

Higher Degree by Research Supervision - Supervisor Registration and Professional Development Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) Victoria University (VU) has a policy relating to the registration of Higher Degrees by Research (HRD) supervisors. These Procedures outline the requirements and processes around the registration of HDR supervisors.

Section 2 - TEQSA/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(2) HESF: 4.1 Research; 4.2 Research Training; 3.2 Staffing.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to the registration and professional development of all supervisors of HDR candidates at VU.

Section 4 - Definitions

(4) External Supervisors

(5) Principal Supervisor

(6) Associate Supervisor

(7) Research-intensive

(8) Research

(9) TEQSA

Section 5 - Policy/Regulation

(10) [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy](#)

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
HDR Supervisors	<p>Assist HDR candidates to devise, undertake and complete an independent research project within the allotted candidature duration by providing appropriate direction, guidance, feedback and support, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Providing advice on the theoretical basis of the project; ii. Suggesting appropriate reading; iii. Providing guidance on research methods and methodology; iv. Providing guidance on the responsible conduct of research; v. Providing guidance and modelling of research communication in written, spoken and visual genres relevant to the discipline. <p>Generally, assist with planning and conducting the research and preparing the thesis.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for the broad research education of the HDR candidate, and act as a general guide and advisor for the progress of the project and for the HDR candidate's professional and career development.</p> <p>Be available for regular consultation and to provide timely critical feedback (written and verbal) on the thinking, writing and research of the HDR candidate's work.</p> <p>Introduce the HDR candidate to scholarly networks and encourage them to participate in the activities of the research community outside of the actual thesis preparation, including scholarly publishing and conference presenting.</p> <p>Keep up to date in relation to the policies, procedures and guidelines governing the conduct of research and research degrees at VU.</p> <p>Guide, monitor, review and oversee HDR candidates to ensure compliance with external bodies and internal regulations and policies for the conduct of research including ethics and integrity, health and safety, sanction laws, work with foreign organisations and Defence Export Controls.</p>

(11) HDR supervisors are appointed to provide guidance and support to their HDR candidate/s in the conduct of their research project and in their development as a professional and ethical researcher.

(12) Section Three of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) is particularly pertinent to HDR supervision, specifically:

- a. Responsibility 15: provide guidance and mentorship on responsible research conduct to other researchers or research trainees under their supervision and, where appropriate, monitor their conduct and
- b. Responsibility 16: Undertake and promote education and training in responsible research conduct.

(13) The [Supervision Guide](#) supplement to the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) also specifies that a supervisor's responsibilities include developing and maintaining a working knowledge of the legal and policy frameworks that underpin responsible conduct of research at the disciplinary, institutional, and national levels.

(14) In line with the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021 \(Cth\)](#) Standard 4.2.3, each HDR candidate is supported by continuing supervisory arrangements, including:

- a. A principal supervisor who holds a doctoral degree, or has equivalent research experience, and who is active in research and publishing in, or otherwise making original contributions to, a relevant field or discipline.
- b. At least one associate supervisor with relevant research expertise; and
- c. The principal supervisor is a member of staff of the higher education provider, or has a relevant adjunct appointment, or is otherwise formally contracted and accountable to the provider for supervisory duties.

(15) Supervision requires regular, ongoing interaction and formal meetings between a designated HDR candidate and their supervisors. Supervision is to be provided from commencement of enrolment to classification (including during any coursework components), other than in periods of approved leave for the supervisors and/or the HDR candidate.

For extended periods of leave, alternative supervisory arrangements must be formally put in place (as outlined in [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 7 Supervision](#), Clause 21). Formal supervision meetings should take place at least fortnightly for full-time HDR candidates and monthly for part-time HDR candidates at a location mutually agreed on by all parties.

(16) To maximise transparency and ensure a shared understanding of expectations of both the supervisors and HDR candidate, detailed arrangements about supervisory contact and meetings must be negotiated no later than eight weeks after initial enrolment and are further formalised at the time of Candidature Confirmation in the formal [Graduate Research Supervision Agreement](#). The Supervision Agreement is to be reviewed annually.

(17) Any sexual or romantic relationship that develops between the supervisor and HDR candidate constitutes a conflict of interest. The supervisor can therefore not be part of the supervisory team. A new supervisor must be brought into the supervisory team as soon as possible, through the Changes in Supervision process outlined in Part E.

