Higher Degrees by Research
Researcher Development and Support Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

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

Section 2 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(2) HESF: Standard 3.2 Staffing; 3.3 Learning Resources and Educational Support; 4.1 Research; 7.2 Information for Prospective and Current Students.

(3) ESOS Act: Part 3 Division 2; Part 5 Division 2.

Section 3 - Scope

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

Section 4 - Definitions

(5) Candidature Budget – Budget proposed at candidature confirmation covering the projected expenses for a HDR student's research project.

Section 5 - Policy/Regulation

(6) Higher Degrees by Research Policy

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Graduate Research School (GRS)	Provide a range of workshops and other activities to support the development of HDR Students.
Research Institutes	Maintain records of research funding support. Develop guidelines for funding support.

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Part B - Minimum Resources and Facilities

(7) Resources and facilities are provided by the University, with the actual level of support provided in each specific case 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.

(8) Upon enrolment, HDR students will be provided with a clear statement of the general support and minimum resources that will be provided to them throughout candidature.

(9) At the time of Confirmation of Candidature, candidates may apply for specialised facilities and infrastructure relevant to their research. 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.

(10) Research Institutes will maintain accurate records of budgets for research support available to each of their eligible candidates.

(11) 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 candidate support through the candidature milestones.

(12) The Graduate Research School will survey all candidates, via the annual postgraduate research experience survey (CREQ), on their satisfaction with the facilities and infrastructure provided to support them in their Higher Degree by Research (HDR).

Part C - General Resources

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

(14) The following resources will be available throughout candidature:

a. Photocopying, scanning and printing facilities, when on campus (subject to any pre-advised limits);
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 and required 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 programs;
f. Student and academic support services, such as counselling, student advocacy, academic and careers support;
g. Tea rooms; and
h. Bathrooms.

(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. Access to facilities on campus may be provided on a 24-hour basis, subject to approval and compliance with other relevant University Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policies, only if necessary for the conduct of research.

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Part D - Study Environment

(16) Research space requirements will be determined in consultation with relevant stakeholders, giving consideration to all OHS and other legislative or regulatory compliance requirements. Candidates refer to the Space Allocation and Management Procedure.

Part E - Researcher Professional Development and Support

(17) In addition to the training candidates receive within their supervision, VU Research will offer developmental activities and opportunities to support candidates' professional development skills as a researcher. This includes access to:

a. induction and orientation 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 the conduct of responsible research, including the preparation of ethics applications;
c. training to assist with the preparation of candidature proposals, the conduct of the research and the dissemination of outcomes;
d. professional development to support the development of generic and transferable skills, including through experiential learning;
e. opportunities to interact with research academics (in addition to the nominated supervisors);
f. professional and/or social networking opportunities;
g. opportunities to conduct and present at internal seminars, 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).

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

(19) 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. Researcher Professional Development will map out a suggested general program of researcher professional development activities across the lifecycle of candidature. Candidates are expected discuss the general program with their supervisor/s to determine an appropriate professional development plan for the duration of their degree. Candidates are expected, at a minimum, to review this plan with their supervisor/s during each candidature milestone.

Part F - HDR Researcher Integrity Modules

(20) All HDR students must undertake and pass between ten (10) and twelve (12) mandatory online HDR Researcher Integrity modules through their research degree enrolment. The prescribed timing of the module completion is outlined in Clause 22. However, HDR students may undertake the modules earlier in their enrolment than prescribed in Clause 22 if desired.

(21) Each module takes between 20 and 30 minutes to complete and has a quiz to be passed at 80% or higher. Successful completion of the quiz releases a certificate of completion for that module.

(22) At candidature milestones, HDR students are required to upload the relevant completion certificates for the

modules relating to that milestone or phase of their research. The three phases of research and related modules are as follows:

a. Phase One: Pre-candidature confirmation
    i. Module 1: The research conduct of research (before coursework commences)
    ii. Module 3: Planning your research (before coursework commences)
    iii. Module 4: Managing and recording your research
    iv. And (if applicable, either or both of the following):
        - Module 10: Responsible conduct of human participants research
        - Module 11: The care and use of animals in research
b. Phase Two: Mid-candidature (or the middle third of the degree)
    i. Module 2: When things go wrong: Breaches of the code
    ii. Module 5: Data selection, analysis and presentation
    iii. Module 9: Conflict of interest
    iv. Module 12: Intellectual property
c. Phase Three: Towards Submission milestone
    i. Module 6: Scholarly publication
    ii. Module 7: Professional responsibilities
    iii. Module 8: Communication and social responsibility

(23) HDR students must follow the Guidelines for Candidature as outlined on the Preparing for Candidature webpage.

(24) It is mandatory for all HDR students to complete the ten modules outlined above, plus either or both of Module 10 and 11 if applicable, regardless of which milestones their degree type requires. Some HDR students are not required to undertake a Mid-candidature milestone but must still complete the modules.

Part G - Candidature and Professional Development Funding

(25) VU Research will develop budget guidelines for candidates based on the nature of the discipline and the specific project in which the candidate is engaged.

(26) 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, and/or other research-related activities. This funding is only available to candidates who have achieved candidature and are making satisfactory progress with their course of study.

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

(28) Candidates who are enrolled as part of group-based, off-shore or fee-discounted programs are only eligible for research support of this type if this was specified in the contract for the program.

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

(30) 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 provide guidelines

as to what is eligible for inclusion in the budgets. Current guidelines are found on the Preparing for Candidature webpage.

(31) 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 22).

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

(33) All equipment purchased by candidates through the provision of 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.

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