HDR Candidature Management and Enrolment Variation Procedure

Contents

Purpose

This procedure documents process for managing candidature and variations to candidate's enrolment. It applies to candidates enrolled in the University of Tasmania's higher degree by research (HDR) course, their supervisors, and academic unit in which they are enrolled (academic unit of enrolment).

It does not apply to undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs or higher doctoral degrees.

Applicable governance instruments

Instrument	Section	Principles
Research Training Ordinance		
Research Training Policy	3 Academic support, resources and intellectual climate	3.1 – 3.2
	4 Candidature progression, development, and completion	4.1 – 4.4
Research Policy	2 Responsible conduct of research	2.1 – 2.2
Compliance Policy	2 Conflict of interest	2.1
People Policy	2 Inclusion, diversity, and equity	2.2
Data and Information Governance Policy	1 Privacy	1.1
Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act (2000) *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standard)* *The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)* *ACGR Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships* *Higher Education Support Act (2003)* *Australian Qualifications Framework* *University of Tasmania Act (1992)* *Defence Export Controls* *UN Security Council and Australian Autonomous Sanctions legislation*		

Procedure

1. Variations to enrolment and/or conditions of candidature

1.1. A candidate may apply to vary the conditions of their candidature in accordance with the conditions outlined in *Research Training Ordinance*, provided they do so on the prescribed form and include supporting evidence where required. Applications to vary condition of candidature will be subject to any applicable scholarship terms and conditions.

1.2. All applications to vary enrolment or conditions of candidature will be approved or rejected by the Dean of Graduate Research (the Dean), or delegate. In making their decision, the Dean or delegate will consider whether:

    a. the University can continue to meet its duty of care in relation to the candidate's safety and wellbeing and student experience, and

    b. completion within the maximum degree period will be affected, and

    c. the academic unit will continue to have the necessary physical, financial and supervisory resources necessary to enable completion of candidature, or

    d. compassionate or compelling circumstances exist.

1.3. International candidates will be responsible for the management of and adherence to any visa or other government requirements and are strongly encouraged to seek advice from an International Student Advisor prior to applying to vary their enrolment or conditions of candidature.

1.4. All applications:

    a. must be endorsed by the primary supervisor, Graduate Research Coordinator (GRC), and head of academic unit (HoAU)

     b.   will normally be submitted at least four weeks prior to the requested date of the change to candidature, and

     c.   will normally not be approved retrospectively unless the reason for the variation was unforeseen.

1.5.   Changes to candidature will be made according to the processes stipulated by the Graduate Research Office (GRO).

1.6.   A candidate will be notified of the outcome of their application to vary their candidature via email to their University email account.

2.   Study load

2.1.   A candidate is enrolled for 52 weeks of each calendar year, with attendance requirements as defined in the *Research Training Ordinance*.

2.2.   A candidate will be expected to spend the following hours per week progressing their candidature:

     a.   38 hours when enrolled full-time, or

     b.   an average of 19 hours when enrolled part-time.

2.3.   The University will not allow an HDR candidate to be both working full-time and studying full-time.

2.4.   A full-time candidate may undertake limited work experience or employment provided it:

     a.   does not interfere with the timely progression and completion of their research project

     b.   does not exceed on average over a 12-month period, 20% of a full-time load (ie 365 hours per annum)[1]

     c.   is documented in an updated Research Plan, and

     d.   is endorsed by the academic unit.

2.5.   Any work, paid or otherwise, undertaken by the candidate outside of their research project will not affect their ability to maintain their full-time or part-time attendance requirements and will not be considered as a permitted reason for an extension of candidature request as set out in the *HDR Academic Progress Procedure*.

2.6.   A candidate may request a change to their study load by submitting a [Change of Load, Mode or Campus](#) form.

2.7.   Except where an application is made for medical reasons, applications to convert a full-time enrolment to part-time enrolment or vice versa will be considered in accordance with Section 1.1 to 1.4 of this procedure. Approval of an application under this clause is subject to confirmation from the academic unit of enrolment that the candidate can satisfy the requirements of the degree as specified in *Research Training Ordinance*, within the revised expiry of the maximum degree period.