Part B - Appointment of Supervisors

(18) Researcher Professional Development, Graduate Research School (GRS) will maintain the Supervisor Register.

(19) Every HDR candidate must have two supervisors from their initial enrolment until the completion of their research degree. This includes any periods of time when the candidate is undertaking their coursework. HDR candidates may have more than two supervisors.

(20) Supervisory arrangements are approved on offer of admission by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee and formally registered at the time of enrolment. The arrangements must include a nominated Principal Supervisor and at least one Associate Supervisor.

(21) Only supervisors registered at Levels 2 and 3 (see Part C, Clause 59 and Table 1 below) can be appointed to the role of Principal Supervisor to lead the supervisory team for a HDR candidate.

(22) All supervisors must have an Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) upon registration or change in level.

(23) Proposed changes to supervision arrangements must be discussed with and approved by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee for changes to take effect.

(24) The Associate Director, Research Training or nominee will advise the Manager, Researcher Professional Development in the GRS when a current supervisor is departing from the University's employment, and whether they will be continuing on the supervisory team as an external Associate Supervisor.

(25) The Associate Director, Research Training or nominee will advise whether an Adjunct/Honorary or contracted supervisor is no longer able to offer supervision.

Principal Supervisors

(26) Further to the roles and responsibilities outlined in Part A, the nominated Principal Supervisor for a HDR candidate is recognised as the academic leader of the candidate's supervisory team. In addition to academic responsibilities the Principal Supervisor has official responsibility for the overall management of the HDR candidate's candidature from enrolment to final thesis classification, including:

- a. Progress milestones (i.e. Candidature confirmation, Mid-candidature and Towards submission);
- b. Other progress-related requirements (such as interim progress reports; marginal or unsatisfactory progress processes and timely thesis submissions);
- c. Nomination of the membership of the milestone panels (i.e. Candidature confirmation, Mid-candidature and Towards submission);

- d. Administrative processes linked to variations in enrolment and leave;
- e. Monitoring eligibility to maintain scholarship entitlements, such as regular attendance and timely completion of required work;
- f. Nomination of examiners;
- g. Review of thesis prior to submission and classification;
- h. Thesis lodgment in VU Research Repository.

(27) Notwithstanding the role of the University Candidature Milestone Reviews, it is the responsibility of the Principal Supervisor to monitor the HDR candidate's progress to ensure they are on track for a timely completion. When appropriate, the Principal Supervisor must notify the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee if the HDR candidate is not making satisfactory progress in their candidature either at the relevant candidate milestone or outside of this process so the appropriate action can be taken.

(28) A Principal Supervisor must be a doctorally qualified member of staff (or have an adjunct or honorary role with the University) who is engaging in the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, understandings, inventions and applications of this knowledge, demonstrated via publishing in, or otherwise making original contributions to, a relevant field or discipline to the HDR candidate's research.

(29) Research activity for Principal Supervisors can be demonstrated via a number of ways including at least one of the following: a minimum authorship of one published high quality paper per year during the last three years; one major high quality scholarly work such as a book or creative performance during the last three years; securing of a patent/invention during the last three years; or securing externally funded grants totaling \$45,000 or more during the last three years, in a field or discipline relevant to the HDR applicant/candidate's research.

(30) Final approval of the appointment of a Principal Supervisor or an Associate Supervisor must be made by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee.

Associate Supervisors

(31) Associate Supervisors may provide the HDR candidate with access to a broader range of skills and knowledge (disciplinary and/or methodological) and are identified at the time of offer of admission to the degree. They must be registered and appointed at the time of a HDR candidature' enrolment.

(32) An Associate Supervisor would normally have a doctoral qualification. If they do not hold a relevant doctoral qualification, evidence of exceptional relevant research experience must be provided in their application for registration.

(33) An Associate Supervisor is normally a doctorally qualified member of staff (or has an honorary role, including adjunct, with the University) who is engaging in the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate concepts, methodologies, understandings, inventions and applications of this knowledge, demonstrated via relevant research expertise to the candidate's research.

(34) Research activity for Associate Supervisors can be demonstrated via a number of ways including at least one of the following: a minimum authorship of one published high quality paper per year during the last three years, one major high quality scholarly work such as a book or creative performance during the last three years; securing of a patent/invention during the last three years; securing externally funded grants totalling \$45,000 across the three years, not necessarily in a field or discipline relevant to the higher degree research applicant/candidate's research.

