

Research Masters (Honours) Policy

Academic Senate approved the retirement of the Research Masters (Honours) Policy (AS24/06:04) on publication of the revised Higher Degree by Research Policy and suite of HDR Procedures that were published on 1 January 2025.

Note: This policy is currently under review to reflect the establishment of the Graduate Research School and Master of Research course, and the replacement of Masters (Honours) terminology by the Master of Philosophy.

Section 1 - Purpose and Context

(1) This policy establishes policy for the academic governance of the Research Masters (Honours) degree, M (Hons), including the admission of candidates, matters related to the enrolment and progression of candidatures, examination and graduation.

Section 2 - Definitions

(2) Definitions for the purpose of this policy:

- a. A Research Masters (Honours) is a research higher degree of which at least two-thirds of the study must be undertaken as independent research.
- b. A Research Training Scheme candidate is a candidate funded under the Commonwealth Research Training Scheme that provides eligible higher degree research students with an entitlement to a HECS exemption for the duration of an accredited higher degree research course.
- c. The Dean is the Dean of a University School.
- d. The Director, Research Institute is the Director of a University Research Institute (Institute).
- e. The HDR Director is the relevant Director (e.g. Director, HDR or Director, Research and HDR) as determined by the Dean, or an equivalent role as determined by the Director, Research Institute.
- f. The School or Research Institute (Institute) Research and Higher Degrees Committee is the relevant School Research and Higher Degrees Committee, or the equivalent committee for an Institute as determined by the Director, Research Institute in consultation with the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President, Research, Enterprise and Global.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(3) The M (Hons) degree is aimed at the research skills development of the candidate, with particular emphasis on research methodology appropriate to the field of study. It is intended to provide candidates with the opportunity to develop their potential for research, enhance their skills in problem identification and specification, and their ability to develop and present solutions.

(4) The Research and Higher Degrees Committee will approve a Schedule of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Delegations specifying the tasks that may be undertaken by an HDR Director or equivalent on behalf of the relevant School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee, with reporting to the next meeting of that Committee. This Schedule will be an Associated Document to this Policy, and will include a list of delegations under

this Policy that are held by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee, the Research Studies Committee, and the Dean or Director, Research Institute.

Part A - Admission

Approval of Admission

(5) An applicant for admission to candidature for the degree of Research Masters (Honours) must satisfy the requirements specified in this Part of the Policy. The relevant School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee makes a recommendation to the Dean or Director, Research Institute for endorsement or otherwise on behalf of the School or Institute.

(6) Endorsed recommendations from the Schools and Research Institutes are considered by the Revocations Committee, which recommends a consolidated list of candidates to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President, Research, Enterprise and Global who has authority to approve their admission.

Academic Qualifications of the Applicant

(7) An applicant for admission to candidature for the degree of Research Masters (Honours) shall hold:

- a. A bachelor honours degree; or
- b. A bachelor degree, normally, and demonstration in an appropriate discipline or disciplines of a capacity for research deemed by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee to be acceptable for the purpose of proceeding to the degree.
- c. In those cases where an applicant does not have a bachelor degree the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee may take into consideration professional training, relevant work experience, research or other creative output and seniority and standing in an area of endeavour; or
- d. Qualifications from a university or other tertiary institution deemed by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee to be equivalent to the requirements set out above.

(8) In exceptional circumstances a Dean or Director, Research Institute may approve the admission of an applicant who does not have the qualifications specified in clause 7. In such cases the Dean or Director, Research Institute will consider evidence to be supplied by the candidate and verified by the relevant HDR Director or equivalent, that shows that the applicant has equivalent qualifications based on academic and professional attainment and demonstration in an appropriate discipline of a capacity for the research. The Dean or Director, Research Institute may approve admission on the basis of equivalent capacity.

(9) An applicant who does not meet the admission criteria described above may be required to successfully undertake a Graduate Certificate in Research Studies and/or other nominated University accredited units, as part of their M (Hons) program but these must be satisfactorily completed before Confirmation of Candidature. A student who does not satisfactorily complete the units within the time frame prescribed for confirmation of candidature will normally not be permitted to continue enrolment.

