



**UNIVERSITY of
TASMANIA**

Higher Degrees by Research Admissions and Enrolment Policy

Responsible Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Approved by	Vice-Chancellor
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Relevant Legislation, Ordinance, Rule and/or Governance Level Principle	<p>Australian Sanctions Legislation: <i>Charter of the United Nations (UN Sanction Enforcement Law) Declaration 2008</i> <i>Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 (Cth)</i> <i>Autonomous Sanctions Regulations 2011 (Cth)</i> <i>Defence Trades Control Act 2012 (Cth)</i> <i>Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth)</i> <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth)</i> <i>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</i> <i>Australian Qualifications Framework</i> <i>University of Tasmania Act 1992.</i> Governance Level Principle 12 - Academic Standards Governance Level Principle 13 - Quality Management Framework Rule 4 - Rules of Graduate Research</p>
Responsible Organisational Unit	Division of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

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1 Objective

The objective of this *Policy* is to set out admission and enrolment requirements for Higher Degrees by Research at the University of Tasmania (the University).

2 Scope

This *Policy* applies to:

- all domestic, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and international students applying for admission to a Higher Degree by Research and
- all staff of the University involved in the assessment of applicants for admission to a Higher Degree by Research.

3 Policy Provisions

3.1 Principles of Selection

Selection of applicants for admission to a Higher Degree by Research will be based on:

- the applicant demonstrating they have an appropriate academic background and adequate research preparation to meet the minimum entry requirements for the Higher Degree by Research as specified in clause 8 of Rule 4
- an applicant having a preliminary research proposal that is academically appropriate for their proposed Higher Degree by Research and
- the University's assessment of its capacity to provide:
 - a. suitable, qualified supervision appropriate to the discipline and background of the applicant and

- b. the necessary facilities and resources required to successfully complete the Higher Degree by Research within the degree period as specified in clause 12 of Rule 4.

Selection decisions will be based on demonstrated academic achievement but may also take account of other factors if applying via an alternative pathway as listed in Section 3.4.2.

3.2 Enrolment and Research Sanctions

Where an applicant is a citizen of a country affected by:

- United Nations Security Council Sanctions
- Australian Autonomous Sanctions Regimes or
- the Defence Trades Control legislation;

the applicant and/or the applicant's proposed research project will be assessed in accordance with the *Defence Export Controls Policy* and the *Security Council and Autonomous Sanctions Compliance Policy* prior to consideration for admission to a Higher Degree by Research.

The University Graduate Research Office is nominated as the authorised assessor for autonomous sanctions compliance and risk assessment forms.

Final approval of whether to support an offer of admission to a Higher Degree by Research to an applicant who is a citizen of a sanctioned country is made by the Dean of Graduate Research.

3.3 Enrolment and Declaration of a Disability or Health Issue

In keeping with the University's *Disability and Health Conditions Policy*, it is important that applicants disclose any pre-existing health conditions at commencement of candidature where:

- it may affect their capacity to undertake their Higher Degree by Research work and
- reasonable adjustments are necessary to undertake the requirements of the Degree Program, assist with the management of candidature and identify the level of additional support required.

Information disclosed to the University about a candidate's disability/health condition will be managed in accordance with the relevant privacy legislation and the University's *Privacy Policy*.

3.4 Entry Pathways into a Higher Degree by Research

Entry into Higher Degrees by Research is based on a demonstrated capacity to undertake significant research in the proposed field.

The final determination regarding the standard of an applicant's research ability is made by the Dean of Graduate Research.

3.4.1 Standard Entry Pathways

Minimum entry requirements apply to all Higher Degrees by Research and are specified in clause 8 of Rule 4.

Qualifying degrees must have been awarded within a 10-year period prior to the date of application for admission to Higher Degree by Research candidature.

Where a coursework masters' degree or graduate diploma is considered as the basis for admission the research project or thesis must be between 10,000 to 20,000 words and equate to a minimum 25 per cent research component of the entire degree.

Where any of the above standard admission requirements are not met, an application will be considered as part of an application via the alternative entry pathway process.

3.4.2 Alternative Entry Pathways

Where attainment of research skills and ability has been achieved through sector-based research and/or equivalent professional experience and/or qualifications, applicants may submit an application for alternative entry to a Higher Degree by Research.