(35) Completion of a doctoral degree in the previous year to their initial registration is sufficient research activity for initial registration as an Associate Supervisor (Level 1).

(36) Associate Supervisors may be added or removed throughout the duration of candidature as the project becomes more defined, however a HDR candidate must always have a minimum of two supervisors.

(37) Associate Supervisors will engage with the HDR candidate and Principal Supervisor to allow adequate use of their specialised skills and knowledge. Their involvement in the project and the supervisory team also will facilitate them in developing the necessary skills in due course and with sufficient experience to meet the criteria to apply for progression to Principal Supervisor, if they are Level 1 registered supervisor.

External Associate Supervisors

(38) HDR candidates may have external supervisors, especially where industry or specialist research expertise is not available at VU and required for their research project.

(39) External supervisors are appointed by the Research Institute through the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee. The process involves completion of the [Application for Registration as an External Graduate Research Supervisor](#).

(40) External supervisors are usually appointed as Associate Supervisors (Level 1).

(41) External supervisors may be appointed as Associate Supervisors (Level 1) without a doctoral qualification if their research expertise is required for the HDR candidate's project.

(42) The Associate Director, Research Training or nominee will inform the GRS when a current supervisor is departing from the University's employment, and whether they will be continuing on the supervisory team as an external Associate Supervisor. The Associate Director, Research Training or nominee will also advise whether an Adjunct/Honorary or contracted supervisor is no longer able to offer supervision. The supervisor concerned may continue on the supervisory team, as an external Associate Supervisor or as a Principal Supervisor under Clause 43.

(43) In certain circumstances, a departing Principal Supervisor may be approved to continue to act as an External Principal Supervisor with an adjunct appointment. This can occur when:

- a. The Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, after consultation with the HDR candidate and supervisor, concludes that this is in the best interests of the HDR candidate; and,
- b. The arrangements negotiated with the supervisor satisfy the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee and the Dean, Graduate Research that the supervisor is in a position to continue to provide their Principal Supervisory responsibilities. (NB: the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee is required to approve the proposed conditions of adjunct appointment, including where agreed any remuneration of the external supervisor).

(44) In the circumstances described in Clauses 42 and 43 above, the HDR candidate's Associate Supervisor must be a member of staff of the University, and the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee will be expected to oversee the supervisory arrangements.

(45) It may be necessary or desirable to appoint an external supervisor outside Australia where a HDR candidate:

- a. Is conducting extended fieldwork overseas (for a year or more);
- b. Has changed residence to another country for the remainder of their research degree;
- c. Is enrolled in a research degree at VU in partnership with an overseas university or industry or professional organisation;
- d. Is an international HDR candidate required to return home for visa, personal or health reasons, but who needs to continue their studies.

(46) External supervision arrangements are reviewed via the milestones process and overseen and approved by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee.

(47) All external supervisors must be registered according to the provisions in Part C below and officially appointed to be a member of the designated supervisory team for a particular HDR candidate.

(48) External supervisors will:

- a. Be required to participate in an induction to Supervision at VU which must be completed within one month following provisional registration approval; and,
- b. Have access to the University and Institute training and development programs, for example, seminars, workshops and other Research Institute research activities and events, however, it is recognised that participation may be dependent on the availability of the external supervisor at the time/s programs are offered.

(49) External supervisors who do not already hold a staff appointment will normally be issued with an (e7) identification number in order to provide them with access to VU Library and online research and supervision support services and resources. The Researcher Professional Development team, GRS will organise this following the provisional approval as an External Supervisor.

Remuneration of External Supervisors

(50) External supervisors are normally not remunerated. Their involvement in contributing to research at VU is seen as part of their own professional outreach and collaboration with the University in research. They are encouraged to maximise their involvement in VU's research community and to access VU's researcher development and research support resources as part of their professional relationship with the University and their Research Institute.

(51) A remunerated external supervisor may be appointed where a Research Institute believes that remuneration is warranted by the nature of the supervisor's engagement. Such employment is managed by the Research Institute under the terms and conditions of related University policies and negotiated at Research Institute level.

(52) Any remuneration will reflect the level of supervisory contribution in relation to the Research Institute's agreed supervisory workload allowances and will be pro rata depending on the agreed split of supervisor responsibilities and the actual ongoing level of involvement maintained by the external supervisor. The level of remuneration may be varied from year to year throughout the duration of candidature.