(10) In some cases where the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee determines, the candidate may be required to undertake nominated University accredited units as part of the M (Hons) program and in such cases the units must be satisfactorily completed before Confirmation of Candidature.

Approval of Resources, Thesis Topic and Supervisory Panel

(11) The Dean or Director, Research Institute must attest that adequate supervision and facilities are available before he/she approves admission.

(12) The School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee shall approve the thesis topic and a supervisory panel. The supervisory panel will normally comprise a Principal Supervisor and at least one other member. Panels will be appointed in accordance with the [Higher Degree by Research Procedures - Supervision](#).

English Language Requirements

(13) Where an applicant has completed all previous studies in a language other than English, the University will require the applicant to demonstrate a satisfactory command of the English language.

(14) Completion of a tertiary level qualification (Certificate IV or above), where the medium of instruction was English, meets this requirement.

(15) Applicants can also demonstrate English proficiency by achieving a prescribed level in an approved English examination. The approved English Language tests include the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Combined Universities Language Test (CULT).

(16) standards required are:

- a. IELTS - 6.5 overall score with a minimum 6.0 in each subtest;
- b. TOEFL - 575 (minimum 4.5 in TWE);
- c. TOEFL computer based test - 232 (minimum 4.5 in Essay Writing);
- d. TOEFL Internet based test - 89; (writing = 21 and subtests = 18);
- e. Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English - (CAE) - A grade of B or above; or
- f. Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English - A grade of B or above.

(17) If applicable, candidates must also meet [Department of Home Affairs](#) requirements for English language ability for the issue of student visas, according to country of origin.

(18) English Language proficiency tests must be no more than two years old at the time of commencement of study at the University.

Part B - Candidature

Conditions of Enrolment

(19) A candidate is expected to establish and maintain enrolment at the University by completing the requirements for initial enrolment and annual re-enrolment.

(20) Candidates must submit a Commencement of Candidature form within three months of first enrolment. Alternatively, the Principal Supervisor must advise the Graduate Research School of the commencement date of the candidate within that time frame. If the Graduate Research School is not advised of a commencement date via one of these methods within the three months, the candidate will be required to either defer or have their enrolment terminated.

(21) Except when the candidate is on approved leave, failure to re-enrol will lead to the candidate being deemed to have abandoned the course.

(22) Candidates are responsible for ensuring that the Graduate Research School is advised of any changes to their personal and contact details during the period of their enrolment and examination.

(23) Candidates must access their University student email account.

(24) Candidates are required to make themselves available for consultation with academic advisors on campus.

(25) Commencing candidates must undertake such Orientation programs as are directed by the Research Studies Committee.

Full or Part-time Mode of Candidature

(26) At admission a candidate shall be designated as full-time or part-time by the Dean or Director, Research Institute on the recommendation of the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee, with advice, where applicable, from the relevant Director, University Research Centre.

(27) International on-shore candidates may not enrol part-time.

(28) Scholarship recipients must usually enrol full-time and are advised to consult their Conditions of Award for further information.

(29) A candidate may change their mode of candidature from full-time to part-time or part-time to full-time on approval of the HDR Director or equivalent.

(30) A full-time candidate should expect to spend approximately 35 hours a week throughout the year on the program of research and advanced study and to attend the University for consultation as required by the Principal Supervisor.

(31) A part-time candidate should expect to spend approximately 20 hours a week throughout the year on the program of research and advanced study and to attend the University for consultation as required by the Principal Supervisor.

Period of Candidature

(32) The minimum period of candidature is one year full-time, or the part-time equivalent.

(33) The maximum period of candidature is two years full-time, or the part-time equivalent.

Extension of Candidature

(34) It is the responsibility of both the candidate and supervisor to ensure timely completion. Scholarship end dates are different from candidature completion dates and recipients should consult their conditions of award for information relating to the duration and implementation of scholarships.

