Higher Degree by Research Graduate Research Coordination Policy

Responsible Officer
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

Approved by
Vice-Chancellor

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Review by
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Relevant Legislation, Ordinance, Rule and/or Governance Level Principle
Australian Autonomous Sanctions Legislation:
Charter of the United Nations (UN Sanction Enforcement Law) Declaration 2008; the Australian Autonomous Sanctions Act (Cth) 2011; and the Autonomous Sanctions Regulations (Cth) 2011
The Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000
Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011
Australian Qualifications Framework
Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007)
Ordinance 8 – Candidate Complaints
Ordinance 9 – Candidate Discipline
Rule 4 – Rules of Graduate Research
GLP 12 Academic Standards
GLP 13 Quality Management Framework

Responsible Organisational Unit
Division of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

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Objective

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Outline the roles and responsibilities of Graduate Research Coordinators in the research training and management of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Candidates enrolled at the University.
- Outline good practices that support the highest quality HDR Candidature experience and outcomes, and ensure consistency and best practice across the University.

Scope

This policy applies to all:

- University staff members appointed or acting in the role of Graduate Research Coordinator
- College Pro Vice-Chancellor/Faculty Dean/Institute Directors and Heads of School of the University.

Policy Provisions

3.1 Graduate Research Coordination

The Graduate Research Coordinator (GRC) serves a critical role in the overall experience of higher degree by research (HDR) candidates. The GRC is expected to be an exemplar of graduate research good practice, with advanced knowledge of rules, policies and procedures related to HDR candidature, and experience in HDR supervision. As the central point of contact for research candidates within a School/Institute, the University recognises this as a significant role with the following core responsibilities:

- making recommendations to the Dean of Graduate Research on higher degree by research resource and candidature matters;
- signing off on candidature milestones and issues pertaining to candidature management; and
- providing guidance to and/or mediation between candidates and supervisors on issues related to HDR candidature.

The GRC is normally a senior academic member of staff who is an experienced supervisor of HDR candidates and competent to act as the Head of School’s delegate in making academic and administrative decisions across the range of disciplines covered by the School.
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The GRC advises the Head of School on all higher degree research matters and is the School’s point of contact with the Graduate Research Office. In addition, the GRC will typically have responsibility for reviewing and advising the Head of School (HoS) on the School’s higher degree research profile, formulating school higher degree research policy, establishing appropriate procedures for monitoring research candidates’ progress and advising on facilities and appropriate levels of resources. The GRC will work with the for the College Pro Vice-Chancellor/Faculty Dean/Institute Director and relevant Associate Dean/Director Research (ADDR) to support high-quality research training strategy and objectives for the College/Faculty/Institute.

3.1.1 Appointment of Graduate Research Coordinators

The Head of School, in consultation with the College Pro Vice-Chancellor/Faculty Dean/Institute Director will nominate to the Dean of Graduate Research a person who demonstrates the capacity to undertake the role of Graduate Research Coordinator; normally a senior academic staff member within a School (or equivalent) and:

1. is a current supervisor or has been a supervisor within the 2 year period immediately preceding the nomination to be appointed as a GRC.
2. has significant supervisory experience as demonstrated by:
   - the number of candidates successfully supervised to completion; and
   - their research performance as measured by University research performance indicators.

The Dean of Graduate Research will appoint the Head of School's nominee where the Dean of Graduate Research is of the view that the nominee has an adequate level of supervisory experience and is otherwise capable of fulfilling the role.

Where a less senior academic is nominated for the position of GRC, the Head of School must also nominate a mentor to provide guidance to the GRC.

If the Dean of Graduate Research does not appoint the Head of School's original nominee, the Head of School will nominate alternative nominees for the Dean of Graduate Research’s consideration until the Dean of Graduate Research appoints a Graduate Research Coordinator from the Head of School nominees.

The Dean of Graduate Research will undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of Graduate Research Coordination and report the outcomes to the Research Degrees Committee. Any recommendations arising from this review will be provided to Heads of School and College Pro Vice-Chancellors/Faculty Deans/Institute Directors.

Where a school has more than one GRC, each GRC acts as an alternate for the other. Where a school has only one GRC, the Head of School must nominate an appropriately qualified member of academic staff to act as an alternate GRC.

