); previous opportunities for conference attendance; and the effort of the candidate in identifying alternative funding sources.
3. If travel funding is awarded through application rounds, awardees should be informed of the result and the amount allocated within a reasonable time of the closing date for applications.