(35) Applications for extension beyond maximum time may be considered by the Dean or Director, Research Institute where there is clear evidence that there have been delays beyond the control of the candidate that could not have reasonably been foreseen.

(36) Research Training Scheme Candidates requiring extensions beyond two years will have exhausted their Research Training Scheme entitlement.

(37) Extensions of Research Training Scheme entitlements may be granted for a maximum period of one session without additional fees being applied.

(38) Where a Research Training Scheme candidate is granted an extension for more than one session, the candidate will be liable for full sessional course tuition fees for the period of extension in excess of one session.

Changes to Supervisory Panel or Topic

(39) The Dean or Director, Research Institute may approve changes of Principal Supervisor.

The HDR Director or equivalent may approve additions to the supervisory panel or changes to the thesis

topic during the period of candidature. Changes to thesis topic may not be of a nature that would require substantial reworking or abandonment of work already accomplished in the candidature.

(40) Changes to the supervisory panel or thesis topic do not constitute grounds for an extension of candidature or scholarship.

(41) All changes to candidature shall be reported to the Research Studies Committee.

Overseas Research by Higher Degree Candidates

(42) Candidates are considered University travellers if they are conducting work overseas that contributes towards their degree, whether funded by the University or not.

(43) Candidates must apply for permission of their School or Institute to travel overseas to conduct field work.

(44) Candidates must book travel using the University travel booking system.

(45) University Travel arrangements are processed using the University [Travel Portal](#).

(46) Applications must be lodged via the University Travel Portal using an e-TAN, at least 21 calendar days before the planned departure.

(47) Research candidates undertaking field research are subject the University's WH&S obligations and must consider any travel advice issued by the [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(DFAT\)](#). University travellers must adhere to and monitor DFAT travel advisories when organising and travelling overseas.

Applying for Permission to Travel

(48) All candidates travelling overseas to conduct research should apply using the [Application to Vary Research Candidature/Scholarship Form](#).

(49) International candidates are advised to contact Western Sydney International to ask about the validity of their visa if they leave Australia for any period. This must be endorsed by an International Student Advisor.

(50) Australian citizens and permanent resident scholarship holders may take up to 12 months field work overseas and remain in receipt of their scholarship. However, certain conditions must be met regarding supervision during that period and relevance of the work to completion of the degree, see; [Higher Degree by Research Procedures - Scholarships](#).

(51) The candidate must apply for permission to the relevant HDR Director or equivalent at least three months before the proposed date of departure.

Part C - Academic Progress and Review of Candidature

Early Candidature Plan and Confirmation of Candidature

(52) Candidates must complete an Early Candidature Plan with their Supervisory Panel within the first six months of enrolment.

(53) Candidates must successfully complete a formal Confirmation of Candidature within three to six months of commencement of candidature. Full-time candidates will normally complete the Confirmation of Candidature within six months. Part-time range is 3 to 12 months.

(54) Human Ethics applications cannot be submitted until the Confirmation of Candidature has been successfully

completed.

(55) Failure to successfully undertake a Confirmation of Candidature may lead to termination of candidature. Refer part H for details on the process for termination of candidature and the appeals process.

Presentation of Work and Participation in Activities

(56) Candidates must attend and participate in those candidate activities required by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee or the Research Studies Committee. It is expected that all research candidates will present their work on campus at least once per year, at School or Institute conferences or colloquia or as part of the annual progress review.

(57) Failure to attend candidate research events deemed compulsory by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee or the Research Studies Committee may lead to termination of candidature. Refer Part H for details on the process for termination of candidature and the appeals process.

Annual Progress Reports

(58) Candidates must submit an Annual Progress Report from the second year of enrolment. The candidate's report must be accompanied by a report by the candidate's Supervisory Panel.

(59) Annual Progress Reports will be reviewed by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee, and a summary of outcomes reported to the Research Studies Committee.

(60) If the Research Studies Committee, on the recommendation of the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee, is of the opinion that the annual report reveals serious unsatisfactory progress the Research Studies Committee may terminate the candidature or take such other action as it considers appropriate.