3.1.2 Recommended support for Graduate Research Coordinators

The Dean of Graduate Research recommends that:

- the College Pro Vice/Chancellor/Faculty Dean/Institute Director and Head of School should consider the workload implications of this appointment in the
assignment of teaching and other administrative duties to Graduate Research Coordinators in their College/Faculty/Institute;

- Schools, in conjunction with the Office of the Dean of Graduate Research and the Graduate Research Office, provide Graduate Research Coordinators with the necessary training required to fulfil the role;
- the Head of School give consideration to the Graduate Research Coordinator’s role in performance and career development meetings; and the Head of School accounts for the role of the Graduate Research Coordinator in academic workloads. As a guide to workload allocation decisions, College Pro Vice-Chancellors/Faculty Deans/Institute Directors and Heads of School should recognise the significant time required to serve as effective GRCs which is generally recognised as between 10-20% depending on the number of HDR candidates.

Graduate Research Coordinators will be supported by Graduate Research Administrative Officers in the relevant Research Hubs.

3.2 Roles and responsibilities of Graduate Research Coordinators

Graduate Research Coordinators are expected to perform a range of tasks in the following broad categories. At all times Graduate Research Coordinators must act in accordance with University Rules, Policies and Procedures relevant to higher degrees by research and the social and emotional wellbeing of Candidates and Supervisors.

3.2.1 In relation to prospective Higher Degree by Research Candidates

- provide advice to Supervisors on the recruitment of high-quality applicants with support and guidance from the College/Faculty/Institute and assist with recruitment activities as required;
- provide applicants with advice on eligibility requirements, possible research topics, available resources, School research strengths, and supervisor expertise;
- make formal recommendations to the Head of School on applications for admission, including any special conditions of candidature;
- identify possible cross-School collaborations with relevant GRCs;
- identify potential commercial-in-confidence issues with specific projects and/or funding arrangements and bring these to the attention of supervisory teams, Head of School and the Dean of Graduate Research;
- Monitor recommendations on the approval of admission of candidates to ensure adherence to policies relating to admission, supervision and provision of resources.

3.2.2 In relation to Scholarships

- Be familiar with the conditions for UTAS Research Scholarships and able to advise scholarship holders about these, or guide candidates to appropriate and up-to-date resources;
- Make recommendations to the Head of School and College Pro Vice-Chancellor/Faculty Dean/Institute Director on scholarship applications (including justification of academic or sector-based experience);
- Make recommendations to the Dean of Graduate Research on applications for scholarship extension, leave of absence, leave of absence (medical);
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Where required, score scholarship applications (including justification of cases for equivalence) for domestic and international scholarship rounds in consultation with College Pro Vice-Chancellor/Faculty Deans/Institute Directors.

3.2.3 In relation to enrolled Higher Degree Research Candidates

- coordinate annual reviews of progress (including confirmation of candidature) in consultation with supervisory teams;
- recommend variations to candidature to the Dean of Graduate Research in consultation with the supervisory team and Head of School;
- identify and manage potential conflicts of interest in supervisory teams;
- facilitate the appointment of supervisors with the Head of School and Dean of Graduate Research;
- monitor progress towards timely completion by all candidates;
- be aware of and keep candidates and supervisors informed of applicable University policies, procedures, due dates and other relevant information;
- coordinate the dissemination of information about relevant workshops, seminars, scholarships and other opportunities;
- coordinate and/or conduct School Induction programs for HDR Candidates;
- ensure that College/Faculty/Institute guidelines, including space, resources and facilities meet minimum standards in accordance with the Higher Degree by Research Minimum Infrastructure and Resources Policy;
- provide pastoral care to candidates; mediate between supervisors and candidates in the first instance and identify situations where more specialist support is warranted;
- act as the initial point of contact for the College Pro Vice-Chancellor/Faculty Dean/Institute Director and the Dean of Graduate Research in resolving candidature problems and formal grievances (including those related to academic or research misconduct);
- provide advice to the Head of School to assist with assessment of supervisory practices within the School and any problems or grievance (including those related to academic or research misconduct) that may arise, and may need to be reported to the Dean of Graduate Research.
- Report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College, Dean of Faculty or Institute Director, via the Head of School, any proposed changes to candidature that may impact on the allocation of supervisory and/or project resources.

