

Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 3 Pre-Candidature and Candidature

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure outlines standard duration, maximum duration, confirmation of candidature and milestones, extensions, advanced candidature, Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) required coursework, progression from pre-candidature to candidature, changes to and reinstatement of candidature.

Section 2 - Accountability

Accountable/Responsible Officer	Role
Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
Responsible Officer	Dean, Graduate Research

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to domestic and international candidates and University staff administering this Policy.

Section 4 - Definitions

(3) Pre-Candidature

(4) Candidature

(5) Maximum duration of candidature: at the discretion of Victoria University of up to 4 years EFT for a Doctoral degree and 2 years EFT for a Masters by research degree.

(6) Post Maximum Duration Fees: fees incurred by the candidate who has exceeded the maximum duration of their degree by more than one semester.

(7) HDR at the masters level: encompass' candidates enrolled in one of the four masters by research degree.

Section 5 - Policy/Regulation

(8) [Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#).

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Office for Researcher Training, Quality & Integrity (ORTQI)	<p>Inform candidates of the required coursework units at the time of enrolment.</p> <p>Coordinate the candidature milestone presentations to monitor progress.</p> <p>Identify candidates approaching maximum duration and provide advice on the appropriate course of action.</p> <p>Identify candidates who have exceeded maximum duration by more than one semester and notify Student Financials to issue a Statement of Account for payment of tuition fees. Notify Enrolments and Student Financials of international candidates who have been identified.</p> <p>Upon the Flagship Research Institute/Centres approval, process any changes to course type, course level and reinstatement of candidature.</p>
Flagship Research Institute/Centres	<p>Provide an outcome for the candidate of the candidature milestone presentations.</p> <p>Provide an outcome for the candidate for any changes to course type, course level and reinstatement of candidature.</p>
Enrolments & Student Financials	<p>Issue a Statement of Account to candidates who have been deemed to incur post maximum duration fees.</p>

Part B - Period of Candidature in Higher Degrees by Research

Pre-Candidature and Candidature

(9) All successful applicants in a HDR at Victoria University (VU) are initially enrolled on a provisional basis in their HDR course, known as the Pre-Candidature phase of enrolment.

(10) During the Pre-Candidature phase, candidates complete any required coursework (where applicable), undertake initial research towards their thesis project, and prepare for candidature confirmation.

(11) A candidate's enrolment in their HDR degree is considered confirmed when their candidature and research (proposals) receive final approval via Confirmation of Candidature.

(12) Candidature, once endorsed by the Chair, Review Panel and approved by the Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres or nominee, is deemed to have commenced from the date of initial enrolment in the respective degree.

Standard Duration of Higher Degrees by Research

(13) As stipulated in the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#), candidates enrolled in HDR at the masters level typically have one to two years equivalent full-time (EFT) enrolment in which to complete their degree.

(14) The standard duration for the following degrees, which were introduced in 2019, is dependent on the volume of learning acquired prior to enrolment in the HDR at the masters level, the discipline of the qualifying degree and the degree in which the candidate is enrolled:

- a. Master of Applied Research- 2.0 years
 - i. Following a Level 7 qualification (Bachelor Degree) in a different discipline.

- b. Master of Research- 1.5 years
 - i. Following a Level 7 qualification (Bachelor Degree) in the same discipline -
 - ii. Following a Level 8 qualification (Bachelor Degree with Honours or Graduate Diploma) in a different discipline.
- c. Master of Research Practice 1.0 years
 - i. Following a Level 8 qualification (Honours or equivalent) in the same discipline.
- d. Masters by Research (for commencing candidates pre-2019)- 2.0 years
 - i. a three-year bachelors (AQF7) degree with average grades of at least H2A/Distinction for the final year (equivalent to above 70 per cent on the VU grading scale);
 - ii. a four year bachelors degree/Honours (AQF8) degree with average grades of at least H2A/Distinction for the final year (equivalent to above 70 per cent on VU grading scale);
 - iii. a Post-graduate Graduate Diploma (AQF8) in a relevant discipline with average grades of at least H2A/Distinction (equivalent to above 70 per cent on the VU grading scale);
 - iv. a Master by Coursework (AQF9) degree with average grades of at least H2A/Distinction (equivalent to above 70 per cent on the VU grading scale);
 - v. qualified for any other award judged by the University to be of a relevant and appropriate standard and have:
 - produced evidence of professional experience through which he or she has developed applied knowledge of the relevant field of study, and which satisfies the University that he or she has the capacity to undertake study for a masters level research degree; and
 - fulfilled any other conditions relating to prerequisite study which the University may have imposed in respect of admission to the research degree.

