

Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 5 Researcher Development and Support

Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure outlines the processes for Researcher Development and Support.

Section 2 - Accountability

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

Section 3 - Scope

(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 4 - Definitions

(3) Candidature Budget - Budget proposed at candidature confirmation covering the projected expenses for a candidate's project.

Section 5 - Policy/Regulation

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

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Office for Researcher Training, Quality and Integrity	Provide a range of workshops and other activities to support the development of graduate researchers.
Flagship Research Institute/Centres	Maintain records of research funding support. Develop guidelines for funding support

Part B - Minimum Resources and Facilities

Submission and Timing of Progress Reports

(5) Resources and facilities are provided by the University in centralised services, with the actual level of support provided in each specific case depended 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 general support and minimum resources that will be provided to them throughout candidature. At the time of candidature approval, candidates may apply for specialised facilities and infrastructure relevant to their research.

(7) 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 VU Research, and subject to availability of resources and the demonstrated need for access in order to finalise and generate outputs (e.g. publications) from the thesis.

(8) Flagship Research Institute/Centres will maintain accurate records of the amount of research support available to each of their eligible candidates.

(9) In order to ensure appropriate provision and utilisation of graduate research support facilities and infrastructure, the candidate's Principal Supervisor will be responsible for coordinating, monitoring and reporting on HDR candidate support.

(10) The Office for Researcher Training, Quality and Integrity will survey all HDR candidates, via the annual postgraduate research experience survey (CREQ), on their satisfaction with the facilities and infrastructure provided to support them in their HDR.

Part C - General Resources

(11) The University will provide facilities to assist candidates with the conduct of their thesis research.

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

- a. photocopying, scanning and printing facilities, when on campus;
- b. information technology support, including a University email address and access to the University web services, and internet;
- c. 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. on campus mailing address;
- j. stationery.

(13) 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 Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres, a University business card identifying the candidate as a Master of Research or Doctoral candidate (to be used strictly in relation to the candidate's research).

(14) 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.

(15) Subject to negotiation with the Flagship Research Institute/Centres, 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 D - Study Environment

(16) 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 shared study space in a shared open plan area.

(17) 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 shared or hot desk space;
- d. email and internet access;
- e. access to an office telephone.

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

(19) 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 E - Researcher Development and Support

(20) VU Research will offer support and development activities and opportunities. 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, [policies and procedures](#);
- 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 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 (Current Research Experience Questionnaire).

(21) ORTQI also hosts the Graduate Researcher Toolkit which provides up to date information and resources for all research students. The Graduate Researcher Toolkit also contains VU MyPlan - a self-assessment tool which allows all research students to reflect and plan on a regular basis in relation to both the progress of their research project and their particular researcher development needs.

(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 F - Candidature and Professional Development Funding

(23) VU Research will develop budget guidelines for HDR candidates 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. Candidature Funds: 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. Professional Development Funds: contributions to conference attendance, specialised professional development needs, thesis production and binding and/or other research-related activities. This funding is only available to HDR students who have achieved candidature and are making satisfactory progress with their course of study.

(25) Candidature and Professional Development Funding must be approved as part of the University's candidature confirmation process.

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

(27) Once candidature is confirmed, candidates can access their approved funding.

(28) VU Research will publish guidelines on the Candidature and Professional Development Funding. The guidelines will state 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.

(29) Ongoing access to the Candidature and Professional Development Funding is subject to a candidate making sufficient progress in their research degree as certified by the Principal Supervisor at the time that access to the approved funding is being sought (see Clause 25).

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

(31) All equipment purchased by candidates through the provision the Candidature and Professional Development Funding remains at all times the property of the University and must be returned to VU Research at the conclusion of the research.

Section 7 - Guidelines

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

Section 8 - Supporting Documents and Information

(33) Nil.

Status and Details

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