(53) For shared programs or those offered via an agreed shared teaching arrangement with an overseas university, the remuneration arrangements for supervisors from the partner university will normally be negotiated as part of the business arrangements between the parties when the program is established. In such cases remuneration of supervisors falls outside the scope of Clauses 51 - 52 above.

Part C - Registration of Supervisors

New Registration Process

(54) All individuals providing supervision to HDR candidates must be registered with VU. To be considered for registration the applicant must meet the requirements under the TEQSA [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021 \(Cth\)](#), Standard 4.2 for registration as a supervisor of research training.

(55) Applicants seeking to be a registered supervisor must complete the Supervisor Registration Form, including all required information and attachments (e.g. a resume with evidence of relevant qualifications and their research, details of previous HDR supervisions, ORCID ID, research training and professional development in supervision).

Currently enrolled VU HDR candidates are not permitted to register to supervise HDR candidates at VU.

(56) Applications are submitted to Researcher Professional Development, GRS, which will forward the application to the relevant Research Institute for review by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee. The Associate Director, Research Training will be asked to make a recommendation on the application, with the following options available:

- a. Register at a designated level (see Table 1 below);or
- b. Not to register. In cases where an application is unsuccessful, the applicant will be advised by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee of the reason/s for their registration application not being supported. This will include feedback to assist them in undertaking relevant professional and researcher development in order to be able to meet the requirements in a future application.

(57) All new supervisors (internal or external) who are approved for a first-time registration at VU will be provisionally approved until they complete the relevant Supervisor Induction. This induction must be completed within one (1) month of the Associate Director, Research Training provisional approval of their registration. Researcher Professional Development will enrol provisional new supervisors in the relevant Supervisor Induction program and provide instructions via email.

(58) Once a new applicant has completed the Supervisor Induction, the Dean, Graduate Research will approve registration.

(59) When a new application is approved by the Dean, Graduate Research, the person is added to the Supervision Register with the designated supervisory registration level by the Researcher Professional Development team, GRS, and the applicant is informed of the outcome of their application. At this point, the newly registered supervisor can formally commence supervision.

Upgrade of Supervisor Registration Level

(60) A person seeking to upgrade their supervisor registration level must complete electronically the Supervisor Registration Form indicating that the application is to upgrade their registration level, including all required information and attachments (e.g. a resume with evidence of supervisor experience, details of HDR supervision completions, relevant qualifications and their research, ORCID ID, research training and professional development in supervision).

(61) Applications are submitted to Researcher Professional Development, GRS, which will forward the application to the relevant Research Institute for review by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee. The Associate Director, Research Training will be asked to approve the application, with the following options available:

- a. Approval of upgrade to a designated level (see Table 1 below); or,
- b. Not to approve. In cases where an application is unsuccessful, the applicant will be advised by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee of the reason/s for their registration application not being supported. This will include feedback to assist them in undertaking relevant professional and researcher development in order to be able to meet the requirements in a future application.

(62) When an upgrade is approved by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, the supervisor's record is updated on the Supervision Register and relevant VU databases by the Researcher Professional Development team, and the applicant is informed of the outcome of their application.

(63) For a Review of an Application to Register or an Upgrade Outcome - see clauses 85 to 90.

Supervisor Registration Levels

(64) Supervisor registration level guidelines stipulate the role that a supervisor may be permitted in a supervisory team, as well as the maximum EFT load of HDR candidates that the supervisor is qualified to supervise (see Table 1 below). The specific supervisory role of the supervisor for a given HDR candidate is distinct from their level of registration. For example, for a given HDR candidate, a supervisor who is registered as a Principal Supervisor (either Level 2 or 3) may have a role as either Associate Supervisor or Principal Supervisor depending on their role in the HDR candidate's project.

(65) Progression of Registration from one level to the next is not automatic. In order to be considered for an upgrade the supervisor will complete and submit electronically to the RPD team the [Application for Registration or Upgrade as a Graduate Research Supervisor form](#) and provide documentation to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the requirements for the level proposed. In addition, an upgrade to a supervisory level may occur as a result of Annual Administrative Review of Supervisor Registration (see Clauses 77 to 84).