(15) The maximum duration for a Master degree is 2.0 EFT years, however some candidates are expected to complete their degrees prior to this EFT as indicated in Clauses (14).

Doctoral degrees

(16) Doctoral candidates should normally complete their degree between three and four years EFT. Standard duration is three years EFT and Maximum duration is four years EFT.

Submission prior to standard duration

(17) The University recognises that some candidates may have demonstrated exceptional research skills, have completed all the requirements of their degree and are ready to submit their thesis prior to the standard duration of their degree.

(18) A candidate may submit their thesis 12 months EFT or more before their standard duration expires by requesting approval from the relevant Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres (or nominee). The following documentation must be submitted to ORTQI:

- a. an electronic copy of the thesis;
- b. a completed [Release of Thesis form](#);
- c. a detailed letter from the Principal Supervisor indicating the reasons for early submission; confirming that the thesis has been verified as being the candidate's own work and analysed through Turnitin.

(19) ORTQI will forward the thesis and accompanying documentation to the relevant Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres (or nominee) for review.

(20) The relevant Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres (or nominee) may convene a Review Panel to

assist with reviewing and approving an application.

(21) The candidate will be advised of the outcome via email. If the application is approved, the candidate is required to submit an electronic copy to ORTQI and the thesis will be sent for examination subject to examiners being approved.

Extensions to Candidature Beyond Standard Duration

Masters by Research, Master of Research, Master of Applied Research and Master of Research Practice

(22) Candidates are ineligible to apply for an extension to candidature beyond the maximum duration of 2 years (EFT) for any VU HDR at the masters level.

Doctoral degrees

(23) Doctoral candidates who successfully participate in their Towards Submission Review (see Part E- Milestones: Mid-Candidature Review and Towards Submission) will be provided with a formal extension to 3.5 years (EFT). Candidates who then reach 3.5 years (EFT), without submitting their thesis for examination, must apply for an extension to candidature using the [Application for Extension form](#). Further extensions will only be granted to the four years (EFT) for doctoral candidates.

(24) Doctoral candidates who have reached 3.0 years (EFT) but who have not successfully participated in the Towards Submission Review, or are not scheduled to do so, must apply for an extension to candidature using the [Application for Extension form](#). The maximum period that will be approved is six months (EFT) and extensions will only be granted for total elapsed enrolment of up to four years (EFT).

(25) All applications for extension must be accompanied by a supporting statement from the Principal Supervisor and a new timeline.

(26) All applications for extension will be reviewed and thereafter may be approved by the Deputy Director Flagship Institute, or their nominee.

(27) In addition to an extension to candidature, candidates who are in receipt of HDR scholarship is outlined in the [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 6 Scholarships](#).

Late Submissions - Post-Standard and Maximum Duration

Masters by Research Degree, Master of Research, Master of Applied Research and Master of Research Practice

(28) Where a Masters candidate expects to exceed the standard duration for their degree, an application for Late Submission must be lodged as part of the Towards Submission Review (if applicable - refer to Confirmation of Candidature). Late submission dates should normally be no later than one semester post the standard (i.e. 1.0, 1.5 or 2.0 years) duration of their degree.

(29) Late Submission requests are approved by the relevant Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres. Alternatively, the Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centre may recommend Unsatisfactory Progress proceedings be invoked in accordance with [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 4 Progress](#).

(30) If a Late Submission date is granted and the candidate fails to submit by the approved late submission date, the relevant Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres will automatically recommend that Unsatisfactory Progress proceedings commence against the candidate in accordance with [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 4 Progress](#).

(31) International candidates who exceed maximum duration and who have an approved Late Submission date will be required to apply for an extension to their Confirmation of Enrolment and may be required to extend their visa.

(32) International full fee paying candidates will continue to incur tuition fees at the current international fee rate.