(61) Failure to complete an Annual Progress Report may lead to termination of candidature. Refer Part H for details on the process for termination of candidature and the appeals process.

Part D - Leave of Absence

(62) In special cases, the HDR Director or equivalent may grant leave of absence from candidature.

(63) As a general guide valid reasons for leave of absence include: serious medical reasons, family/personal reasons or employment-related reasons that are causing significant disruption to the candidate's capacity to study effectively.

(64) The period of such leave shall not be counted as part of the period of candidature for the degree.

(65) The maximum amount of leave will normally be two sessions in any one candidature.

(66) On resuming candidature after leave of absence a candidate shall be enrolled for not less than one session before being permitted to submit a thesis for examination.

Part E - Ethics Committee Approval

(67) Research topics involving human participants or animal subjects or the use of micro-organisms of Risk Group 2 or higher, whole micro-organisms, in vivo use of imported biological products, specimens of human origin (including blood products), recombinant DNA and ionising radiation sources require approval of the relevant University Ethics or Safety Committee.

Part F - Conflict of Interest

(68) Staff and candidates must observe the principles of the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) within the context of research higher degree enrolment and the appointment of supervisors, panellists on Confirmations of Candidature, and external examiners.

Part G - Resolution of Difficulties

(69) Supervisors and candidates must seek to resolve any problems through informal dispute resolution pathways, where possible and before taking steps to initiate a termination of candidature. Informal measures include discussions with key staff such as the relevant HDR Director or equivalent, and other staff members. Efforts to resolve disputes through informal resolution pathways must be documented and such documents must be retained by all both parties to the dispute. Where a resolution to the dispute is reached, the resolution must be set out in a document agreed to and retained by both parties. Supervisors and/or candidates may seek advice from the relevant Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

(70) Where efforts to resolve a dispute through the above informal dispute resolution pathway fail, it is open to either party to seek to resolve the dispute by formal referral to the Chair of the Research Studies Committee [the Chair]. Such referral must include all documents demonstrating efforts to resolve the dispute through the informal pathway.

(71) On the basis of documents provided, the Chair will determine whether the requirements of clause 69 have been met. Where it is determined that the requirements are not met, the matter will be referred back into the processes as set out in clause 69.

(72) Where the Chair determines that the requirements of clause 69 are met and it is clear that a resolution could not be reached via that process, the Chair will establish a sub-committee of the Research Studies Committee to consider the matter. The sub-committee is to meet within 21 calendar days of the receipt of the referral by the Chair.

(73) The sub-committee will consist of:

- a. the HDR Director or equivalent from another School or Institute;
- b. two other members of the Research Studies Committee who are not members of the Supervisory Panel.

(74) Both parties will be notified of the date the sub-committee will meet, and may elect to make a submission to the sub-committee in relation to the matter.

(75) The sub-committee will make a decision within 21 calendar days of its meeting and both parties will be provided with a copy of the decision of the sub-committee.

(76) The decision of the sub-committee is final and no further appeals will be considered.

(77) Where a party to the formal dispute can show evidence of procedural irregularity or unfairness, such evidence will be referred and considered in accordance with the [Complaint Management Policy](#).

Part H - Show Cause and Termination of Candidature

(78) Candidature may be terminated for:

- a. Failure to make academic progress during the period of candidature;
- b. Failure to attend candidate research events deemed compulsory by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee or the Research Studies Committee;
- c. Failure to complete a Confirmation of Candidature;

- d. Failure to complete an Annual Progress Report; and
- e. Academic misconduct as described under the Misconduct - Higher Degree Research Candidate Misconduct in Research Policy.

(79) The School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee will refer the recommendation to request a show cause to the Research Studies Committee. The Research Studies Committee will make a decision on requesting the candidate to show cause why they should be permitted to continue their candidature. The candidate will be told why the request has been made and they will be given ten working days from the date of the letter to respond. The Research Studies Committee will make a decision about the candidature based on the response and information from the School or Research Institute.