(66) For progression from Level 1 (Associate) to Level 2 (Principal) all initial supervisor development must have been completed. In addition, satisfactory completion of the 'Step Up to Principal' Development program is required. After at least two years as an Associate Supervisor with satisfactory performance, following approval of the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, an Associate Supervisor can apply to enter the 'Step Up' program. The program is usually expected to be completed in the year prior to the formal application for the upgrade, but must be completed no later than 12 months following the upgrade to Level 2 being approved. Failure to complete the 'Step Up' program within this timeframe will lead to registration reverting to Level 1 (Associate).

(67) All Level 2 supervisors are expected to have a designated mentor Level 3 supervisor until they have supervised at least one Candidate to completion. This arrangement will be organised by the Supervisor's Research Institute.

(68) The research activity minimum expectations will change over time in line with amendments to University policy on research activity.

Table 1 - Supervisory Levels

Requirements to Qualify for Registration at the Designated Level	Level 1 Associate Supervisor	Level 2 Principal Supervisor	Level 3 Experienced Principal Supervisor
Description of level	Able to act as Associate Supervisor for both Master and Doctoral Candidates	Able to act as a Principal Supervisor for a limited number of Candidates	An experienced Principal Supervisor
Academic qualification level	AQF Level 10 or equivalent OR extensive research experience (as determined officially by Associate Director, Research Training or nominee)	AQF Level 10 or equivalent (as determined officially by Associate Director, Research Training or nominee)	AQF Level 10 or equivalent (as determined officially by Associate Director, Research Training or nominee)

Requirements to Qualify for Registration at the Designated Level	Level 1 Associate Supervisor	Level 2 Principal Supervisor	Level 3 Experienced Principal Supervisor
Research activity	At least one of the following: a minimum authorship of one published paper per year during the last three years, one major scholarly work such as a book or creative performance during the last three years; securing of a patent/invention during the last three years; securing externally funded grants totalling \$45,000 across the three years, not necessarily in a field or discipline relevant to the higher degree research applicant/candidate's research. OR For new doctoral graduates, completion of their degrees in the year previous to their initial registration.	At least one of the following: a minimum authorship of one published paper per year during the last three years, one major scholarly work such as a book or creative performance during the last three years; securing of a patent/invention during the last three years; securing externally funded grants totaling \$45,000 across the three years, in a field or discipline relevant to the higher degree research applicant/candidate's research.	At least one of the following: a minimum authorship of one published paper per year during the last three years, one major scholarly work such as a book or creative performance during the last three years; securing of a patent/invention during the last three years; securing externally funded grants totalling \$45,000 across the three years, in a field or discipline relevant to the higher degree research applicant/candidate's research.
Supervisory experience	No previous graduate research supervisory experience, although desirable to have experience with undergraduate, honours or Master's minor theses projects.	At least 3 years' experience as a graduate research supervisor with evidence of positive appraisal of performance (eg. Candidate feedback on supervision).	At least 5 years experience as a graduate research supervisor with evidence of positive appraisal of performance (eg. Candidate feedback on supervision) and at least two timely completions.
Supervisory professional development	Supervisor Induction is required before initial registration can be finalised. In addition, it is expected that Associate Supervisors will also complete at least one intensive initial supervisor development program (e.g., Demystifying the Thesis - Supervision Intensive or equivalent) across the first two years of registration.	Must have completed initial supervisor development training under Level 1 and mandatory attendance at the Supervisors Refresher program; record of engagement in other supervisory skills development. Must complete 'Step Up to Principal' program by the end of the first year of being upgraded.	Must have completed initial supervisor development training and Supervisor's Refresher program (see Level 1 and 2 requirements); record of engagement in and contributions to other supervisory skills development (including evidence of leadership in developing others).
Supervisory load expectations	A maximum supervision load no greater than 3.0 EFT, all in the role of Associate Supervisor for Candidates.	A maximum supervisory load of 4.0 EFT with no more than 2.0 EFT as a Principal Supervisor for Candidates.	A supervisory load up to the University maximum (6.0 EFT), although the normal recommended maximum supervisory load is 4.0 EFT, other than if holding a research intensive/research only appointment.

Limits on Supervision

(69) The limits on supervisory load, linked to the level of supervisor registration, have been developed to support the delivery of timely and effective supervision as part of a balanced academic workload. These suggested maximums are summarised in Table 1 above. Supervisor loads will be reviewed annually by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee. In exceptional circumstances a supervisor may be permitted to exceed the maximum load. However, the case for exceeding the permitted maximum supervisory load will need to be endorsed by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee and a rationale provided to the Dean, Graduate Research for consideration and, if deemed appropriate, for approval.

