

# Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 7 Supervision

## Section 1 - Summary

(1) 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 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 Staff of the University, and all students enrolled in Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) programs.

## Section 4 - Definitions

(3) Principal Supervisor

(4) Associate Supervisor

## Section 5 - Policy

(5) [Supervision Policy](#)

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

## Section 6 - Procedures

### Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Office for Researcher Training, Quality and Integrity (ORTQI)	Records provisional supervisor at time of offer and enrolment.  Records confirmed supervision and any changes to supervisory arrangements.
Deputy Director (or nominee), Flagship Research Institute/Centres	Approve supervisory arrangements (including external supervisors).

## Part B - Requirement for Supervision

### Submission and timing of Progress Reports

(7) 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 a minimum of two supervisors, a Principal and Associate Supervisor, by the time of Confirmation of Candidature.

## Part C - Admission and Supervision

(8) Research degree applicants are expected to have identified a relevant supervisor prior to admission and all applicants, other than those applying for entry to a professional doctorate, should nominate potential supervisors. The provisional internal supervisors must be registered supervisors with Victoria University.

(9) In determining suitable supervisors, applicants should consider the following:

- a. Check the supervisors' publication records and if possible talk to some of their research students;
- b. Assess compatibility with the supervisor prior to enrolment;
- c. Recognise own strengths and weaknesses and identify the characteristics you are seeking in a supervisor;
- d. Discuss your expectations/style with your potential supervisors.

(10) 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.

(11) 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 D - Supervision and Candidature Confirmation

(12) All supervisors of HDR candidates must fulfill requirements for registration as supervisors, as outlined in the [Supervision - Supervisor 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 Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres (or nominee).

(14) Where an applicant sources an external supervisor, approval is subject to their registration as a supervisor and the Deputy Director's (or nominee), Research Flagship Institute agreement and includes consideration of its ability to fund any potential costs associated with this external appointment.

## Part E - Supervision Agreement

(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 review of material provided by the candidate.

## Part F - Joint Authorship and Intellectual Property

(16) 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 Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018).

(17) In accordance with the University's [Intellectual Property Regulations 2013](#) 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;
- d. 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 G - Changes in the Supervisory Team

(18) Over the period of 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 leave or employment arrangements;
- d. The candidate may initiate a change of supervisor/s for a range of reasons.

(19) 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 Office for Research Training, Quality and Integrity (ORTQI).

(20) Any change in supervision arising from a change in research topic must be assessed for compliance with specific requirements under any Australian law, including [Sanctions Laws](#) and [Defence Export Controls](#).

## Part H - Advice and Feedback on Supervision

(21) 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 Deputy Director, Flagship Research Institute/Centres and/or the Dean, Graduate Research. Where an issue cannot be resolved at the local level, a candidate may lodge a formal complaint.

(22) 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.

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

## **Part I - Unavailability of Supervision**

(24) Circumstances arise from time to time when 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.

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

(26) 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 [HDR 2 - Enrolment Procedure](#), Part H).

## **Section 7 - Guidelines**

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

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	17th December 2018
<b>Review Date</b>	17th December 2021
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-President (Research)
<b>Approval Date</b>	14th December 2018
<b>Expiry Date</b>	20th October 2020
<b>Accountable Officer</b>	Andrew Hill Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research & Impact Andrew.Hill@vu.edu.au
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	John Price Dean, Graduate Research 9919 2046
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Elizabeth Smith Manager, Candidature +61 3 99194228

## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Principal Supervisor"** - The primary academic supervisor of a research student, recognised as the academic leader of the candidate's supervisory team. A principal supervisor must be a doctorally qualified member of staff who is research active in a field or discipline relevant to the candidate's research.

**"Associate Supervisor"** - A member of staff who is research active, not necessarily in the field or discipline relevant to the candidate's research.