Applicants must provide documented evidence as stated in clause 3.2.4 of the *Higher Degree by Research Admissions and Enrolment Procedure* to demonstrate their level of competency against four skills areas:

- conceptual and theoretical understanding/knowledge of the field
- potential to undertake research (research design, data collection and data management skills)
- analytical and interpretative skills (e.g. data analysis, critical analysis, problem solving) and
- communication skills.

3.5 English Language Requirements

English is the language of instruction at the University. All applicants for whom English is not their first language will be required to provide evidence that they are able to read, write, speak and understand English to a sufficient standard before commencing their Higher Degree by Research as per the *Higher Degree by Research Admissions and Enrolment Procedure*.

Faculties/Institutes may set higher individual minimum scores for English language requirements for specific Higher Degrees by Research subject to approval by the Research Degrees Committee

3.5.1 Options for Applicants who do not meet English Language Requirements

The Head of Academic Unit, through the Executive Dean, may present a case to the Dean of Graduate Research that an applicant who does not meet the minimum English Language Requirements has other qualifications or experiences that demonstrate their English language proficiency.

3.6 Referee Reports

Two referee reports are required in support of applications for admission to Higher Degrees by Research. At least one report must be from a referee who is external to the University. Applicants may only nominate their proposed supervisor as a referee if they have previously been supervised by them at the University.

Applicants who completed all their previous tertiary qualifications at the University, may nominate both referees from the University provided that one referee is not a member of the proposed supervisory team.

Referees must be able to comment on an applicant's research experience and potential with reference to their academic background, including comparative standing in research qualifications, sector-based experience, prizes/achievements and other research related activities.

3.7 Transfer from another Institution

An applicant who is enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research at another Australian university may seek to transfer their candidature to a Higher Degree by Research at the University at the same level of degree provided:

- the body of work the applicant is seeking to count towards their new candidature has not been submitted and/or accepted for an award at another institution
- there is no interval between the two enrolments unless the interval is covered by a formal period of suspension
- the research undertaken by the student is continued or modified to meet the requirements of the new Higher Degree by Research candidature and
- the previous institution has provided appropriate release documentation related to candidature, Project IP and/or student visas.

Applicants wishing to transfer their candidature to the University must obtain the support of the relevant Executive Dean at the University and are subject to the Higher Degree by Research admission requirements and enrolment procedures at the time of transfer.

If the transfer is approved, the total duration of candidature will include the time enrolled at the original institution and the University's minimum and maximum degree periods will apply.

3.8 External (Off-Campus) Candidature

A domestic or international applicant may apply to undertake their candidature off-campus. Approval for off-campus candidature is not automatic. The Academic Unit of enrolment and relevant College must be confident that the prospective applicant has the personal maturity and research experience to pursue independent, sustained and structured research off-campus. Applicants may be able to demonstrate these abilities through previous study/research completed. A plan must be provided that shows how any program requirements will be met. Final approval of any application for off-campus enrolment will be made by the Dean of Graduate Research.

Before external candidature is approved the relevant College is expected to provide assurance to the Dean of Graduate Research that all additional costs related to external candidature can be met by the Candidate, the research project or the academic unit of enrolment.

The following periods away from the University are not classified as completing all or part of a program outside the University:

- fieldwork
- conference attendance

- short-term exchange visits to another institution
- studying at a partner institution under a joint or dual degree and
- revisions completed elsewhere after a thesis examination.

3.8.1 Domestic Applicants and External Candidature

A domestic applicant may apply to undertake all or part of their candidature off campus. Where an application for external candidature is approved, domestic candidates must attend the University for periods of time sufficient to complete any on-campus requirements of the Higher Degree by Research in accordance with course specifications approved by Academic Senate and set out in the applicable University course and unit handbook.

3.8.2 International Applicants and External Candidature

For international Higher Degree by Research applicants there are two categories of external candidature: onshore or offshore.

Onshore external candidature: International candidates in Australia who hold a student visa can only spend up to 12 months in total studying off-campus within Australia.

Offshore external candidature: The candidate undertakes their entire degree at a location outside of Australia. Candidates may visit a University campus, but must seek advice from the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Control prior to entering Australia.

3.9 Joint Research Training Programs

Applicants who wish to apply to undertake a Doctoral degree under a Joint Research Training Program should refer to the *Joint Research Training Policy and Procedures*.

