



Higher Degree by Research Code of Practice

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In developing this policy the University had regard to the provisions of section 40B(1)(b) of the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT).

1. PURPOSE:

1.1. The University is committed to providing a quality student experience. In the case of Higher Degree by Research candidates, a quality research environment and supervision is integral to this commitment. The *Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Code of Practice* is a mechanism for assuring quality in HDR training.

1.2. The University's *Code of Practice* is based on the *Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee Code of Practice for Maintaining and Monitoring Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Degrees* published by Universities Australia. Universities Australia recognises that the task of ensuring that research training is conducted in the most efficient and effective manner is shared by both University staff and HDR candidates. The University; its academic units and staff; and its Higher Degree by Research candidates, all have legitimate expectations of each other.

1.3. This Code of Practice sets out the responsibilities of the University, the Faculties and Research Institutes, supervisors and candidates. The policy does not provide an exhaustive list of every responsibility of the parties above. It involves implicit recognition that Faculty and Research Institute structures differ, lines of responsibility for research and HDR candidates vary from one academic unit to another, and the supervision of HDR candidates will frequently involve research areas and supervisory panels that cross Faculty and Research Institute boundaries.

2. SCOPE:

2.1. The Code of Practice applies to the supervision of candidates enrolled in Higher Degree by Research courses (Masters by Research, Professional Doctorates or PhD) only.

2.2. The Code complements the University of Canberra [Student Charter](#) which sets out the main rights and responsibilities of students within the University context.

3. PRINCIPLE:

Responsibilities of University of Canberra

- 3.1. The University of Canberra has the responsibility to establish a policy framework within which Faculty and Research Institute-specific guidelines can be developed. It is therefore the University's responsibility to ensure that:
- a. entry standards are clearly specified, which apply with due regard to discipline, and which are set to ensure that enrolling candidates are likely to have the capacity to succeed given adequate commitment by both the student and the supervisor;
 - b. requirements and standards for the particular degree are clearly described;
 - c. candidates have access to adequate physical facilities and resources for their research project and the minimum infrastructure support available to candidates is made clear to them prior to the commencement of candidature;
 - d. the intellectual property arising from the work of HDR candidates is protected, in accordance with the University's [Intellectual Property Policy](#).
 - e. annual reporting requirements and milestone requirements are set and these requirements adhered to and made clear to the students and supervisors;
 - f. there are procedures by which either a candidate or a supervisor may raise and seek resolution of grievances;
 - g. central standards exist for the registration of academic staff engaged in supervision;
 - h. a comprehensive development program for newly registered supervisors is provided at least on an annual basis and ongoing development is also provided;
 - i. there are explicit procedures for the examination process, including clear guidelines for examiners outlining the University's expectations for that particular degree; and
 - j. specific variations in the status of intellectual property or other necessary rules are explained in writing for candidates who conduct research with other bodies such as Cooperative Research Centres or industry partners.

Responsibilities of Faculties and Research Institutes

- 3.2. The Dean of the Faculty or Director of the Research Institute is responsible for ensuring that areas of responsibility for HDR candidates between affiliated Research Institutes, discipline areas and the Faculty are clearly articulated and advised to all academic staff.
- 3.3. Further, it is the responsibility of the Faculty or Research Institute Dean or Director to ensure that:
- a. the candidate meets the minimum requirements set out by the University for admission to candidature and appears to have the time, motivation, maturity and capacity to complete the degree successfully and on time;
 - b. the proposed research project is appropriate for the standard of the degree;
 - c. the discipline area proposed is appropriate for the research to be undertaken, and the discipline has the necessary space, facilities and resources needed for the project;
 - d. the discipline area proposed has the capacity to provide and maintain high quality supervision throughout the research period;
 - e. the proposed primary supervisor is sufficiently expert in the area of research to be able to offer the candidate appropriate intellectual input;
 - f. all members of the supervisory panel, including external supervisors, have the necessary discipline expertise and are registered according to the University's supervisor registration

- procedures;
- g. supervisory responsibility within panels is clearly designated and understood by the supervisors and the candidate;
 - h. the appointment of advisors to supervisory panels is a Faculty or Research Institute responsibility and can be valuable to provide essential supplementary expertise. All advisors are expected to behave ethically and professionally;
 - i. an academic staff member within the Faculty or Research Institute is appointed in a convener capacity for HDR students, whose duties it is to monitor the general progress and welfare of HDR candidates, to monitor compliance with administrative requirements such as reporting, and to facilitate resolution of grievances where necessary;
 - j. the University's requirements for reporting on the candidature are met, and supported by Faculty procedures as appropriate to the discipline;
 - k. written information is produced and distributed to all HDR candidates and supervisors with details on requirements and procedures relating to HDR matters administered at a Faculty or Research Institute level including:
 - o up-to-date guidelines on the facilities and resources (including conference and fieldwork funding) are developed and disseminated within the Faculty or Research Institute to both students and supervisors;
 - o discipline-specific guidelines on expectations regarding the content, format and length of milestones such as the Confirmation seminar and thesis submission are developed and disseminated to both students and supervisors;
 - o Faculty or Research Institute grievance procedures are available, whereby a candidate may make representation to the appropriate person if they believe his or her work is not proceeding satisfactorily for reasons outside his or her control, especially in situations involving problems of supervision or unresolved conflicts between candidates and supervisors;
 - o guidelines on health and safety procedures with regard to office space, laboratories, and other research spaces are applied;
 - o guidelines on research integrity including responsible practices in research and information on ethics applications and approval for working with humans or animals and Office of Gene Technology Regulator compliance are provided to both students and supervisors.
 - l. Appropriate opportunities are provided, by way of a Faculty or Research Institute seminar program and other research events, for candidates to develop their skills at presenting their work as well as facilitating their integration into a cohesive group and research culture, and developing links to the discipline at a national and international level.
 - m. Appropriate opportunities are provided for candidates to interact with and develop profitable intellectual relationships with one another.
 - n. Alternative supervisory expertise is provided should the primary supervisor for any reason cease to be an employee of the university.
 - o. Appropriate supervisory arrangements and access to resources are established for part-time and remote candidates.
 - p. Career advice and assistance are provided as appropriate and participation in professional and career development activities provided by the University is encouraged.