(33) International scholarship awardees whose tuition fee scholarship has ceased at maximum duration will incur tuition fees at the current international fee rate.

(34) International full paying candidates who received a waiver of tuition fees, which ended at maximum duration, will incur tuition fees at the current international fee rate.

Doctoral candidates

(35) Where a doctoral candidate expects to exceed four years (EFT), an application for Late Submission must be lodged with ORTQI two months prior to four years (EFT). The application must provide strong justification for a Late Submission beyond four years (EFT). The application must detail the strategies to ensure the thesis is submitted by the requested Late Submission date. Late submission dates should normally be no later than 4.5 years EFT for doctoral candidates.

(36) All applications for Late Submission will be reviewed and thereafter may be approved by the Deputy Director Flagship Research Institute/Centres or their nominee.

(37) Late Submission requests are approved by the relevant Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres. Alternatively, the relevant Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres may recommend Unsatisfactory Progress proceedings to be invoked in accordance with [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 4 Progress](#).

(38) If a Late Submission date is granted and the candidate fails to submit by the approved late submission date, the relevant Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres will automatically recommend Unsatisfactory Progress proceedings commence against the candidate in accordance with [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 4 Progress](#).

(39) International candidates who exceed maximum duration and have an approved Late Submission date will be required to apply for an extension to their Confirmation of Enrolment and may be required to extend their visa.

(40) International full fee paying candidates will continue to incur tuition fees at the current international fee rate.

(41) International scholarship awardees whose tuition fee scholarship has ceased at maximum duration will incur tuition fees at the current international fee rate.

(42) International full paying candidates who received a waiver of tuition fees, which ended at maximum duration, will incur tuition fees at the current international fee rate.

Post Maximum Duration Fees

(43) Candidates who have exceeded the maximum duration of their degree and have a Late Submission date of more than one semester for their degree (4.5 EFT for Doctoral, 2.5 EFT for Masters by Research, 2.5 EFT for Master of Applied Research, 2.0 EFT for Master of Research and 1.5 EFT for Master of Research Practice) will incur post maximum duration tuition fees for their enrolled status by the census date.

(44) A full time enrolled candidate will be charged a tuition fee of \$6000 per semester and a part time enrolled candidate will be charged a tuition fee of \$3000 per semester.

(45) Student Financials will issue the candidate with a Statement of Account requesting payment in 10 University working days.

(46) If an international candidate does not pay the fees by the due date or apply for additional time in which to pay the tuition fee under [Exceptional Circumstances Fee Extension](#), they will be issued a 20 day notice of the University's intention to cancel their enrolment. Once the notice expires, the candidate's enrolment and eCOE will be cancelled due to non-payment and reported to the Department of Home Affairs.

(47) If a domestic candidate does not pay fees by the due date or if eligible, defer the payment via FEE-HELP or apply for a Fee Extension to defer the payment until the census date, their enrolment will be cancelled due to non-payment.

(48) Candidates who have submitted their thesis for examination and the completed Release of Thesis has been endorsed by the Chair of Examiners, Student Financials will reverse the Research Late Fee and liaise with candidates where refunds are applicable.

Part C - Pre-Candidature: Research Degrees with Required Coursework

Progress in Required Coursework Units (non-Thesis Units)

(49) At enrolment in a HDR course, candidates will be informed about any required coursework unit/s. Candidates must successfully complete all required coursework units to the required level to proceed to the research phase of their degree and candidature confirmation.

(50) A candidate's progress in the required coursework will be monitored by Leader of Academic Programs in ORTQI, or their nominee, who would normally be the HDR Coursework Co-ordinator.

(51) Candidates are required to achieve an average of 70% in their coursework units relevant to their higher research degree.

(52) Candidates who do not achieve an average of 70% are permitted to re-submit the final piece of assessment for the unit(s) that they did not achieve a result of 70%. The final result of the unit will include the result of the original submission or re-submission, whichever is the greater.

(53) On completion of all required coursework and achievement of the required average of 70% across the required units, a candidate will proceed with the research component of their degree, or for PhD (Integrated) candidates, then undertake their Year One Thesis (see Clause 56).

