

# Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 2 Enrolments

## Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) Nil

## Section 2 - Scope / Application

(2) This Procedure outlines Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) enrolment, re-enrolment, changes to enrolment, auditing of additional units of study and the process for discontinuation of candidature.

## Section 3 - Definitions

(3) Maximum duration - Represents the amount of time for which Commonwealth funding is provided for candidates undertaking a HDR program. The same duration of candidature is applied for all candidates.

(4) Intermission - Candidates may apply for intermission from the program for reasons that prevent them carrying out their research. Time spent on intermission will not count towards the duration of candidature and is normally granted for up to twelve months irrespective of mode of study.

(5) Additional Intermission - In exceptional cases, intermission beyond twelve months may be granted.

(6) Higher Degree by Research (HDR)

## Section 4 - Policy Statement

(7) [Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#)

(8) [Enrolments Policy](#)

## Section 5 - Procedures

### Part A - HDR enrolment: General

(9) The processes of enrolment, intermission and discontinuation for HDR candidates are outlined in these procedures. In accordance with clauses 11-13 of the [Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#) , and Part B (clause 10) of the [Enrolments Policy](#) a graduate research candidate (candidate) will be required to enrol and re-enrol each year until thesis submission.

(10) The process and timeline for enrolment will vary according to the enrolment category. Candidates may be enrolled in one of the following categories:

- a. Research Training Scheme (RTS — local candidates only);
- b. Full-fee paying (local or international); or
- c. Fee-Scholarship (full or partial, local or international).

(11) HDR Candidates studying full-time equates to a commitment of 38-40 hours per week. The University would normally expect full-time HDR candidates to have no other study commitments, but in no case should they be studying more than part-time in a second course. Outside work and study commitments need to include the total number of hours linked to the activity not just face to face tuition/teaching time and should not exceed 15 hours per week in total.

## **Part B - Initial enrolment**

### **All candidates**

(12) Initial enrolment is organised by the Graduate Research Centre (GRC). This occurs through arrangement with the College Support Officer (CSO).

(13) Local applicants must bring their letter of offer and evidence of citizenship and certified hard copies of required academic documents to the enrolment session.

(14) International applicants must bring their Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) letter, their passport, the letter of offer and, if a sponsored student, also proof of their financial guarantee.

(15) Candidates are given a University @ live email account when they enrol. Candidates must access this account regularly as the University sends most correspondence via email, including student announcements and progress reports.

## **Part C - Offshore enrolment**

(16) Victoria University (VU) will normally only consider applications for offshore enrolment, or a change of status from onshore to offshore, in exceptional circumstances. Those circumstances are:

- a. where the candidate is part of a larger university-endorsed arrangement for a research degree course to be delivered offshore and where there is clear evidence of a suitable academic environment through online and blended course delivery and/or in conjunction with a host institution;
- b. compassionate and compelling circumstances that prevent or make it difficult for the candidate to study or continue to study in Melbourne.

(17) The following conditions must be met for candidates who have been granted permission to enrol offshore:

- a. the candidate must declare on the [Apply for Research form](#) the principal location at which research studies will be undertaken;
- b. candidature is subject to the satisfaction of course progression requirements including:
  - i. completion of required coursework where applicable;
  - ii. candidature confirmation; and
  - iii. ongoing progress review.
- c. the Principal Supervisor must be a member of the University;
- d. a local Associate Supervisor should be appointed;
- e. a supervision schedule (for example, monthly Skype meetings, weekly email exchange, annual face to face meetings) must be approved by the College Director, Research Training (and, where applicable, a

Centre/Institute Director) at the time of enrolment, or at the time the candidate requests to become an offshore candidate.

(18) Candidates will be notified in advance of applicable fees.

(19) University refund policies apply to offshore candidates.

(20) The offshore enrolment process follows the process outlined in Part C, depending on residency status.

(21) International applicants who are offshore for the duration of their course follow the process for local enrolment without the involvement of Victoria University International (VUI).

(22) VUI will need to be involved in the enrolment process for those international applicants who are predominantly offshore but who will be onshore for more than three months during their candidature, as a student visa may be required for these periods.

## **Part D - Re-enrolment**

(23) Re-enrolment is required annually and no later than the census date for each semester.

(24) Where candidates fail to re-enrol by the census date:

- a. candidature will lapse and candidates will be required to apply for reinstatement into the degree (see Part D of [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 3 Pre-Candidature and Candidature](#));
- b. any scholarship stipend that a candidate has been entitled to will be suspended effective from the relevant census date.

(25) Supervision and resources can only be provided whilst a candidate is enrolled.

