

# Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 5 Researcher Development and Support

## Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) Nil

## Section 2 - Scope / Application

(2) This Procedure outlines minimum facilities, resources and infrastructure for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates to support their development as researchers and to enable the conduct of their research.

## Section 3 - Definitions

(3) Higher Degree by Research (HDR)

## Section 4 - Policy Statement

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

## Section 5 - Procedures

### Part A - Minimum resources and facilities

(5) Resources and facilities are provided at both University and College level with the actual level of support provided in each specific case will be dependent on a range of factors: including discipline and specific approved project requirements; availability of external funding support; location/s in which the research is being conducted and enrolment status of the candidate.

(6) Upon enrolment, research candidates will be provided with a clear statement of the minimum resources that will be available provided to them throughout candidature.

(7) At the time of candidature approval, candidates may apply for specialised facilities and infrastructure relevant to their research.

(8) General support is provided throughout candidature. Particular support (outlined below) is only available after Confirmation of Candidature. Access to specialised facilities and infrastructure, including study space, for candidates who have submitted their thesis but are awaiting classification and graduation is at the discretion of the College/Centre/Institute in which the candidate is enrolled, and subject to availability of resources and the demonstrated need for access in order to finalise and generate outputs (eg, publications) from the thesis.

(9) College/Centre/Institute's will maintain accurate records of the amount of research support available to each of

their eligible candidates.

(10) In order to ensure appropriate provision and utilisation of graduate research support facilities and infrastructure, each College Director, Research Training (and, where applicable, each Centre/Institute Director) should nominate an administrative officer/s who is/are responsible for coordinating, monitoring and reporting on HDR candidate support.

(11) The Graduate Research Centre will survey all HDR candidates, via the annual postgraduate candidate experience survey (CREQ), on their satisfaction with the facilities and infrastructure provided to support them in their HDR.

## **Part B - General resources**

(12) The University will provide facilities to assist candidates with the conduct of their thesis research. For resources that are not part of centralised services delivery, the resources are to be provided through the candidate's College/Centre/Institute.

(13) The following resources should be available throughout candidature:

- a. photocopying and printing facilities, when on campus;
- b. information technology support, including a University email address and access to the University web services, and internet (when on campus);
- c. College technical support (where required and approved as being available for their project);
- d. library and information services, including e-research online resources, Australian and overseas interlibrary loans, and access to subject librarians and other library staff;
- e. computer and laboratory facilities, as required for their research program;
- f. student and academic support services, such as counselling, student advocacy, academic and careers support;
- g. tea room;
- h. washroom;
- i. access to a scanner when on campus;
- j. on campus mailing address;
- k.

(14) The following resources are available only after candidature has been confirmed:

- a. access through the University to postage and courier for research-related needs;
- b. on request and after consultation with the relevant College/Centre/Institute, a University business card identifying the candidate as a Masters by Research or Doctoral candidate (to be used strictly in relation to the candidate's research).

(15) Access to these services shall cater to the needs of on and off campus, and full- and part-time candidates across the year, excluding University holidays. Where possible, and if specifically required for the approved project, access to facilities on campus may be provided on a 24-hour access basis, subject to compliance with other relevant University [Occupational Health and Safety policies](#) .

(16) Subject to negotiation with the relevant College/Centre/Institute, financial assistance may be provided to full fee-paying candidates who are fully off campus and/or based offshore to support their computer and internet access.

## **Part C - Study environment**

(17) Research candidates who have commenced the research phase of their degree will have access to the following study space:

- a. full-time on campus candidates will have access to an adequate study space (normally no less than 3 square metres in floor space) in a shared open plan area, preferably located near the academic staff with whom they work, and proximate to toilets and other amenities;
- b. part-time on campus research candidates will have access to a similar level of quality of study space in a shared open plan area.

(18) Each candidate study space shall contain:

- a. an ergonomically sound chair and desk (no smaller than 0.5 sq m);
- b. access to a lockable filing cabinet drawer;
- c. access to a personal computer equipped with the standard software provided through University license agreements;
- d. email and on-line internet access;
- e. access to an office telephone.

(19) Study spaces should have adequate air conditioning, lighting, security and privacy.

(20) Candidates who are normally studying off campus/overseas shall have access to a shared study space when they are spending an agreed period of time on campus in Melbourne.

## **Part D - Researcher development and support**

(21) The Graduate Research Centre (GRC) will offer support and development activities and opportunities through their College/Centre/Institutes. This includes access to:

- a. induction program/s dealing with University systems and support, and the research training environment at Victoria University (VU), including relevant codes, regulations, procedures and policies;
- b. training to assist with preparation of the candidature proposal, the conduct of the research and the dissemination of outcomes;
- c. professional development to support the development of generic and transferable skills, including through experiential learning;
- d. seminar program/s relevant to the field of research;
- e. opportunities to interact with College research academics (in addition to the nominated supervisors);
- f. professional and/or social networking opportunities;
- g. opportunities to make internal seminar presentations, and to present at conference/s;
- h. training and mentoring in aspects of academic career planning and practice, including in publishing the outcomes of research;
- i. annual opportunities to provide feedback on the graduate research experience and support provided by VU through a confidential evaluation process.

(22) Graduate research candidates are expected to participate in the regular review of their research and professional development needs in order to support planning for and participation in relevant development opportunities.

## **Part E - Research Support Funding**

(23) Colleges will develop a budget for students in their College (and, where applicable, the Centre/Institute) in which the candidate is enrolled, based on the nature of the discipline and the specific project in which the candidate is engaged.

(24) Two types of funding are available:

- a. contributions to the candidate's project-specific costs, such as the purchase of approved equipment and/or consumables and/or costs associated with data collection; and
- b. contributions to generic research support costs, such as conference attendance, specialised professional development needs, office consumables, thesis production and binding and/or other research-related activities approved by the College.

(25) Normally, the research budget for the activities directly associated with the conduct of the candidate's research must be approved as part of the University's candidature approval process.

(26) Colleges/Centres/Institutes will publish guidelines about the minimum and maximum levels of funding that are available in each category, and will specify what is eligible for inclusion as Research Support Funding.

(27) Any research candidates who are enrolled as part of group-based, offshore or fee-discounted programs are only eligible for Research Support Funding if this service was specified in the contract for the program.

(28) Once candidature is confirmed, candidates may expect to receive assistance towards conference participation/presentation costs at conference/s relevant to their program of research as part of their Research Support Funding as follows:

- a. Masters by Research and Professional Doctorate candidates can expect to receive assistance towards attending one conference;
- b. PhD candidates can expect to receive assistance towards attending two conferences (including one international conference).

(29) Each College/Centre/Institute will publish guidelines about their available conference support schemes and application processes.

(30) Ongoing access to Research Support Funding is subject to a candidate making satisfactory progress in their research degree as certified by the Principal Supervisor at the time that access to the approved funding is being sought.

(31) The expenditure of funds is subject to standard University policies and regulations.

(32) All equipment purchased by candidates through the provision of Research Support Funding remains at all times the property of the University and must be returned to the College/Centre/Institute who provided the funding at the conclusion of the research.

## **Section 6 - Guidelines**

(33) Nil

## Status and Details

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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.