(54) If after the re-submission(s) of their final piece of assessment a candidate does not achieve the required average of 70%, a member of ORTQI's Academic Programs, normally the HDR Coursework Co-ordinator, will counsel the candidate and advise them as to their options, such as course discontinuation or transfer to a more suitable course.

(55) If a candidate does not accept the option(s) proposed, Unsatisfactory Progress Proceedings will be commenced against the candidate in accordance with [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 4 Progress](#).

Progress Required in the Year One Thesis - PhD (Integrated)

(56) Candidates are required to achieve 70% in their Year One Thesis, in order for them to progress to the research phase of their degree.

(57) If a candidate does not achieve 70% in their Year One Thesis on their first attempt, and the result is between 65% and 69%, they are permitted to submit their thesis for re-assessment. After formally receiving the results of their re-assessment of their Year One Thesis, candidates are given one month to resubmit their Year One Thesis, with the average of the two assessments used to calculate the final result.

(58) After the re-assessment of their thesis, if a candidate does not achieve 70% in their Year One Thesis, a member

of the ORTQI's Academic Programs, normally the HDR Coursework Co-ordinator, will contact the candidate to discuss their progress and advise them as to their options, such as course discontinuation or transfer to a more suitable course. If a candidate does not accept the option(s) proposed, Unsatisfactory Progress Proceedings will be commenced against the candidate in accordance with [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 4 Progress](#).

Progression to the Research Phase of a HDR

(59) Once candidates have successfully completed their required coursework and/or Year One Thesis, they will progress to the research phase of their degree. The candidate's Candidature Confirmation process will proceed as per Part C in this Procedure.

Part D - Progression from Pre-Candidature to Candidature

(60) Whilst in Pre-Candidature, candidates participate in required induction, coursework, work with their supervisors to plan their research project and prepare a Candidature application and proposal according to the [Confirmation of Candidature Guidelines](#).

(61) The outline of the planned research project, incorporating resources required and a timeline, will be presented to the Flagship Research Institute/Centres in which the candidate is enrolled, based on the following timelines:

- a. Doctor of Philosophy: Within 6-12 months (EFT) of initial enrolment;
- b. Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated): Within 15 months (EFT) of initial enrolment;
- c. Professional Doctorates: Within 3-6 months (EFT) of completion of required coursework;
- d. Master of Applied Research: Within 6 months (EFT) of initial enrolment;
- e. Master of Research: Within 6 months (EFT) of initial enrolment;
- f. Master of Research Practice: Within 4 months (EFT) of initial enrolment;
- g. Masters by Research: Within 6 months (EFT) of initial enrolment.

Pre-Candidature Extension

(62) The Pre-Candidature phase may be extended for a clearly defined additional period when one or more of the following unanticipated difficulties have been experienced:

- a. disruption to supervisory support arrangements (e.g. need to change supervisor/s; unanticipated absence of supervisor/s);
- b. change in focus and direction of proposed project;
- c. revision required in the review process leading up to presentation for candidature;
- d. difficulties in scheduling of Candidature Confirmation deliberations and/or in convening a suitable confirmation panel;
- e. documented personal illness or other serious personal difficulties;
- f. other unforeseen disruptions beyond the candidate's control that have directly impacted on their capacity to prepare for Candidature.

(63) A candidate must apply for an extension to Pre-Candidature by lodging the [Application for Extension form](#) with ORTQI two months prior to their expected candidature confirmation date if additional time is required to prepare for confirmation of candidature. ORTQI will notify the candidate in writing of the outcome of their application.

Confirmation of Candidature Process

(64) Each HDR candidate will be required to submit a completed [Application for Confirmation of Candidature](#) and [Graduate Research Supervision Agreement](#) when they are applying for Confirmation of Candidature. Candidates

should refer to [Confirmation of Candidature Guidelines](#) as well as seek guidance from their supervisor(s) during this period.

(65) The process for Confirmation of Candidature will include careful scrutiny of the following:

- a. a detailed research proposal including research gap and aims, literature review, methodology and methods, proposed analysis, ethical considerations, and thesis format;
- b. a detailed budget outlining the resources required for the project.