(26) Once a candidate has submitted their thesis for examination they are not required to re-enrol, however they will remain a student of the University until their thesis has been submitted for classification.

## **Part E - Changes to enrolment**

### **Change from onshore to offshore**

(27) Candidates seeking to transfer their enrolment status to offshore must seek approval from the GRC and attach supporting documentation from their Principal Supervisor. Such candidates must adhere to all conditions for offshore enrolment as outlined in Part C of these procedures. Failure to do so may result in the University discontinuing the enrolment.

### **Change in enrolment time fraction**

(28) A local candidate may apply to change their enrolment from full time to part time mode of study or vice versa. Approval by the GRC will depend on a number of factors, including:

- a. whether the candidate is in receipt of a stipend scholarship;
- b. availability of places; and
- c. supervisor load.

(29) Any candidate who is considering a change in their mode of study must discuss this with their supervisor and their CSO. If the candidate is a stipend scholarship holder, they must inform the [Senior Coordinator, Admissions and Scholarships, GRC](#), as normally such a change will result in the cessation of the stipend.

(30) International candidates are not permitted to enrol part time except under exceptional circumstances. All international candidates must consult with VUI ([Compliance](#)) and their CSO if they need to make any change to their enrolment.

### **Change of enrolment category**

(31) All candidates initially enrol in one of the three categories outlined in clauses 9 (a)-(c). However, as candidature progresses, any candidate may request that their enrolment category be changed (for example, a fee-paying candidate may ask to be reclassified and be admitted on an RTS-based enrolment).

(32) Changes to enrolment categories are possible, but do not constitute an entitlement. The University may decline such an application.

(33) Where an application to change enrolment category has been declined a candidate may seek a review of the decision by the relevant authority as outlined in the Reviews and Appeals of Decisions section in the [Enrolments Policy](#).

### **Change between Colleges**

(34) Candidates may change supervisors under conditions outlined in the [Supervision Policy](#) , where such a change does not contravene any Australian law, for example [Australian Autonomous Sanctions](#).

(35) Where this occurs, and the new Principal Supervisor is employed in a different College/Centre/Institute to that of the candidate's initial enrolment, the candidate may continue to be enrolled in the initial College/Centre/Institute of enrolment provided that the College/Centre/Institute can continue to support the candidate and their project. In such cases the hosting College/Centre/Institute is expected to make arrangements with the new Principal Supervisor's College/Centre/Institute in relation to supervision costs, and would continue to provide other support and facilities for the candidate.

(36) Where the change in project direction and supervisory arrangements means that the initial College/Centre/Institute of enrolment is no longer able to support the candidate and their project, an official change of College/Centre/Institute needs to be considered.

(37) Upon agreement between the respective Colleges' Directors of Research Training (and, where applicable, the relevant respective Centre/Institute Directors) the candidate must complete a [Course Discontinuation form](#) and a new Enrolment form for the receiving College/Centre/Institute. Once this has been approved by the receiving College, arrangements will be made between the two Colleges (and where applicable Centres or Institutes) for all aspects of the candidate's re-location.

### **Changes to personal details**

(38) It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that any changes to their personal details are updated through submission of a [Personal Details Amendment form](#) or through the [MYVU portal](#) . Stipend scholarship holders must also inform the [Senior Coordinator, Admissions and Scholarships, GRC](#) , of any changes in their circumstances.

## **Part F - Auditing/enrolling in a single unit of study**

(39) A candidate may enrol in a single unit of study that is not mandatory to their course. This unit will appear on the transcript as a non-award unit of study. In order to enrol in a single unit, the [Non Award Unit of Study Application HE form](#) and a separate Enrolment form must be completed. Candidates will incur a separate fee for that unit.

(40) A candidate may audit a single unit of study to gain further knowledge to assist with their research (for example, research methodology). The candidate must consult with their supervisor before seeking to audit a unit.

(41) Arrangements for a candidate to audit a unit of study are to be negotiated between the candidate's supervisor and the relevant Unit Convenor.

## Part G - Intermission

(42) Candidates may apply for intermission for up to 12 months for any reason, including illness, family difficulties or financial hardship. Candidates must complete and submit an [Application for Intermission form](#) to the GRC prior to the leave commencement date.

(43) The period of intermission must be within the candidature maximum duration, otherwise an extension to candidature must first be applied for. If the candidate has reached maximum duration, then an application for late submission must be lodged on the [Application for Extension form](#).

(44) Applications for intermission prior to pre-candidature approval for any period of more than four weeks will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the College Director, Research Training and, where applicable, the relevant Centre or Institute Director. Pre-candidature applicants requiring extended intermission should consider discontinuing their studies and reapplying when they are in a position to return to study.