(70) The maximum supervisory load for an individual supervisor registered as Level 3 Principal Supervisor, who has a strong record of successful completions is 6.0 (six) EFT. However, these maximums would normally only be supported where the Principal Supervisor is working in a research-intensive or research-only environment within the University.

Supervisor Development

(71) All supervisors must complete the required Supervisor Induction training before their supervisor registration is finalised.

(72) All internal supervisors are required to maintain current knowledge of supervisory practice and an awareness of VU research and research training policies through attendance at a Supervisor's Refresher program (face-to-face or online module) every two years from their anniversary date or re-registration date. Supervisors are expected to check the GRS Researcher Professional Development website, VU Collaborate and/or email bulletins regularly to determine when this program will be offered.

(73) All internal supervisors are expected to develop supervisory skills and contribute to the development of others, including through attendance at Supervisor Development Programs offered by the University. Supervisors are expected to check the GRS Researcher Professional Development website and to register to the VU Research staff email list in order to be aware of upcoming workshops.

(74) All external supervisors are required to undertake the Supervisor Induction program for external supervisors. All external supervisors are encouraged to engage in supervisory skill development or activities appropriate to their role. External supervisors will have access to the VU Supervisor Development Program (see also Clause 48). External supervisors may also provide evidence of supervisor training undertaken at other universities or organisations.

Maintaining the Supervisor Register in response to a staffing change

(75) The Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, will advise Researcher Professional Development, GRS of staffing changes. Researcher Professional Development will follow up any required changes to supervisor registration. Changes may include:

- a. Change of supervisor status (e.g. to external supervisor);
- b. Deactivation of supervisor registration in good standing.

(76) To ensure that the Supervisor Register is up-to-date and accurate, the Researcher Professional Development team will review and update the supervisor listings on an annual basis, with the Associate Director, Research Training's or nominees, to take into account staffing changes.

Annual Administrative Review of Supervisor Registration

(77) Each year the Researcher Professional Development team will undertake an administrative review of all supervisors who have been on the register at their particular level for three or more years.

(78) The Researcher Professional Development team will review each supervisor's registration taking into account the following:

- a. Active research engagement - evidence of ongoing contributions to and outcomes from research in their field, such as grants, publications, or other relevant reportable research outcomes, including their MORA score and Research Fellowship status;
- b. Supervisor development programs attended - attendance at internal and/or external programs;
- c. Personal record of supervision in the last three years: highest level of supervision, supervisory role, current EFSTL being supervised, completions during the last three years (including timely and non-timely);

d. Employment status with the University.

(79) The Researcher Professional Development team may contact supervisors during the review to clarify or request additional information.

(80) Following the administrative review, the Manager, Researcher Professional Development will make one of the following recommendations to the relevant Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, for each supervisor:

- a. Continued registration;
- b. Conditional registration (e.g. training, limitation of students, level);
- c. Upgrade to higher level (with requisite training if required);
- d. Registration to be reviewed by the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee; or
- e. Registration deactivated in good standing.

(81) The Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, will review the recommendations from the Manager, Researcher Professional Development and advise the Manager, Researcher Professional Development of the outcome of their review. The outcomes will be one of the following:

- a. Continued registration confirmed;
- b. Conditional re-registration stipulating conditions to be met within a designated timeframe. Registration after this period will only continue if the condition/s have been met;
- c. Endorsed for upgrade to a higher level (including notification of any training to be undertaken);
- d. Change in supervisor level stipulating the reasons for the change in level and any conditions to be met to upgrade in future;
- e. Registration deactivated in good standing.

(82) Upon confirmation from the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, Researcher Professional Development will advise supervisors via email of the outcome of the annual review and update the Supervision Register and relevant VU databases.

(83) The Manager, Researcher Professional Development will inform the Dean, Graduate Research of the outcomes of the Annual Administrative Review.

(84) A supervisor whose registration has been deactivated in good standing may apply for registration in the future (through completing the [Application for Registration or Upgrade as a Graduate Research Supervisor](#) form) should their circumstances change and they can provide evidence of capacity to supervise at the required level. Such an application would require the supervisor to undertake the Supervisor Induction training, in addition to any training advised by the Associate Director, Research Training or Dean, Graduate Research.