(66) The Review Panel will take into consideration:

- a. the academic merit, feasibility and viability, including some consideration of the ethical implications, of the proposed project in relation to the degree for which the candidate is applying to be a candidate;
- b. the capacity to ensure that adequate supervision, resources and infrastructure are available to support the proposed project;
- c. the capacity of the candidate to undertake the project successfully:
 - i. in the format proposed;
 - ii. within the time frame stipulated for the degree for which the candidate is applying to be a candidate; and
 - iii. with the enrolment time fraction proposed.

(67) A candidate must also satisfy the Review Panel that he or she is able to devote the time necessary for completion of the course in accordance with the time fraction in which they are enrolled.

(68) The Review Panel may:

- a. fully endorse the proposal;
- b. endorse the proposal subject to changes being made; or
- c. reject the proposal.

(69) Candidates who have their proposal rejected will have one opportunity to resubmit their application for Candidature.

(70) Confirmation of Candidature is provisionally approved by the relevant Review Panel once the candidate has met the criteria, including making any changes required by the Panel.

(71) Final approval lies with the Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres, or their nominee.

Failure to Obtain Confirmation of Candidature

(72) Candidates who have their proposal rejected on their second attempt will be counselled about alternative study options and discontinuation from the course by Deputy Director, Flagships Research Institute, or their nominee. If the candidate does not discontinue their enrolment, the University will provide notice in writing of its intention to discontinue their enrolment after 20 University business days.

(73) Where an international candidate has failed to obtain Candidature, ORTQI will advise Enrolments and Student Financials that their Confirmation of Enrolment will need to be cancelled and, if the candidate is sponsored, their sponsor must be notified that their candidature will be discontinued after 20 University business days due to failure to have candidature confirmed.

(74) Candidates who have not presented for Candidature within the timelines specified in Clause 61 will be required to present for candidature at the next scheduled session. Failure to do so will result in the commencement of the

Unsatisfactory Progress in accordance with [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 4 Progress](#).

Part E - Milestones: Mid-Candidature Review and Towards Submission

(75) All candidates will be required to present for Mid-Candidature and/or Towards Submission as required for their degree as a means of reporting and monitoring academic progress.

(76) All candidates will be required to submit their documentation relating to their Mid-Candidature Review or Towards Submission Milestones as required for their degree. Candidates should refer to Mid-Candidature Review Guidelines or Towards Submission Guidelines as well as seek guidance from their supervisor(s).

(77) Doctoral Candidates must present for their Mid-Candidature Review within the timeframes below:

- a. 1.5 to 2.0 years (EFT) for Doctoral candidates;
- b. 2.25 years (EFT) for Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated) candidates;
- c. Masters candidates are not required to present for this Milestone.

(78) Candidates must present for Towards Submission within the timeframes below:

- a. 3.0 years (EFT) for Doctoral candidates;
- b. 2.5 years (EFT) for Professional Doctorates;
- c. 1.5 years (EFT) for Master of Applied Research candidates;
- d. 1.25 years (EFT) for Master of Research;
- e. 1.5 years (EFT) for Masters by Research candidates;
- f. Master of Research Practice candidates are not required to present for this Milestone.

(79) Normally, doctoral candidates will be further advised of the timeline for their Mid-Candidature Review at Confirmation of Candidature and further advised of their Towards Submission at their Mid-Candidature Review and Masters by Research candidates will be further advised of their Towards Submission timeframe at Confirmation of Candidature.

(80) Candidates will be notified in advance of when their Review(s) are scheduled.

(81) Extensions will not normally be granted to the Review and will only be approved on a case by case basis via the Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute, or their nominee.

(82) The Mid-Candidature Review will include careful scrutiny that progress since Confirmation remains satisfactory in relation to feasibility and viability of the proposed project, and that the candidate is on track with the progress of their research. The Panel will provide feedback via a Milestone Report to the candidate and if the Review outcome is deemed to be Satisfactory, working with their supervisors they are encourage to integrate the feedback as appropriate into their study.

(83) The Towards Submission Review will include careful scrutiny that progress since Confirmation of Candidature (Masters candidates only) and Mid-Candidature (Doctoral candidates only) remains satisfactory and that the candidate is on track to submit a high quality thesis in a timely manner. The Panel will provide feedback via Milestone Report to the candidate and if the Review outcome is deemed to be Satisfactory, working with their supervisors they are encourage to integrate the feedback as appropriate into their study.

