Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Policy outlines the qualifications, responsibilities and requirements of the University's Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Supervisors, and defines accountability for HDR supervision at Victoria University in order to ensure quality supervision of HDR candidates.

Section 2 - Accountability

Key Decision-making powers under the Policy

(Delegated) Power	Role
Power to approve a Supervisor exceeding the permitted maximum supervisory load.	Dean, Graduate Research

Section 3 - TEQSA/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(2) HESF: 4.1 Research; 4.2 Research Training; 3.2 Staffing.

Section 4 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to:

a. Higher Degree by Research candidates;

b. Supervisors of Higher Degree by Research candidates;

c. Those involved in the administration of Higher Degree by Research candidates.

Section 5 - Definitions

(4) Principal Supervisor

(5) Associate Supervisor

(6) External Supervisors

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Section 6 - Policy Statement

(7) This Policy is written to ensure that Victoria University's supervision of research students meets the required standards of the relevant governing bodies:

    a. TEQSA [Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth)](#), Standard 4;

    b. [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) (Cth)](#) (including additional Supervision notes).

(8) Victoria University is committed to developing a vibrant and flourishing research culture. One of the mechanisms to achieve this is by offering higher degrees by research (HDR), specifically research Masters and Doctoral degrees (including PhDs and Professional Doctorates). The provision of appropriate and high-quality supervision to HDR candidates is essential to this process.

(9) All HDR Supervisors must be registered on the VU Research Supervisor Register before supervising candidates. Approval of supervisors for registration is the responsibility of the Deputy Director, Research Institute (or nominee) and the Dean, Graduate Research.

(10) All HDR candidates must have at least two supervisors, from the time of enrolment. One of the supervisors will be designated the Principal Supervisor. The Principal Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the HDR candidate meets all administrative and academic requirements of their course. All HDR candidates must also have at least one Associate Supervisor, who may be an External Associate Supervisor.

(11) HDR supervisors will have the qualifications and experience required, including discipline-specific knowledge, to direct the work of the HDR candidate and to provide training in the planning and execution of research. Supervisors are required to ensure that HDR candidates receive adequate and timely support throughout their candidature.

(12) The supervision of HDR candidates is complex, with many competing priorities and requirements. To provide high-quality supervision of HDR candidates requires ongoing training and development in the practice of supervision and research training, as well as active engagement with the research community of the relevant discipline.

(13) HDR Supervisors and candidates will hold regular meetings to monitor and facilitate satisfactory academic progress as prescribed in the [Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#) and procedures. Supervisors must guide the candidate in making satisfactory academic progress.

(14) HDR Supervisors will ensure that provisional supervision arrangements are made if they are to be on extended leave. The Deputy Director, Research Institute (or nominee) is responsible for ensuring the continuity of supervision of candidates enrolled in their Institute, and for minimising disruption to candidate progress in the event of unplanned changes to supervisory arrangements.

(15) A registered HDR supervisor may be deregistered through the deregistration process outlined in the [Higher Degrees by Research Supervision - Supervisor Registration and Professional Development Procedure](#).Detailed information regarding supervisor registration requirements, application and approval processes, changes to supervisor arrangements, review processes, training and development, and deregistration are outlined in the [Higher Degrees by Research Supervision - Supervisor Registration and Professional Development Procedure](#).

(16) All HDR supervisors regardless of their contractual arrangement with VU must abide by the principles as set out in the [Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy](#).

Section 7 - Procedures

(17) [Higher Degrees by Research Supervision - Supervisor Registration and Professional Development Procedure](#)

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Responsible Officer	John Price Dean, Graduate Research 9919 2046
Enquiries Contact	John Price Dean, Graduate Research 9919 2046

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"External Supervisors" - Supervisors who do not hold an ongoing or contract of one year of more at Victoria University (VU). For the purposes of Graduate Research supervision academics holding adjunct or honorary appointments are considered to be external supervisors.

"Principal Supervisor" - The primary academic supervisor of a research student, recognised as the academic leader of the candidate's supervisory team. A principal supervisor must be a doctorally qualified member of staff who is research active in a field or discipline relevant to the candidate's research.

"Associate Supervisor" - A member of staff who is research active, not necessarily in the field or discipline relevant to the candidate's research.