Review of Supervisor Registration Decision Outcomes

(85) If under Clause 56 (b), Clause 61 (b), or Clause 81 an application is not approved or a supervisor has their supervision status changed as a result of an Annual Administrative Review, an applicant will have the option to apply, with relevant evidence, for a review of their application outcome on the following grounds:

- a. Procedural fairness;
- b. Prejudice or bias in the application or upgrade process;
- c. Special circumstances that have not been taken into account in the application or upgrade process (e.g. diversity, inclusion or equity grounds);
- d. That evidence in the original application was not considered; and/or,

e. Additional evidence is available that was not taken into consideration in the annual registration review process.

(86) Requests for review must be made within 20 working days from when the decision was conveyed to the applicant/supervisor.

(87) A review of the registration application outcome can be requested by submitting in writing, to the Researcher Professional Development team, a statement regarding the grounds for the review and evidence that is to be considered.

(88) The review will be undertaken by:

- a. The Dean, Graduate Research, or nominee, if the application was not approved at the Associate Director level; or,
- b. The DVC (Research and Impact), or nominee, if the application was not approved by the Dean, Graduate Research.

(89) The Reviewer will consider all the relevant evidence provided by the applicant and provide an outcome within 20 working days of the request for a review being lodged. The Reviewer may seek further information from relevant parties before making their decision. The decision may be that:

- a. The original decision to not approve the application is upheld;
- b. The original decision is overturned and the application is approved;
- c. The original decision is overturned and the application is approved, subject to conditions set by the Reviewer. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, supervisory training or mentoring.

(90) The decision of the Reviewer in reviewing a supervisor registration application outcome is final.

Part D - Managing Concerns and Conflicts

(91) In the event that a conflict arises, an informal meeting will take place at the earliest opportunity between the HDR candidate and all supervisors to ensure that the HDR candidate has a clear and consistent understanding of what is expected of them.

(92) If there is still no resolution after this meeting, the HDR candidate or supervisor(s) shall have the right to ask for a further meeting with the relevant Associate Director, Research Training or nominee.

(93) Failing resolution after a further meeting with the relevant Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, then the HDR candidate may request a change in the persons providing supervision (see Part E below). Similarly, one or more supervisors may elect not to continue to be a supervisor for the HDR candidate, or there may be a mutual agreement to cease the arrangement. Such requests will be subject to the availability of adequate replacement supervision (refer to [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure 7 Supervision](#)), and only after receiving the endorsement of the appropriate Associate Director, Research Training or nominee. In the event that the Associate Director, Research Training is supervising the HDR candidate, then the responsibility will fall to the appropriate alternative Associate Director, Research Training or Executive Director (or nominee) for that Research Institute.

(94) A review of a supervisor's registration may be initiated at any time when a Associate Director, Research Training or Dean, Graduate Research is made aware of concerns about the suitability of a supervisor to remain registered.

(95) Any individual may raise concerns about HDR supervision under this Procedure including but not limited to a HDR candidate, another member of a HDR candidate's supervisory team or a staff member. These concerns would normally be submitted to the Associate Director, Research Training.

(96) The Associate Director, Research Training or nominee will make confidential enquiries regarding the concerns raised with relevant parties, including but not limited to the supervisor, HDR candidates, and other members of the HDR candidates' supervisory team.

(97) Such concerns could include, but are not limited to, responsibilities outlined in Part A (table) or failure to comply with a supervision related request from the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee.

(98) The Associate Director, Research Training will work with the supervisor and relevant parties to resolve the issue at the local level with or without corrective actions.

(99) If the issue is unable to be resolved at the local level, or if the issue raised needs to be dealt with under another University Policy, the Associate Director, Research Training will advise the Dean, Graduate Research. The Dean, Graduate Research may further attempt to resolve the matter but may also refer the matter to other relevant institutional processes, including but not limited to the [Research Integrity Policy](#), [Research Integrity - Guide to the Management of Potential Breaches of the Australian Code Procedure](#); [Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy](#), [Staff Complaints Resolution Procedure](#), [Bullying Prevention and Management Policy](#), [Student Complaints Procedure](#) or [Student Misconduct Regulations 2019](#).

