

# Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 7 Supervision

## Section 1 - Summary

(1) This Procedure outlines the processes 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 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(2) HESF: 3.2 Staffing; 4.1 Research; 4.2 Research Training; 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 appointment of, and responsibilities of HDR supervisors and candidates. It applies to Staff of the University and all candidates enrolled in Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs.

## Section 4 - Definitions

(5) Principal Supervisor

(6) Associate Supervisor

(7) External Supervisors

## Section 5 - Policy

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

## Section 6 - Procedures

### Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
-------	------------------

Graduate Research School (GRS)	Records provisional supervisors at the time of offer and enrolment. Records confirmed supervision and any supervisory arrangements, including registration.
Research Institutes	Approve supervisor/s arrangements (including external supervisors).

## Part B - Requirement for Supervision

(9) From admission through to classification, all enrolled candidates 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 Supervisor from the date of enrolment and an Associate Supervisor, appointed no later than one month from the date of enrolment.

## Part C - Admission and Supervision

(10) Research degree applicants are expected to nominate a suitable Principal Supervisor for their program of research. The provisional internal supervisors must be registered supervisors with Victoria University. Applicants can search for available supervisors on the Victoria University website [Find a Researcher](#) page.

(11) 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 they are seeking in a supervisor;
- d. Discuss their expectations/style with their potential supervisors.

(12) If a suitable Principal Supervisor and potential Associate Supervisors cannot be sourced by Victoria University, the University will be unable to admit the applicant and will notify the applicant that the application cannot proceed.

## Part D - Supervision and Candidature Confirmation

(13) All supervisors must fulfil requirements for registration as supervisors, and be formally registered as supervisors at Victoria University, as outlined in the [Higher Degrees by Research Supervision - Supervisor Registration and Professional Development Procedure](#).

(14) The composition of the supervisory team is confirmed no later than one month after enrolment and approved by the relevant Deputy Director, Research Institute (or nominee).

(15) Where an applicant or candidate sources an external Associate Supervisor, approval is subject to their registration as an external supervisor at Victoria University. The Deputy Director's (or nominee), Research Institute must confirm their appointment, including consideration of its ability to fund any potential costs associated with this external appointment.

## Part E - Supervision Agreement

(16) A Supervision Agreement is to be completed as early in candidature as possible, and no later than the time of Confirmation of Candidature. It must be signed by the candidate and all members of the supervisory team. This agreement includes:

- a. the agreed frequency of meetings, including participation arrangements and agreed preparatory and recordkeeping arrangements;

- b. agreed protocols for ongoing contact outside meetings;
- c. turnaround time for feedback on review of material provided by the candidate;
- d. the name of the nominated Principal Supervisor;
- e. the name(s) of the associate Supervisor/s; and,
- f. the percentage and nature of supervisory input from each supervisor.

## Part F - Joint Authorship and Intellectual Property

(17) 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 \(2018\) \(Cth\)](#) and any related VU Policy and Procedure.

(18) 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

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 research and on its completion.

## Part G - Changes in the Supervisory Team

(19) 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 student may initiate a change of supervisor/s.

(20) Any change in supervisory 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 a revised Supervision Agreement. The change in supervision arrangements will only be effective when the fully endorsed application has been lodged and approved with the Graduate Research School (GRS).

(21) 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

(22) 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, Research Institute and/or the Dean, Graduate Research. Where an issue cannot be resolved at the local level, a candidate may lodge a formal complaint by following the procedure outlined in the [Student Complaints Procedure](#) (Section 6 Part D).

(23) 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 degree.

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

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

(25) 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 a Principal Supervisor, or an irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between candidate and supervisor.

(26) 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 provide supporting documentation for their application for Advanced Candidature at that institution, where this is relevant and requested by the candidate.

(27) Where all reasonable avenues to provide supervision from within or 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 [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 2 Enrolments](#)).

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	21st October 2020
<b>Review Date</b>	21st October 2023
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
<b>Approval Date</b>	5th October 2020
<b>Expiry Date</b>	22nd March 2023
<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

**"External Supervisors"** - Supervisors who do not hold an ongoing or contract of one year or more at Victoria University (VU). For the purposes of Graduate Research supervision academics holding adjunct or honorary appointments are considered to be external supervisors.

**"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.