3.2.4 In relation to Thesis Examination

- coordinate requests for confidentiality agreements in examination, and coordinate nomination of examiners prior to submission;
- liaise with supervisors regarding the nomination of examiners and recommend examiners to the Dean of Graduate Research on behalf of the Head of School;
- when appointed by the Head of School as a Chair of Examiners,
  - consult with the supervisor on the examiners’ reports and make an appropriate recommendation to the Head of School after examination;
  - coordinate checking of corrections to the thesis or exegesis as applicable;
  - provide advice to the Dean of Graduate Research that the candidate has satisfied the conditions for the award of the degree.
3.2.5 General

- attend and participate in GRC Days, workshops and professional development activities relevant to the GRC role;
- liaise with Graduate Research Administrative Officers (GRAOs) in the relevant Research Services Hub; and
- advise the Head of School about supervisory performance within the School.

3.3 Professional Doctorate Course Coordinators

Are responsible for the coordination of the coursework component of the Professional Doctorate including

- ensuring appropriate quality and compliance with AQF standards
- preparing course and unit proposals for review and approval by the College/Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee, Research Degrees Committee and University Research Committee.
- oversight and management of the candidate's coursework study plan and progress.

At all times the Graduate Research Coordinator retains responsibility for monitoring the academic research progression of candidates as per sections 3.1 and 3.2 of this policy.

3.4 Misconduct

The University is committed to upholding its obligations under the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007). The University is also committed to high standards of professional conduct in all activities, and holds its commitment and responsibilities to candidates as being of paramount importance. Likewise, it holds expectations about the responsibilities candidates have as they pursue their research training within the special environment the University offers.

3.4.1 Academic Misconduct

The University Guide to Academic Integrity for Students details the expectations of scholarship and defines academic dishonesty. Breaches of academic integrity resulting in allegations of academic misconduct will be investigated according to the procedures in Ordinance No 9 – Student Discipline, section 3.1.

3.4.2 Research Misconduct

The definition of research misconduct and the process for submitting an allegation of research misconduct are detailed in the University’s Managing Allegation of Research Misconduct Procedure. Where the preliminary assessment of an allegation of research misconduct involving:

- an HDR Candidate determines that further investigation is warranted, the investigation will be conducted in accordance with Ordinance 9 – Candidate Discipline.
- a supervisor (s) determines that further investigation is warranted, the investigation will be conducted in accordance with the University Staff Agreement.
3.5 Complaints, grievances and resolving difficulties

3.5.1 General

Where possible, candidates should work with their supervisor(s) to resolve difficulties as soon as they arise during their candidature.

Where a Candidate has been unable to resolve a problem(s) with their supervisor(s), they should continue to seek to resolve the problem(s) by working with the following people in the order presented:

1. Graduate Research Coordinator
2. Head of School
3. College Pro Vice-Chancellor/Faculty Dean/Institute Director

If a Candidate is still unable to resolve the problem(s) they can make a formal complaint under Ordinance 8 – Student Complaints through the Dean of Graduate Research following the procedure outline on the student complaints website.

3.5.2 Prevention of Inappropriate Behaviour, Harassment and Discrimination

The University is committed to the provision of a working, research and learning environment that is free from harassment and unlawful discrimination, and a culture where all members of the University community are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. The University Behaviour Policy outlines these commitments and expectations. Contact Officers (CO’s) are appointed and trained under this policy to provide a first point of contact for persons wishing to discuss how to have a complaint dealt with in accordance with University policy and procedures. For more information refer to the University Behaviour Policy and Procedure.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 The Dean of Graduate Research is responsible for:

• reviewing and approving nominations received from Heads of School on the appointment of Graduate Research Coordinators;
• providing Graduate Research Coordinators with the necessary training required to fulfil the role in conjunction with the Office of Research Services; and
• ensuring the quality of graduate research coordination across the University; and
• maintaining a register of approved Graduate Research Coordinators.

4.2 College Pro Vice-Chancellors, Faculty Deans and Institute Directors are responsible for:

• the strategic management of College/Faculty/Institute financial, supervision, and infrastructure resources as per the Academic Structures Policy, Delegations Policy and Schedules.
4.3 Heads of School (or equivalent) are responsible to College Pro Vice-Chancellors/Faculty Deans/Institute Directors for:

- the administration of the School including planning, budget, strategy, human resources and performance as per the Academic Structures Policy, Delegations Policy and Schedules.

4.4 The Graduate Research Office is responsible for:

- providing advice to Graduate Research Coordinators on any administrative matters relating to higher degree research training at the University.