(100) After the matter has been managed via another relevant University policy or procedure, the outcome for the supervisor's registration status will be reported to the Dean, Graduate Research who will inform the supervisor, the Associate Director, Research Training, and the Manager, Researcher Professional Development in writing. The outcome for the supervisor's registration may include but is not limited to:

- a. That the supervisor maintain their supervisor registration status (with or without conditions);
- b. That the supervisor remains as a registered supervisor with some restrictions to their level (with or without conditions);
- c. That the supervisor remains as a registered supervisor but with a downgrade in their supervisory level (with or without conditions); or
- d. That the supervisor is deregistered as a supervisor of HDR candidates (including any conditions and/or time limits on applying for re-registration).

Part E - Changes in Supervision

Absence of Supervisors

(101) If one member of the supervisory team is absent from their duties through approved leave for three months or less, the remaining member of the supervisory team is expected to maintain supervisory oversight and minimise disruption for the HDR candidate.

(102) If all members of a supervisory team are expected to be simultaneously absent from the University and not able to provide supervision, then the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee must be informed by the Principal Supervisor, so that an Acting Principal Supervisor can be appointed for the duration of the period. Under such circumstances, Associate Director, Research Training or nominee may discuss leave with the HDR candidate if deemed appropriate.

(103) When a Principal Supervisor is expected to be absent and unable to provide supervision for an extended period (more than three months), then an Acting Principal Supervisor must be formally appointed. Normally, this would be one of the Associate Supervisors who has relevant experience. In these circumstances the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee will consider appointing another experienced supervisor to the team to provide support.

Changes to the Supervisory Team

(104) Changes to the supervisory team will be discussed with the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee before a change is approved. Reasons for change in the supervisory team can include:

- 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 alternative 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. A replacement or change in the level of appointment of a supervisor.

(105) A request can be made to the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee for an additional Associate Supervisor to be appointed where it is considered that an additional supervisor would complement the supervision team.

(106) It is recognised that in some cases, the supervisory arrangement is not optimal and a change may need to be considered. In such cases, the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee will be asked to assist in resolving the situation.

(107) A requested change is one initiated either by the HDR candidate, one or more of the current supervisors, the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee, or the Dean, Graduate Research.

(108) The person initiating the change request is encouraged to discuss the proposed change in person with those involved in the current supervisory arrangements. In all cases where an ongoing change in supervision is requested, the [Application for Change in Supervision](#) form must be completed. All supervisors on the HDR candidate's supervision team are normally required to consent to the new arrangement through signing the form or through email consent. However, where the Associate Director, Research Training or nominee is satisfied that the proposed change of supervisory arrangements is in the best interest of the HDR candidate then their approval will enable the change to proceed regardless of whether all supervisors have consented and of the timing.

Variations to Supervision Load

(109) Data relating in relation to supervisory roles and percentages will be entered onto the research management system within 20 working days, on receipt of the completed [Application for Change in Supervision](#) form.

(110) The data relating to supervisory load will be utilised in calculations as required according to the procedure supporting the current relevant Enterprise Agreement.

(111) Changes to supervisory teams and load can be made at any time. Adjustments to supervisory workload points will be made according to the timeframe outlined in the current Enterprise Agreement.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	16th September 2022
Review Date	2nd June 2024
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research & Impact
Approval Date	22nd June 2022
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Accountable Officer	Andrew Hill Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research & Impact Andrew.Hill@vu.edu.au
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Research" - The creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include the synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. This definition of research encompasses pure and oriented basic research, applied research and experimental development. This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) comprising creative work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge - including knowledge of humankind, culture and society - and to devise new applications of available knowledge. Activities that do not meet the definition of research include: i. scientific and technical information services ii. general-purpose or routine data collection iii. standardisation and routine testing iv. feasibility studies (except in R&D projects) v. literature reviews that do not include any critical assessment or report any new findings or original experimental work vi. commercial, legal and administrative aspects of patenting, plant breeders rights, copyright, material transfer agreements or intellectual property licensing, option and assignment activities, and royalties vii. routine computer programming, systems work or software maintenance.

"External Supervisors" - Supervisors who do not hold an ongoing position or sessional 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 internal supervisors.

"Research-intensive" - Academic staff whose role means that a major or the primary focus of their work is research (defined as a workload of >50% devoted to research). It is expected that such research-intensive staff will contribute to teaching and research training through supervision and instruction of research postgraduate students.

"TEQSA" - Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency is an Australian government agency that regulates and assures the quality of Australia's higher education sector.

"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.