3.4. The University of Canberra requires each candidate to be supervised by a panel of appropriately qualified academic staff whose combined expertise and experience provides for appropriate intellectual input, quality supervision of the candidate and the timely completion of the degree. While the University expects all members of a supervisory panel to play an active role in the continued support of the HDR candidate towards timely completion, the responsibilities listed below are primarily those of the primary supervisor.

3.5. It is the primary supervisor's responsibility to:

- a. Provide appropriate academic support and intellectual input throughout the candidature, including giving guidance about the nature of research and research integrity; the requirements of the degree; standards expected for the thesis submission; choice of research topic; planning of the project timeline; and requirements for candidature milestones;
- b. Advise the candidate on the most effective use of his or her time and provide detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of milestones and chapter drafts, so that the thesis may be submitted on time;
- c. Ensure knowledge of and compliance with all University policies and procedures relevant to HDR candidature, including:
 - [Higher Degree by Research Enrolment and Changes to Candidature Policy](#)
 - [Higher Degree by Research Progress and Milestones Policy](#)
 - [Infrastructure Support for Higher Degree by Research Candidates Policy](#)
 - *Higher Degree by Research Examination Policy*
 - *HDR Generic Skills and Attributes Statement*
 - Human Research Ethics and Animal Ethics procedures as appropriate
 - Office of Gene Technology Regulator compliance
 - [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
 - [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)
- d. Ensure that the candidate has adequate access to the necessary facilities and resources, and participates in the intellectual life of the Faculty or Research Institute;
- e. Maintain close and regular contact with the candidate and establish from the outset the basis on which contact will be made;
- f. Request written work from the candidate on a prearranged, regular and agreed basis and return such work with constructive criticism within one month or less as appropriate;
- g. Arrange, as appropriate, for the candidate to present his or her research work in Faculty or Research Institute seminars and provide support in preparing for seminars;
- h. Monitor carefully the performance of the candidate relative to the standard required for the degree, ensuring that inadequate progress or work below the standard generally expected is brought to the candidate's attention. Notes should be kept of such discussions and actions taken;
- i. Provide accurate and honest feedback on the progress of the HDR candidate in relation to milestones, as required by the University and scholarship authorities;
- j. Ensure knowledge of the Faculty's or Research Institutes workflow for reporting unresolved problems in candidature progress, and follow this process in any instance when a problem is not resolved at a supervisory level;
- k. Comment critically and constructively on the content and drafts of the thesis and, at the time of submission, certify that the thesis is properly presented, confirms to University standards and is,

therefore, prima facie, worthy of examination;

- l. Advise the Associate Dean Research of the Faculty or Director of the Research Institute of the names and credentials of suitable examiners;
- m. Maintain currency in the knowledge and skills required for supervision through participation in development activities as provided through University supervisor development programs;
- n. Fulfil other institution-specific obligations regarding supervision; and
- o. Provide career advice and assistance as appropriate and encourage participation in professional and career development activities provided by the University.

Responsibilities of the HDR Candidate:

3.6. It is the responsibility of the candidate to:

- a. Diligently and intelligently proceed with the research as agreed between the candidate and the supervisory panel;
- b. Become familiar and comply with University policies governing the progression through the HDR course as well as how to conduct ethical and responsible research with either humans or animals;
- c. Discuss with the supervisor the type of guidance and comment considered most helpful, and agree to and maintain a schedule of meetings which will ensure regular contact;
- d. Take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties in maintaining adequate progress and share responsibility with the supervisor for seeking solutions;
- e. Maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the timeline developed and agreed with the supervisor;
- f. Present written material in sufficient time to allow for feedback before scheduled meetings;
- g. Provide accurate and honest progress reports to the Associate Dean Research of the Faculty or Director of the Research Institute, through the supervisor, at periods specified by the University;
- h. Follow, at all times, safe working practices relevant to the field of research as advised by the supervisor and the Faculty or Research Institute;
- i. Utilise the resources, facilities and opportunities provided by the Faculty or Research Institute to facilitate progress in the research, integrate into the intellectual community provided by the Faculty or Research Institute, and acquire or improve the skills and knowledge required for the completion of the project;
- j. Attend, where practicable, conferences, Faculty or Research Institute mini conferences, research forums and groups and University research events; and
- k. Accept responsibility for producing the final copies of the thesis for examination, including adhering to editing rules, arranging for its proof-reading and binding as well as consulting the supervisor regarding matters of style and presentation, according to disciplinary standards.

4. SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Other related documents

Selected policies and procedures related to the *Higher Degree by Research Code of Practice* are:

- [Student Charter](#)
- [Infrastructure Support for Higher Degree by Research Candidates Policy](#)
- [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy](#)

- [Admission to Higher Degree by Research Courses Policy](#)
- [Higher Degree by Research Progress and Milestones Policy](#)
- [Higher Degree by Research Progress and Milestones Procedure](#)
- [Higher Degree by Research Enrolment and Changes to Candidature Policy](#)
- [Higher Degree by Research Scholarships Policy](#)
- [ITM Policy Manual](#)
- Higher Degree by Research Generic Skills and Attributes Statement
- [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)