(80) Where a candidate fails to attend candidate research events deemed compulsory by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee, and the Committee recommends termination of candidature, the matter will be referred to the Research Studies Committee for a determination with a full explanation of why the recommendation has been made. The Research Studies Committee will make a determination about continuation or termination of candidature.

(81) Where a candidate fails to complete a Confirmation of Candidature and the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee recommends termination of candidature, the matter will be referred to the Research Studies Committee for a determination with a full explanation of why the recommendation has been made. The Research Studies Committee may recommend conditional continuation of candidature.

(82) Where a candidate fails to complete an Annual Progress Report and the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee recommends termination of candidature, the matter will be referred to the Research Studies Committee with a full explanation of why the recommendation has been made. The Research Studies Committee will make a determination about continuation or termination of candidature.

(83) The candidate has the right of appeal under the [Academic Appeals Procedures](#) in respect of decisions to terminate candidature made by the Research Studies Committee under this Part.

Part I - Upgrade to Doctoral Studies

(84) In some circumstances a candidate and supervisory panel may consider an upgrade from a research masters to a doctoral program. (see Clause 9, Doctor of Philosophy Policy). Upgrades are not to be seen as a way of circumventing doctoral admission policies but as a step to be taken when it can be demonstrated that the quality and depth of the candidate's work warrants such a consideration. The candidate's scholarship will be demonstrated by markers such as written research design and analysis, the Confirmation of Candidature document, a literature review, completed chapters and publications.

(85) The Confirmation of Candidature should be completed as a Research Masters (Honours). The applicant should provide the confirmation document and the confirmation report with the application to upgrade.

Applications

(86) Applications will be considered by the relevant School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee and referred to the Dean or Director, Research Institute for a decision.

(87) Criteria for an upgrade:

- a. The quality and originality of the research already completed: General quality will be reflected in an original methodology or procedure of originality and merit and/or an original analysis of compelling significance.
- b. The scope and complexity of the project: It must be shown that the scope and complexity of the project are

beyond that which could be reasonably expected of a Research Masters degree. The project must be shown to have a clear focus that will fulfil the requirements of a doctoral degree by leading to the uncovering of new knowledge by the discovery of new facts, the formulation of theories or the innovative re-interpretation of known data and established ideas.

- c. Research capabilities of the applicant: The assessment of the research capability of the applicant will normally be demonstrated by the completion of a significant body of material, including written research design and analysis.

Part J - Thesis

(88) The candidate's thesis must be the candidate's own account of the work undertaken. The thesis may consist of a single written work or a combination of a written work with work in other media (exhibition, performance, novel, film, video, computer program, etc.). The language of expression and analysis must be English and reach a satisfactory standard of literary presentation. Candidates in modern languages may submit a thesis in a language other than English with the approval of the Research Studies Committee.

(89) A candidate may not submit as the main content of the thesis any work or material which has been previously submitted for any degree, but may incorporate such work or material in the thesis if the candidate specifies the work or material which has been so incorporated and if it does not form part of the main content of the thesis.

(90) In exceptional cases, work done conjointly with other persons may be accepted, provided that the Research Studies Committee is satisfied as to the candidate's part in the conjoint research.

(91) The Supervisory Panel must be satisfied that the thesis meets a suitable academic standard and format and presentation requirements before it may be submitted by the candidate. Supervisory panel approval for the examination to proceed will be indicated on the Examination Submission Form. The Examination Submission must be endorsed by the HDR Director or equivalent

(92) If the Supervisory Panel does not agree that the thesis is ready for examination, the candidate may refer the matter to the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee for determination. If examination has been refused because the thesis does not meet a suitable standard of format and presentation, referred to in clause 92, the examination will not proceed. In other cases the matter will be forwarded, with a recommendation to the Research Studies Committee for a decision. The School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee may refer the matter to the Research Studies Committee for a determination if the School or Institute Committee is unable to reach agreement. If the examination is refused the candidate will be asked to remain enrolled and to take further academic advice from their Principal Supervisor.