(45) Candidates who require intermission beyond 12 months must consider one of two options:

- a. [Additional Intermission](#) ;
- b. Discontinuing with a view to applying for Reinstatement of candidature (under Part D of the Pre-candidature and Candidature Procedures) if and when their circumstances change.

(46) Applications for Additional Intermission must be approved by the College Director, Research Training (and, where applicable, the relevant Centre/Institute Director). Additional intermission is only granted in exceptional circumstances, such as ongoing medical condition/s, carer responsibilities, bereavement, etc and must be supported by medical certificates and/or other supporting documentation (such as a letter from a counsellor).

(47) Additional intermission can be applied for in blocks of time up to six months in any one application, provided that supporting evidence is supplied that is judged to justify the granting of additional leave.

(48) Applications for more than 18 months Additional Intermission must be authorised by the Dean, Graduate Research, on the recommendation of the College Director, Research Training (and, where applicable, the relevant Centre/Institute Director).

(49) International candidates have visa restrictions which limit their ability to intermit whilst still resident in Australia. Any international candidate who requires intermission must seek approval from VUI before an [Application for Intermission form](#) can be processed.

(50) A candidate on intermission has no entitlement to access supervision or training and support programs, and must not undertake any data collection that is subject to the approval and oversight of one of the University's ethics committees during such a period.

## Part H - Discontinuation

### Candidate-initiated discontinuation

(51) A candidate may discontinue their course at any stage and for any reason prior to thesis submission by completing and submitting the [Course Discontinuation form](#) to the GRC.

(52) A candidate who has achieved Candidature and discontinues from their course may reapply at a later date to be reinstated into their course (see Part D of the [HDR Procedure 3 Pre-candidature and Candidature](#)) and should contact

the GRC to discuss their individual case. Reinstatement is not granted automatically and will depend on the reasons for discontinuation, current place restrictions, availability of supervision and resources, and the viability of the proposed project.

(53) A candidate who has achieved Candidature, and who has a documented ongoing medical condition or personal situation over an extended period that affects their capacity to maintain their enrolment may discontinue, documenting these reasons. Should their circumstances subsequently change they will be eligible to be considered for reinstatement through the Reinstatement of Candidature process outlined in under Part D of the Pre-candidature and Candidature Procedures .

(54) Applicants who discontinue before achieving Candidature, or who wish to be admitted to a different research degree, must apply for admission to the course they wish to pursue through the Admission Process (see the [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 1 Admissions](#)).

### **University-initiated discontinuation**

(55) If the College has confirmed their incapacity to provide supervision as a result of the circumstances outlined in [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 7 Supervision](#), the Dean, Graduate Research will advise the candidate in writing, requesting discontinuation from their research degree. The candidate will also be advised that they will not be entitled to re-enrol.

(56) In the circumstances outlined in clause (54) the candidate's College/Centre/Institute and the GRC will provide advice to the candidate to assist them in locating another university in which to undertake their postgraduate research.

(57) If the candidate does not voluntarily discontinue their enrolment within 20 University business days from the written notification, the GRC will discontinue their enrolment. The candidate will be advised in writing when their enrolment has been discontinued.

(58) International candidates who have been asked to discontinue are required to liaise with VUI so that notification of appropriate authorities can be made in relation to their student visa.

(59) GRC may also discontinue candidature in certain circumstances such as:

- a. failure to notify of a change to offshore enrolment status;
- b. failure to voluntarily discontinue or transfer to alternative study options where the candidate:
  - i. has not met the requirements to proceed to the research component of a research degree;
  - ii. has not met candidature following the second attempt;
  - iii. has been advised that the Unsatisfactory Progress Panel has reviewed their case and recommended discontinuation of candidature.
- c. where the candidate has been nominated for Unsatisfactory Progress and has not requested a hearing;
- d. a formal outcome of a formal disciplinary process.

(60) International candidates will be given 20 days' notice of any discontinuation to be effected under any of these circumstances.

## **Section 6 - Guidelines**

(61) Nil



## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
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## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Higher Degree by Research (HDR)"** - A Higher Degree by Research (HDR) is a postgraduate award at Master or Doctoral level at AQF 9 or 10 respectively, of which two thirds or more is research and research training. The major part of assessment of these courses must be in the form of reporting the outcomes of a research project/s conducted as the research component of the degree. A HDR may also include a coursework component, which is one or more accredited units of study designed to address and area(s) of content and/or skill development within the HDR program.