4.5 Graduate Research Administrative Officers are responsible for:

- providing administrative assistance to the Graduate Research Coordinators;
- providing support to the Graduate Research Coordinators and the Academic Director/Associate Dean/Director Research in developing high-quality research training strategy and objectives for the relevant College/Faculty/Institute;
- providing support and first line advice to academic staff, candidates and prospective candidates on all candidate matters including, but not limited to: HDR scholarship application processes, enrolment and academic progress, HDR skilling & support programs, information and offered through the Institution;
- liaising with potential candidates who have submitted an application for candidature; and
- sourcing all supporting documentation from applicants and acting as the conduit between the applicant and the GRCs in the relevant School.

5 Definitions and Acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Term/Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Review of Progress Candidate</td>
<td>An annual meeting to review a HDR candidate’s academic progression against agreed milestones.</td>
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<td>Candidate</td>
<td>A person enrolled at the University as a candidate for a Degree.</td>
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<td>Candidature</td>
<td>The status conferred on a person who is enrolled as a Candidate under Rule 4</td>
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<td>Chair of Examiners</td>
<td>An academic staff member appointed by the Head of School to act as an independent Chair throughout the examination process of a Candidate’s Thesis.</td>
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<td>College Pro Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>The Pro Vice-Chancellor of the relevant College (or their authorised delegate)</td>
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<td>Dean of Graduate Research</td>
<td>The Dean of Graduate Research is the person who has responsibility for:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• establishing the academic framework for research training at the University; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• for working with Faculties and Institutes to ensure the University maintains appropriate standards for research training at the University (including admission,</td>
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appropriate infrastructure, supervision and examination).

**Experienced Supervisor**
An experienced supervisor is the identified supervisor/s who has at least two years’ supervision experience and who has been on a supervisory team that supervised a candidate to submission of a pass grade thesis within the Maximum Degree Period or acceptable time period based on international standards.

**Faculty Dean**
The Dean of the relevant faculty (or their authorised delegate)

**Graduate Research Coordinator**
an academic staff member who oversees Candidature supervision within a School in consultation with the Head of School

**Graduate Research Administrative Officers**
a designated member of Research Services staff tasked with providing administrative assistance to the Graduate Research Coordinators.

**Head of School**
The Head of the School of Enrolment or the Director of the National Centre, or the Dean of the Faculty of Law or Head of the Institute of Enrolment (or nominee).

**Institute Director**
For the purposes of this Policy, Institute Director refers to in the case of:
- the Australian Maritime College, the Principal of that college (or their authorised delegate).
- the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Research, the Executive Director of that institute (or their authorised delegate).
- the Menzies Research Institute, the Director of that institute (or their authorised delegate).

**School**
Unless otherwise stated, in this Policy School refers the School, Centre or Institute or Faculty of Law in which the Candidate is enrolled.

**Supervisory Team**
As defined in the HDR Supervision Policy a supervisory team consists of
- a Primary Supervisor;
- at least one co-supervisor; and
- a maximum of four supervisors

**University**
Unless otherwise stated all references to the University mean the University of Tasmania

6 **Supporting Documentation**
- Authorship of Research Policy
- Authorship of Research Procedure
- Management of Research Data Policy
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- Higher Degree by Research Admissions Policy
- Higher Degree by Research Admissions Procedure
- Higher Degree by Research Candidature Policy
- Higher Degree by Research Candidature Procedure
- Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy
- Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedure
- Higher Degree by Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Policy
- Higher Degree by Research Thesis Preparation, Submission and Examination Procedure
- Higher Degree by Research Graduate Research Coordination Procedure
- Adjunct and Clinical Titles Policy
- Adjunct and Clinical Titles Procedure
- Rule 4 Rules of Graduate Research
- Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- Harassment and Discrimination Procedure
- University Staff Agreement 2013-2016
- Academic Structures Policy
- Delegations Policy and Schedules

7 Acknowledgements

This policy has been developed with reference to the DDOGs Principles of Graduate Research and the CAPA report on the Research Education Experience.

Candidate policies and procedures from a range of Australian universities were reviewed and related policy documents from the following universities are gratefully acknowledged:

- University of Canberra
- RMIT
- University of Melbourne

8 Versioning

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<tr>
<th>Former Version(s)</th>
<th>Version 1 – Higher Degree by Research Graduate Research Coordination Policy, approved January, 2015, amended in December 2016 to incorporate Colleges.</th>
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