

Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 7 Supervision

Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) Nil

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(2) This Procedure outlines the process for appointing Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) Principal, Associate and External Supervisors, intellectual property, candidature confirmation and supervision, candidature feedback on supervision and changes to the supervisory relationship.

Section 3 - Definitions

(3) Higher Degree by Research (HDR)

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(4) [Supervision Policy](#)

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

Section 5 - Procedures

Part A - Requirement for supervision

(6) From admission through to classification, all candidates who are in the research phase of their degree must be undertaking their research with academic supervision. The University is committed to ensuring that each candidate has two supervisors, a Principal and Associate Supervisor, by the time of Confirmation of Candidature.

Part B - Admission and supervision

(7) Research degree applicants are expected to have contact with the relevant College and, where applicable, relevant Centre or Institute, prior to admission and all applicants, other than those applying for entry to a professional doctorate, should be allocated potential supervisors. The applicant may also wish to suggest appropriate supervisor(s) who are registered supervisors with Victoria University.

(8) If at the time of admission to a research degree (other than a professional doctorate), a suitable provisional supervisory team cannot be sourced, the University will be unable to admit the applicant and will notify the applicant that the application cannot proceed.

(9) On completion of the coursework phase of the professional doctorate, candidates must complete the [Application for Progression to the Research Component of a Professional Doctorate form](#) and nominate the proposed supervisory team.

Part C - Joint authorship and intellectual property

(10) Candidates and supervisors must discuss issues of authorship, including order of authorship, prior to the conduct of any joint research or publication, in accordance with the [National Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

(11) In accordance with the University's [Intellectual Property Regulations](#) candidates involved in research:

- a. that could result in the generation of intellectual property with commercial potential; and/or
- b. is funded by a contractual agreement; and/or
- c. in which Victoria University will make a substantial investment

must be informed in writing by the supervisory team of any conditions or contracts which could either restrict disclosure or affect the extent to which communication with colleagues is possible during the course of the work and on its completion.

Part D - Supervision and Candidature Confirmation

(12) All supervisors of HDR candidates must fulfil requirements for registration as supervisors, as outlined in the HDR Supervision Registration and Development Procedure.

(13) The composition of the supervisory team is confirmed as part of the Candidature Confirmation process and will be approved by the relevant College Director, Research Training.

(14) Where an applicant sources an external supervisor, approval is subject to their registration as a supervisor and the College/Centre/Institute's agreement and includes consideration of its ability to fund the costs associated with this external appointment.

(15) A Supervision Agreement is to be submitted at the time of Candidature Confirmation and must be signed by the candidate and all members of the supervisory team. This agreement includes:

- a. the nominated Principal Supervisor;
- b. Associate Supervisor/s;
- c. percentage and nature of supervisory input from each;
- d. the agreed frequency of meetings, including participation arrangements and agreed preparatory and recordkeeping arrangements;
- e. agreed protocols for ongoing contact outside meetings;
- f. turnaround time for feedback on drafts.

Part E - Changes in the supervisory team

(16) Over the period of a candidate's enrolment changes to a candidate's supervisory arrangements may occur for reasons such as:

- a. additional supervisor/s may be appointed to assist with a particular aspect of the research;
- b. the research topic may change and this may result in the appointment of an alternate supervisor/s;
- c. the initial supervisor/s may no longer be able to supervise the research for a number of reasons, including their leave or employment arrangements;

d. the candidate may initiate a change of supervisor/s for a range of reasons.

(17) Any change in supervision arrangements for a period of three months or longer, following Confirmation of Candidature, must be notified and approved using the [Application for Change in Supervision form](#) and documented in the Supervision Agreement. The change in supervision arrangements will only be effective when the fully endorsed application has been lodged with the Graduate Research Centre (GRC).

(18) Any change in supervision arising from a change in research topic must not contravene any Australian law, including [Australian Autonomous Sanctions](#).

Part F - Advice and feedback on supervision

(19) In accordance with the University's [Student Complaints Procedure](#) where any issues relating to supervision arise candidates are encouraged to address these directly with members of their supervision team where possible. Where this is not possible, or the candidate is not satisfied with the outcome, a candidate can discuss their supervisory issues and needs at any time with the discipline leader of their area, the College Director, Research Training and/or the Dean, Graduate Research. Where an issue cannot be resolved at the local level, a candidate may lodge a [formal complaint](#).

(20) All candidates will be invited to provide feedback annually on the quality of the supervision they are experiencing through the Current Research Experience Questionnaire (CREQ) as well as through the official Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ) at the conclusion of their course.

(21) Every candidate is also offered the opportunity to provide more detailed individual feedback to their own supervisors through completing the Candidate Feedback on Supervision Questionnaire after submission of their thesis for examination.

(22) Candidates may also provide confidential feedback about any aspect/s of the supervision they are receiving through lodging confidential feedback to the Dean, Graduate Research via email.

Part G - Unavailability of supervision

(23) Circumstances arise from time to time when the College/Centre/Institute or the University becomes unable to provide adequate supervision for a designated candidate or project. This may be due to a change in research topic or direction, a change in the availability of the Principal Supervisor, or an irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between candidate and supervisor.

(24) In such circumstances the University will assist in referring the candidate to an alternative institution that may be able to supervise the proposed research, and in providing supporting documentation for their application for Advanced Candidature at that institution, where this is relevant and requested.

(25) Where all reasonable avenues to provide supervision from within and outside the University have been exhausted, the University will be unable to support the candidate's project and the candidate will be required to discontinue from the degree (see Part H, clause 54 of [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 2 Enrolments](#)).

Section 6 - Guidelines

(26) 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.