(84) If the outcome is deemed Unsatisfactory, the candidate must contact the Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute no later than 10 working days after receiving their Milestone Report. A meeting with the Deputy Director, Research Institute, or their nominee, and their Principal Supervisor is to occur to negotiate a program of study with

clearly defined hurdles to be achieved in the next three months of enrolment (EFT). Final approval of the Milestone Review lies with the Deputy Director, Research Institute, or their nominee.

(85) Candidates will not have an opportunity to present a second time for either the Mid-Candidature Review or Towards Submission.

(86) Candidates who have not submitted for Mid-Candidature Review or Towards Submission within the timelines specified above will be required to meet with the Deputy Director Flagship Institute within 10 working days from the specified period to negotiate a program of study towards timely completion.

Part F - Changes to Candidature

Change in Research Direction

(87) Minor changes to research projects do not require Flagship Research Institute/Centres approval, but must be discussed and negotiated with the supervisory team.

(88) A significant change in the direction of a research project post-Confirmation of Candidature requires a new research proposal to be submitted to the ORTQI for consideration by the relevant Deputy Director, Research Institute, or their nominee, and will require an assessment to identify any new or changed legal requirements that may apply (E.g. [Sanctions Compliance](#) or [Defence Export Controls Compliance](#)). Significant changes include:

- a. a major change to the project plan;
- b. a major change in resourcing and/or support needs;
- c. a change in academic supervision for the new research direction.

(89) The University will need to consider whether the project remains viable and feasible within the timeframe and to determine whether it is still able to support the project with resourcing and supervision and, where applicable, continue to support the project following any revisions to the sanctions approval.

Conversions Between Course Type and Level

Conversion from Doctoral to a Master Degree

(90) A candidate may apply for their candidature to be converted from a Doctoral to a Masters degree, if they satisfy the requirements of a research degree (the total credit points are derived from no more than one third coursework) and under certain other circumstances, such as:

- a. the doctoral thesis has not been formally examined by external examiners;
- b. they are unable to continue in the course, but have completed sufficient work to be able to prepare a Master degree thesis submission;
- c. a review of progress (such as the Mid-Candidature review) leads to agreement that the candidate's work is not at a doctoral level, but is considered of sufficient scope and quality to merit submission and examination for a Masters degree.

(91) The application for conversion must be made to the ORTQI for consideration by the relevant Deputy Director, Research Institute (or nominee) using the [Application for Conversion of a Research Degree form](#).

(92) If the candidate has been on a scholarship for more than two years EFT, the scholarship will cease immediately on conversion to a Masters by Research degree.

Conversion between Professional Doctorate and PhD

(93) A candidate may apply to convert from a professional doctorate to a PhD or from a PhD to a professional doctorate where both types of research doctorates are offered. This is done by lodging an [Application for Conversion of a Research Degree form](#) with the ORTQI for consideration by the other Research Institute.

(94) The difference in the nature/scope of the research proposed between the two degrees should be made apparent in the application for conversion submission. The request must be supported by the Principal Supervisor.

(95) If a candidate is approved for conversion to PhD on completion of their Professional Doctorate Coursework, they will be granted advanced standing for the required coursework units providing a formal application for advanced standing is submitted.

(96) Conversion between a professional doctorate and PhD can only be done prior to the thesis being submitted and formally examined.

Conversion from a Masters Level HDR to a Doctoral degree

(97) Candidates enrolled in one of a Master of Applied Research, Master of Research or a Master of Research Practice are ineligible to apply to convert their candidature to a doctoral degree.

(98) Candidates enrolled in a Masters by Research may apply to convert their candidature to a doctoral degree, under the following conditions:

- a. candidature has been approved in the Masters by Research degree;
- b. the candidate is no more than 12 months EFT into their Masters by Research degree;
- c. the candidate's supervisors support the application for conversion and agree that the scope of the project and the progress made in the 12 months is equivalent as to what would be expected for a doctoral degree;
- d. the candidate is judged by the relevant Deputy Director, Research Institute, or their nominee, with input as appropriate from supervisors and a Review Panel, to have:
 - i. demonstrated exceptional ability and achievement in the first stages of the Masters by Research degree;
 - ii. a research project with the capacity to be developed and extended to a level that makes it suitable in breadth and depth for doctoral-level research.