(93) The University does not prescribe a word limit and candidates should seek the advice of the supervisory panel. However, 80,000 words is considered to be the upper limit for M (Hons). Most disciplines have a general expectation of a minimum of 40,000 words for a research masters.

(94) A candidate shall submit to the Graduate Research School three copies of the written component of the thesis prepared in a form approved by the Research Studies Committee, and include a 300 word summary and a certificate of authenticity signed by the candidate to the effect that the work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other institution. The candidate shall also indicate in the thesis the sources of information and the extent to which the candidate has used the work of others. For advice on writing the certificate of authenticity see Thesis Presentation Guidelines.

(95) Any component(s) of the thesis in other media shall be submitted in a form approved by the Research Studies Committee. The Research Studies Committee will seek advice from the relevant School, Research Institute or Research Centre on any non-printed text-based component of the submission for examination.

(96) All copies of the thesis presented for examination will be returned to the candidate. Examiners will be requested to return their copies unless they specifically request to keep their copy and the candidate agrees.

Part K - Examination and Award of Degree

Early Submission for Examination

(97) Candidates who wish to submit work for examination before completion of the minimum period of candidature should apply in writing to the Research Studies Committee with the support of their Supervisory Panel and School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee. The Research Studies Committee will seek evidence that no purpose would be served by continuing the candidature in terms of academic readiness of the work.

Thesis Examination

(98) On the recommendation of the Principal Supervisor and the School or Institute HDR Director or equivalent, the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee shall appoint two external examiners of the thesis.

(99) An external examiner is a person who is not employed as a member of the staff of the University at the time when invited to examine the thesis, and who has not been a member of University staff within the five years prior to the examination.

(100) There will not normally be more than one examiner from any one institution.

(101) Past Supervisors of the candidate cannot act as an examiner.

(102) Examiners will hold qualifications at the level of or the equivalent to that which they are examining and be recognised academic leaders in their discipline.

(103) Candidates may advise their Principal Supervisor if there is a particular person in their field who they would prefer not to have as an examiner. They may also inform the Principal Supervisor of people that they would particularly like to have as an examiner. However, the final recommendation will be made by the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee who will approve the examination panel.

(104) Candidates will not be informed of the composition of their examining panel at the time of examination. Candidates may eventually learn the identity of an examiner, if the examiner agrees to their name being disclosed on the thesis report. Examiners may request that their identity not be disclosed.

(105) The examiners will be asked to assess the work to determine if:

- a. the thesis as a whole makes an original contribution to the knowledge of the subject with which it deals at research masters level;
- b. the thesis provides a sufficiently comprehensive study of the topic appropriate to the degree in the discipline area, or in related interdisciplinary areas;
- c. the methods adopted are appropriate to the subject matter and are appropriately applied;
- d. the research findings are suitably set out, accompanied by adequate exposition and are discussed critically in the context of the discipline;
- e. the quality of English and general presentation is satisfactory.

(106) Each examiner shall report in writing to the Graduate Research School within six weeks of the date of posting of the thesis. Examiners may be replaced if a report is not received within two months unless the examiner is given leave to report late.

(107) Each examiner's written report must recommend one of the following outcomes:

- a. A - the degree be awarded;
- b. M - the candidate be required to undertake minor rewriting of an editorial nature (as identified by the examiners to the satisfaction of the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee before the degree is awarded;
- c. R - the candidate be required to undertake rewriting that is of greater magnitude than minor editorial changes (as identified by the examiners) to the satisfaction of the Research Studies Committee before the degree is awarded;
- d. X - the candidate be required to revise and resubmit for further examination within a specified time; or
- e. F - the degree not be awarded.

(108) The examiners may request to submit a conjoint report. The decision to permit a conjoint report will be made by the Research Studies Committee, in consultation with the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee.

(109) The examiners' reports will be sent by the relevant HDR Director or equivalent to the Principal Supervisor for comment and advice. The Principal Supervisor will prepare a written report for the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee that will recommend an initial outcome and list in detail any recommended changes to the thesis.

