



## Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy

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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. This policy sets out the requirements and criteria for supervision of Higher Degree by Research candidates at University of Canberra.

### 2. SCOPE:

- 2.1. This policy refers to supervision of candidates enrolled in University of Canberra Higher Degree by Research courses.
- 2.2. This policy is designed to assist in the establishment of supervisory panels to ensure all Higher Degree by Research candidates receive high quality supervision during candidature.
- 2.3. This document is designed for use by University of Canberra staff.
- 2.4. This policy does not apply to non-research postgraduate courses or supervision of students enrolled in honours courses.

### 3. PRINCIPLE:

#### **Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Candidates at UC**

- 3.1. To ensure quality of supervision, all supervisors must register as outlined in this policy.
- 3.2. An offer for a Higher Degree by Research course place can only be made when appropriate supervision is in place.
- 3.3. Supervisors must hold a relevant qualification as detailed in this policy, or have recognised equivalent research experience.
- 3.4. Supervisors are expected to be research active to ensure a sound understanding of current scholarship and/or professional practice in the discipline.

3.5. Supervisors overseeing research involving the use of animals must be authorised to conduct experiments using animals in accordance with animal welfare legislation and are expected to have taken the University's mandatory Animal Ethics Training Course.

3.6. To maintain registration supervisors are required to engage with approved professional development opportunities at least every two years.

3.7. Supervision is the responsibility of the host Faculty or Research Institute.

### **Criteria for Supervisor Registration**

#### *Internal supervisors*

3.8. To be eligible for entry into the Supervisor Register, supervisors must meet the following criteria:

- Have obtained a research degree at the level at which they intend to supervise<sup>[1]</sup> or have recognised equivalent research experience<sup>[2]</sup>;
- Have a current active involvement in research;
- Have an ongoing University of Canberra appointment (or be adjunct or emeritus staff); and
- Have completed the University of Canberra's online modules on the supervision of Higher Degree by Research students and Research Integrity.

3.9. Education focused academic staff may supervise as secondary supervisor only, and must meet the criteria detailed in clause 3.8.

3.10. Professional staff may supervise as secondary supervisor only, and must meet the following criteria:

To be eligible for entry into the Supervisor Register as external supervisor, a supervisor must meet the following criteria

- Have obtained a doctoral research degree or have recognised equivalent research experience;
- Have a current active involvement in research;
- Have an ongoing professional position; and
- Have completed the University of Canberra's online modules on the supervision of Higher Degree by Research students and Research Integrity.

3.11. Education focused and Professional staff may supervise as primary supervisor in exceptional circumstances approved by the Associate Dean Research of the Faculty or Director of the Research Institute.

3.12. Applications for internal supervisor registration must be approved by the Associate Dean Research of the Faculty or Director of the Research Institute.

<sup>[1]</sup> *To supervise a doctoral candidate a supervisor must have obtained a doctoral qualification. To supervise a research master candidate a supervisor must have obtained a research master qualification.*

<sup>[2]</sup> *Assessed by the Faculty or Research Institute.*

#### *External supervisors*

3.13. To be eligible for entry into the Supervisor Register as external supervisor, a supervisor must meet the following criteria:

- Have obtained a doctoral research degree or have recognised equivalent research experience; and
- Have a current active involvement in research.

3.14. Applications for external supervisor registration must be approved by the Associate Dean

Research of the Faculty or Director of the Research Institute.

### **Panel Composition and Appointment of Supervisors**

3.15. Appointment of supervisors to a supervisory panel will be determined and approved by the Faculty/Research Institute.

3.16. Every supervisory panel must meet the following minimum standards:

- Each panel must consist of at least a primary and a secondary supervisor.
- The primary supervisor must have an ongoing academic appointment with the University (not sessional)
- Members of the panel, other than advisors, need to hold the relevant qualifications or recognised equivalent professional experience.
- Panels can be supplemented with additional registered supervisors and/or advisors as dictated by the needs of the research being pursued by the Higher Degree by Research candidate; and
- Every panel must have an agreed contingency plan in the event that a panel member needs to step down for any reason.

3.17. The Faculty/Research Institute must approve any changes to supervisory panel membership to ensure that the minimum standards are maintained and candidate support remains at the highest quality.

3.18. UC staff members who leave the University during the candidature of a Higher Degree by Research candidate may remain on the supervisory panel if approved and managed by the Faculty/Research Institute.