(99) The demonstration of exceptional ability and achievement should take into account elapsed EFT in the Masters by Research at the time of application, as well as the progress with the Masters project, both in terms of the quantity and quality of work achieved against the confirmed project plan. Normally this would include draft chapter/s or publishable level article/s based on the research to date.

(100) Application for conversion is made to ORTQI by using the [Application for Conversion of a Research Degree form](#).

(101) Where a candidate commences studies in a Masters by Research degree and then converts to a doctoral degree, they are entitled to a maximum of four years (EFT) enrolment, which includes the time enrolled in the Masters by Research degree. There is no guarantee that the category in which the candidate was enrolled in the Masters by Research (RTP, fee-paying etc) will transfer to the doctoral degree.

(102) Where a candidate converts from a Masters by Research to a PhD, their progress and the nature of their project will be assessed to determine whether advanced standing is granted for any PhD coursework units. A member of the ORTQI's Academic Programs, normally the HDR Coursework Co-ordinator, will approve advanced standing.

(103) Where an International candidate has been approved for conversion, the ORTQI will contact Enrolments and Student Financials and request that a new Confirmation of Enrolment and Letter of Offer be issued with the new

course code and revised end date. ORTQI will then enrol the candidate in the new course.

Reinstatement of candidature

(104) A candidate must have a continuous enrolment for the duration of their candidature. Failure to re-enrol by their census date will result in candidature lapsing. If the candidate wishes to continue in the degree, they will be required to apply for reinstatement of candidature.

(105) When enrolment has lapsed, been discontinued by the University, or voluntarily discontinued by a candidate, within three years of their last enrolment, providing candidature has been approved, a person may apply to be reinstated to the degree in which they were enrolled. Normally, this is for the purpose of continuing their previous project, or a revised version of their previous project. If more than three years has lapsed, or a different research project is being proposed, a new application must be submitted (see [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 1 Admissions](#)).

(106) In exceptional circumstances, reinstatement may also be considered for a candidate whose enrolment has been discontinued by the University through Unsatisfactory Progress Proceedings.

(107) The application for all candidates who seek to have their candidature reinstated must be made on the [Application for Reinstatement of Candidature form](#).

(108) If candidature is reinstated and maximum duration for the course has been reached, the applicant will be subject to the post maximum duration fees as outlined in the extensions to candidature beyond maximum duration section of this Procedure.

(109) The decision about reinstatement of candidature will be made by the relevant Deputy Director, Research Institute, or their nominee, taking into consideration:

- a. the nature of the circumstances that led to the cessation or suspension of candidature and the strength of the case made for why the applicant should be permitted to recommence their candidature, including the likelihood of this leading to a successful outcome;
- b. the continuing academic merit, feasibility and viability of the proposed (and revised) project;
- c. the capacity to ensure that adequate supervision, resources and infrastructure are available to support the project;
- d. the capacity of the applicant to undertake the project successfully within the time frame stipulated, requested or deemed to be available.

Conflict of Roles

(110) No individual may be involved in dual or multiple roles. Where the potential for a conflict of roles exists the following alternate delegations will normally apply:

- a. For Deputy Director, Research Institute who is also the Principal Supervisor - The Dean, Graduate Research (or their nominee, normally a senior academic).
- b. For Deputy Director, Research Institute of the Research Institute which the candidate is enrolled - the alternate Deputy Director, Research Institute.
- c. For the Dean, Graduate Research - Pro Vice-Chancellor Research Training or nominee.

Section 7 - Guidelines

(111) [Confirmation of Candidature Guidelines](#)

(112) Mid-Candidature Review Guidelines

(113) Towards Submission Guidelines

(114) [VU Graduate Research Training and Supervision Quality and Standards Framework](#)

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	18th April 2019
Review Date	18th April 2022
Approval Authority	Vice-President (Research)
Approval Date	16th April 2019
Expiry Date	27th April 2020
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Candidature" - Confirmed enrolment of degree; and Period of enrolment in degree including pre-candidature enrolment.

"Pre-Candidature" - A period of enrolment prior to the student achieving confirmation of candidature.