3.10 Assessments of Applications for Admission to a Higher Degree by Research

The Graduate Research Coordinator, in consultation with the proposed Primary Supervisor, is responsible for assessing applications for admission to Higher Degree by Research candidature and making recommendations to the relevant Heads of Academic Units and College Associate Deans Research. These recommendations will take into consideration:

- the program of research and other studies required of the candidate
- the supervisory arrangements in accordance with the *Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy*
- the date of enrolment in the Higher Degree by Research and
- any other conditions recommended by the academic unit of enrolment.

After endorsement by the Head of Academic Unit and Associate Dean Research, recommendations for admission are provided to the Dean of Graduate Research for approval.

3.11 Offers of Admission to a Higher Degree by Research

Letters of offer for admission to a Higher Degree by Research shall be made in writing by the Dean of Graduate Research.

Letters of offer are valid for two weeks (domestic) or eight weeks (international), unless otherwise advised. Offers will lapse if they have not been accepted by the date indicated in the letter of offer as per clause 3.11 and 3.12 of the *Higher Degree by Research Admissions and Enrolment Procedure*.

Once an offer of admission to a Higher Degree by Research has been accepted candidates have up to two months (domestic) or six months (international) to enrol in the Higher Degree by Research and commence candidature from the date of the letter of offer unless otherwise stated.

A letter of offer may contain pre-enrolment conditions that must be met either before accepting the offer or being admitted to candidature.

3.12 Enrolment in a Relevant Program of Coursework

Doctor of Philosophy and Master of Research applicants will be automatically enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Research when enrolled in the relevant Degree Program, unless otherwise specified in the letter of offer.

Professional Doctorate applicants must enrol in the coursework units in accordance with course specifications approved by Academic Senate and set out in the applicable University course and unit handbook.

Applicants should refer to the *Higher Degree by Research Reviews of Progress Policy* for more information about coursework requirements.

3.13 Credit provisions

The Dean of Graduate Research may determine that an applicant is wholly or partially exempt from coursework requirements of the Higher Degree by Research as a result of the applicant's previous qualifications and/or experience. The applicant/Candidate will be advised in writing of any exemptions/credit approved by the Dean of Graduate Research.

3.13.1 Graduate Certificate in Research

Applicants may apply for full or partial exemption from, or credit for, units already completed towards the Graduate Certificate in Research. Applicants should refer to section 3.2 of the *Higher Degree by Research Candidature Management Procedures*.

Applicants seeking full exemption from the Graduate Certificate in Research or exemption from one or more core units, must complete relevant research integrity and work health and safety training as specified by the Dean of Graduate Research.

3.13.2 Professional Doctorates

Applicants to a Professional Doctorate may apply for credit for to up to 50% of coursework where:

- the student gained at least a distinction grade for the unit of study
- the unit of study was a genuine Australian Qualifications Framework level nine unit in the same or a cognate discipline
- the unit of study did not constitute a component of an already completed degree and
- the unit of study was completed in the past ten years.

No credit will be given for previously completed research.

Applications for credit towards the coursework component of a Professional Doctorate must be discussed with and approved by the relevant course coordinator.

3.14 Commencement Date of Enrolment

Applicants must enrol and commence candidature on or before the date of enrolment stipulated in the letter of offer.

3.14.1 Delaying the Date of Enrolment

In exceptional circumstances, and where delaying the date of enrolment in the Higher Degree by Research can be accommodated by the research project, the Academic Unit of enrolment and the relevant College the Dean of Graduate Research may approve an application from the applicant to delay the date of enrolment. This application must be made in accordance with Section 3.10 of the *Higher Degree by Research Admissions and Enrolment Procedure* and prior to the original date of enrolment contained in the letter of offer.

An application to delay the date of enrolment will not normally be approved for longer than three months. In exceptional cases an application to delay the date of enrolment may be approved for longer periods up to a maximum of 12 months. Where commencement has been delayed for more than 12 months, applicants will be required to reapply for admission to the Higher Degree by Research.

Scholarship conditions may have an impact on whether an applicant can delay the date of enrolment and retain the scholarship. Applicants should check the conditions of the scholarship they have been offered prior to making an application to delay the date of enrolment.