3.19. The Faculty/Research Institute will internally manage workload and time commitment for membership of a supervisory panel.

### **Responsibilities of Supervisory Panel**

3.20. The responsibilities of the supervisory panel include but are not limited to the following:

- Discuss choice of research topic, planning of research program and availability of resources.
- Ensure that the Higher Degree by Research candidates has a full understanding on his/her responsibilities and the expectations of the panel.
- Provide academic support (including timely feedback), guidance and evaluate progress.
- Maintain regular contact with the Higher Degree by Research candidate as dictated by the research program and milestones.
- Assist the Higher Degree by Research candidate in meeting milestones in a timely manner.
- Provide support and advice, including on funding, publishing and networking, and in pursuing additional opportunities.
- Monitor performance of the Higher Degree by Research candidate and address potential issues or problems as early as possible within the University framework.
- Assist in design and preparation of thesis material and submission of final thesis.
- Provide career advice and assistance as appropriate.

### **Responsibilities of the Primary Supervisor**

3.21. The primary supervisor has specific responsibilities in addition to the responsibilities of the supervisory panel:

- Primary responsibility for the Higher Degree by Research candidate's supervision and

progression.

- Responsibility for the management of the supervisory panel and the responsibilities of the panel. The primary supervisor must ensure that all panel members remain actively engaged in supervision.
- Main contact point for the Higher Degree by Research candidate unless otherwise agreed by the supervisory panel.
- Main liaison between the Higher Degree by Research candidate and the University.
- Facilitating opportunities for the secondary supervisor and other panel members to discuss the candidate's progress/progression.
- Provide guidance and advised in relation to Ethics requirements and ensure that the research is undertaken in accordance with the University's Ethics and Integrity guidelines and obligations, including applying for Ethics clearance as required and annual reporting of research progress.
- Completion of Higher Degree by Research milestones in a timely manner.
- Overseeing of all necessary administration with regard to milestones.
- Ensuring access to appropriate infrastructure is provided.
- Making available support for publication and research dissemination.
- Ensuring advice on the acquisition of a range of research and other skills is available.
- Ensuring that the Faculty/Research Institute is informed of progress and any issues with regard to supervision.
- Ensuring access to an active research team/centre.
- Facilitating opportunities to interact with the wider academic community nationally or internationally.
- Timely completion of the degree.

### **Responsibilities of the Secondary Supervisor**

3.22. The Secondary Supervisor has the following responsibilities:

- Provide academic support (including timely feedback), guidance and evaluate progress.
- Attend panel meetings regarding candidates' progress and at required milestones.
- Act in place of the Primary Supervisor when they are absent from the University.
- In the case of Professional Staff, Education Focused academic staff or externally registered supervisors appointed as Secondary Supervisor, if the period of absence of the Primary Supervisor is longer than three months, an appropriate interim Primary Supervisor must be appointed.

### **Role of Advisors**

3.23. Advisors can provide essential supplementary expertise to support a supervisory panel. This expertise is typically specialised assistance in an area or a specific aspect of the Higher Degree by Research candidate's program.

3.24. Advisors can be engaged under the following conditions:

- Advisors may only be appointed with Faculty/Research Institute approval to established panels that meet all other requirements.
- An advisor is not required to be registered as a UC supervisor.
- An advisor may not act as primary or secondary supervisor.

- Appointment of an advisor may be for a specific period of time or for the full candidature period as needed.

### **Roles of Adjuncts**

3.25. University of Canberra adjuncts can become involved in the supervision of Higher Degree by Research candidates, providing they are registered and they have approval of the relevant Faculty/Research Institute.

3.26. Adjuncts are not permitted to supervise as Primary Supervisor.

### **Role of External Supervisors**

3.27. External experts can become involved in the supervision of Higher Degree by Research candidates with the approval of the relevant Faculty/Research Institute.

3.28. External supervisors are not permitted to supervise as Primary Supervisor.

3.29. In order to act as a Secondary Supervisor an external supervisor must be registered. The Faculty/Research Institute will facilitate the registration process for external supervisors.

### **Supervisor Register management**

3.30. The registration of supervisors is approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation) or delegate.

3.31. The registration process and management of the Supervisory Register will rest with Graduate Research.

3.32. Professional development will be recorded in the Register, and monitored for compliance by Graduate Research.

## **4. SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

- [Admission to Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Courses Policy](#)