(110) Where the examiners present recommendations of A or M the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee may approve the initial examination outcome and report its finding to the Research Studies Committee.

(111) Where one or more examiners recommend R, X or F the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee will seek the advice of the Supervisory Panel and refer the matter to the Research Studies Committee.

(112) The Research Studies Committee may specify the time within which any additional work shall be completed. Normally all corrections will be made within one session of the candidate being advised to make changes or rewrite for re-examination.

(113) The Principal Supervisor must advise the Graduate Research School if a candidate who is re-writing will need access to the library and other facilities.

(114) The Research Studies Committee will consider the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee report and the Graduate Research School will advise the candidate of the Research Studies Committee decision.

(115) Examination outcomes remain confidential to the candidate until a final recommendation is decided.

(116) In certain circumstances where the outcome is not clear, before making any determination the Research Studies Committee may take one or more of the following actions:

- a. appoint an additional examiner;
- b. appoint an arbiter;
- c. invite the examiners to confer with each other and/or with the Research Studies Committee with a view to the presentation of a consolidated recommendation; and/or
- d. direct that the candidate undertake such further examinations oral, written or practical as the Research Studies Committee may specify.

Re-writing and Re-examination

(117) Option X shall be available only for initial examination of the thesis.

(118) A re-examination will be conducted on the basis of specific advice given to the candidate on what must be

achieved in rewriting.

(119) The specific instructions to the candidate for rewriting for re-examination will be approved by the Research Studies Committee.

(120) The rewriting instructions will be written by the Supervisory Panel and endorsed by the Research Studies Committee.

(121) These instructions will be provided to the examiner for the re-examination as they will form the basis of the second examination.

(122) No new criticisms may be introduced by the examiner in the second examination.

(123) The examiner(s) who recommended that the thesis be re-examined shall be invited to undertake the re-examination.

(124) The rewritten thesis will be presented for the second examination with an Examination Submission Form.

Access to Examiner's Report

(125) Candidates will be given a copy of each examiner's report at the completion of the examination process. Each report will include the name of the examiner unless he/she requests, in writing, that his/her name be withheld. Examiners are to be informed that Access to Information ([GIPA](#)) legislation might limit the effectiveness of this option.

Award of the Degree

(126) When the Research Studies Committee is satisfied that all requirements have been met, it shall agree that the degree be awarded.

(127) On successful completion of the degree, a candidate must submit to the Graduate Research School one digitised (CD or disc in PDF format) copy of the thesis incorporating all amendments and/or rewriting that was required as an outcome of the examination. Detailed advice on format of the digital copy can be found on the [Australian Digital Theses Program web page](#).

(128) The candidate must submit an electronic copy of the approved thesis and a completed Right of Access Form in order to graduate.

(129) A digital copy of the thesis will be made available via the University Library unless the School or Institute Research and Higher Degrees Committee, on the application of the candidate determines in exceptional cases that it will not be made available until after the expiry of a period, which shall not normally exceed one year.

Section 4 - Procedures

(130) Forms for application for admission, variation of candidature, examination processes; nomination of examiners, thesis lodgement form and amendments completed can be found on the University's website.

Section 5 - Guidelines

(131) This policy should be read in conjunction with the Supervisors Code of Practice, [Higher Degree by Research Procedures - Supervision](#) and University Policies, including:

- a. [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#);

- b. [Responsible Conduct of Research Procedures - Animal Research Ethics](#);
- c. [Higher Degree by Research Procedures - Resources](#);
- d. Misconduct - Higher Degree Research Candidate Misconduct in Research Policy; and
- e. [Schedule of Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Delegations](#).

(132) Scholarship recipients should consult their Conditions of Award for additional advice relating to candidature.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	2nd November 2012
Review Date	2nd July 2016
Approval Authority	Academic Senate
Approval Date	11th September 2012
Expiry Date	16th January 2025
Unit Head	Jeffrey Powell Dean, Graduate Studies and Researcher Development jeff.powell@westernsydney.edu.au
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