An applicant who is granted a delay to the date of enrolment will be liable for any tuition fees at the rate applicable in the year of enrolment pro rata.

3.15 Withdrawing an Offer or Cancelling Enrolment

The Dean of Graduate Research may withdraw an offer of admission to Higher Degree by Research candidature or cancel the enrolment of an applicant where:

- an offer is made on the basis of incomplete, inaccurate, fraudulent or misleading information supplied by the applicant or certifying authority or
- an applicant has been excluded from any tertiary institution or tertiary program, and has not so advised the University, at any time up to the commencement of, or during, the Higher Degree by Research program or
- the applicant does not meet the pre-enrolment conditions in the letter of offer within the maximum expiry date specified.

Fees paid may be forfeited as per the [International Student Fee Refund Policy](#).

3.16 Review of Decisions made by the Dean of Graduate Research

An applicant who wishes to appeal an admission decision may submit a request for review in writing to the Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Research) (DVCR) within 20 working days of receiving a notification regarding admission from the University.

If upon review the applicant is not successful, the decision is final and no further appeal can be made within the University.

3.17 Record Keeping Requirements

Records and Information that support activities related to the assessment of applications and admission to Higher Degrees by Research will be created, managed and retained in accordance with University *Records Management Policy, Procedures and Guidelines*.

4 Responsibilities

4.1.1 The Dean of Graduate Research is responsible for ensuring that:

- information about programs, entry requirements and application procedures are accurate and communicated to applicants in a timely fashion
- admission processes are explicit, fair, transparent, inclusive and consistent across the University
- the quality of admission services are maintained at a high-level and that the University engages in activities which continually improve the delivery of those services
- records will be created, managed and retained in accordance with University *Records Management Policy, Procedures and Guidelines* and
- the processes used for the allocation of Commonwealth and University Research Scholarships are consistent with the fairness requirements of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*.

4.1.2 The Executive Deans are responsible for:

- the strategic management of College financial, supervision, and infrastructure resources as per the *Academic Structures Policy and Delegations Policy* and Schedules.

4.1.3 The Academic Directors, Associate Deans Research are responsible for:

- assisting the Executive Dean with the planning, development and management of research and research training in the College and
- making recommendations on the strategic use of College resources to support Higher Degree by Research candidature, in line with College research priorities.

4.1.4 The Head of Academic Unit is responsible to the College Executive Dean for:

- the administration of the Academic Unit including planning, budget, strategy, human resources and performance as per the *Academic Structures Policy and Delegations Policy* and Schedules and
- approving the commitment of resources to support Higher Degree by Research candidature.

4.1.5 Graduate Research Coordinators are responsible for:

- assessing applications for candidature and making recommendations to Heads of Academic Units and Executive Deans on Higher Degree by Research admissions to candidature as per the *Higher Degree by Research Graduate Research Coordination Policy*.

4.1.6 Supervisors are responsible for:

- making an assessment of an applicant's suitability for a Higher Degree by Research
- conducting a face-to-face (in person or using video conferencing technology) interview with an applicant for a Higher Degree by Research to test claims of research preparedness as per section 3.1 of the *Higher Degree by Research Admissions and Enrolment Procedure* and
- ensuring they are registered as a Supervisor as per the *Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy*.

4.1.7 Applicants are responsible for ensuring that:

- the information provided in their application is complete and accurate, and does not contain any fraudulent or misleading information and
- they adhere to any pre-enrolment and ongoing conditions stipulated by the University.

5 Definitions and Acronyms

Term/Acronym	Definition
Applicant	A person applying for enrolment at the University as a Candidate for a Research Higher Degree.
Academic Unit	The secondary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, reporting directly to the College Executive Deans, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure.
Associate Dean Research	A senior academic staff member appointed to assist the Executive Dean with the planning, development and management of research and research training in the College.
Australian Autonomous Sanctions Laws	Australian laws developed to implement United Nations Security Council sanctions regimes and Australian autonomous sanctions regimes.
Authorised Assessor	A University employee responsible for reviewing autonomous sanctions compliance and risk assessments and making a recommendation to the Dean of Graduate Research on the level of risk of the University being in breach of Australian autonomous sanctions laws.
Candidate	A person enrolled at the University as a candidate for a Degree.
Candidature	The status conferred on a person who is enrolled as a candidate under Rule 4.
College	means (a) the primary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure

(b) the University College

Dean of Graduate Research	The Dean of Graduate Research is the person who has responsibility for establishing the academic framework for research training at the University; and for working with Colleges, Faculties and Institutes to ensure the University maintains appropriate standards for research training at the University (including admission, appropriate infrastructure, supervision and examination).
Degree Period	The period within which a Higher Degree by Research Thesis must be submitted as defined in clause 12 of Rule 4.
Executive Dean	means: (a) the Executive Dean of the relevant College, or (b) in relation to the University College, the Principal of the University College
External candidature	An arrangement whereby a candidate undertakes part of their candidature off-campus.
Graduate Research Coordinator	An academic staff member who oversees candidature supervision within an academic unit of enrolment in consultation with the Head of Academic Unit.
Graduate Research Office	The University organisational unit responsible for supporting the central administration of Higher Degrees by Research.
Head of Academic Unit	means the head of the relevant Academic Unit
Higher Degree by Research	A Doctor of Philosophy, Professional Doctorate or Master of Research Degree as listed in Rule 4: Rules of Graduate Research.
Institute	Unless otherwise stated, in this <i>Policy</i> 'Institute' refers to the Institute in which the applicant will be enrolled.
Institute Director	For the purposes of this <i>Policy</i> , Institute Director refers to in the case of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the Australian Maritime College, the Principal of that college (or their authorised delegate).• the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, the Executive Director of that institute (or their authorised delegate).• the Menzies Institute for Medical Research, the Director of that institute (or their authorised delegate).
Joint Research Training Program	A Joint Research Training Program is an arrangement whereby a Doctoral candidate is jointly supervised by the

	University of Tasmania and a partner institution, is enrolled at both institutions and receives one award, made jointly by the University of Tasmania and the partner institution.
Primary Supervisor	The supervisor who is primarily responsible for ensuring that all administrative and regulatory requirements prescribed for candidates are met.
Reasonable Adjustments	The alterations or modifications that are able to be provided so as to alleviate the implications of a disability/health condition, after due consideration is given to inherent requirements and academic integrity.
Research Project	The research undertaken towards the Higher Degree by Research as articulated in the research plan.
Research Proposal	Draft aims, objectives and significance for a research project submitted as part of an application for admission to a Higher Degree by Research.
Rule 4	Rules of Graduate Research.
Academic Unit of Enrolment	The Academic Unit in which a successful Higher Degree by Research applicant will be enrolled.
Supervisory Team	The Primary and Co-Supervisors appointed by the Head of Academic Unit to supervise the candidate and their research project (also see clause 3.2 of the Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy).
United Nations Security Council Sanctions	A Council of the United Nations with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.
University	Unless otherwise stated all references to the University mean the University of Tasmania.

6 Supporting Documentation

- Rule 4 – Rules of Graduate Research
- *Higher Degrees by Research Admissions and Enrolment Procedure*
- *Higher Degrees by Research Candidature Management Policy*
- *Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy*
- *University English Language Proficiency Policy*
- *Conjoint Doctoral Degrees Policy*
- *Conjoint Doctoral Degrees Procedures*
- *Defence Export Controls Policy*
- *Security Council and Autonomous Sanctions Compliance Policy*
- *Disability and Health Conditions Policy*
- *Records Management Policy*
- *Document and Records Management Procedures*
- *Records Management Guidelines*
- *Responsible Conduct of Research Policy*
- *Managing Allegations of Research Misconduct Procedure*
- *Research Ethics Policy*
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007).

- Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (8th Edition, 2013)
- National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)
- *Gene Technology Policy*
- *Privacy Policy*
- *English Proficiency Policy*
- *International Student Fee Refund Policy*

7 Acknowledgements

This *Policy* has been developed with reference to the Australian Council of Graduate Research Good Practice Principles.

8 Versioning

Former Version(s)	Version 1 – <i>Higher Degrees by Research Admissions Policy</i> . Approved January, 2015. Version 2 – <i>Higher Degrees by Research Admissions and Enrolment Policy</i> ; approved April, 2017
Current Version	Version 3 – <i>Higher Degrees by Research Admissions and Enrolment Policy</i> ; approved April, 2017, amended in December 2017 to reflect College structure and nomenclature.