2.8.   Where a candidate seeks to vary their enrolment from full-time to part-time on medical grounds, candidates will provide a medical certificate from a registered medical professional that includes the start date (and end date, if relevant) of the period of the requested change.

3.   Taking leave

3.1.   Leave entitlements and conditions are set out in *Research Training Ordinance.*

3.2.   A candidate is entitled to take their yearly annual or sick leave provisions at any time, provided this is discussed and agreed by the primary supervisor and recorded within the academic unit of

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[1] This does not apply to work undertaken outside of the 38 hrs per week that is dedicated to the research project.

enrolment. Academic unit's will manage the application for and granting of annual and sick leave provisions at their discretion. No application form will be required by GRO for these types of leave and GRO will not track annual or sick leave balances.

3.3.   An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander candidate is entitled to take cultural leave in accordance with the *Research Training Ordinance*, provided this is discussed and agreed by the primary supervisor and recorded within the academic unit of enrolment.

3.4.   Annual leave will be accrued but will be dissolved upon submission of the thesis or termination or expiry of candidature.

3.5.   Sick leave will be used to cover leave for candidates caring for an ill or incapacitated partner or immediate family members.

3.6.   Sick leave that continues for more than ten (10) calendar days or where annual sick leave entitlements have been exhausted will be considered in accordance with *Research Training Ordinance*, and applications for a leave of absence in accordance with this procedure.

3.7.   A candidate will request a leave of absence by submitting the Leave of Absence form, and will include all supporting documentation where required.

3.8.   Where a candidate requests a leave of absence on medical grounds, the candidate will provide a medical certificate from a medical professional that includes the start and end date of the period of the requested leave.

3.9.   A candidate who is taking a leave of absence on medical grounds, while not required to, is encouraged to disclose sufficient information about their medical condition to enable the University to support their return to study. 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 principles and the *Data and Information Governance Policy*.

3.10.   A candidate who is applying for a leave of absence will:

a.   where in receipt of a stipend and/or tuition fee scholarship/sponsorship, refer to their Conditions of Award and the *HDR Research Training Program & Other Scholarships Procedure* prior to submitting an application for a leave of absence and will make themselves aware of any potential impact on their scholarship/ sponsorship

b.   where enrolled in a coursework unit and the study period for that unit overlaps with the proposed leave of absence, contact the relevant unit coordinator to make themselves aware of the potential impact on that unit

c.   where the supervisor of a candidate whose research has ethics approval, or an ethics approval pending, will notify the executive officer of the relevant ethics committee when any leave of absence is granted, as this may impact their ethics approval. Refer to the *Research Ethics Procedure*.

3.11.   Any future candidature action and milestone dates will be adjusted for any periods of approved leave of absence and the candidate will cease working on their research and associated coursework during this period. Any action and milestone dates that are overdue at the time of the leave of absence will not be adjusted. Where a leave of absence is requested and approved for mental health reasons and overdue actions remain, the Dean will consider a request from the academic unit to temporarily remove overdue milestones if that request is in the candidate's best interest.

3.12.   Access to University facilities and resources will be restricted during a period of leave of absence.

3.13.   Issues that may affect a candidate's ability to make satisfactory progress will be addressed as soon as they arise and options for a leave of absence should be discussed with the primary supervisor and GRC.

4. Change of thesis title or research project

4.1.   A candidate may request a textual change to their thesis title by email to GRO, provided there is a supporting primary supervisor statement.

4.2.   A candidate may apply to make a substantial change to their approved research project by submitting a Change of Research Thesis Topic form, and all supporting documentation where required. In making this application, the candidate and primary supervisor will ensure that:

   a.   the revised project satisfies the requirements specified in Section 1.2 and 1.4 of this procedure, and

   b.   where the new research project involves an item subject to controls under the Defence and Strategic Goods list, appropriate advice is sought in accordance with the *Defence Export Controls Procedure*, and/or

   c.   where a candidate is from a sanctioned country a new Autonomous Sanctions Compliance and Risk Assessment (ASCRA) form is submitted. Any request to change a research project for a candidate from a sanctioned country will not be progressed until the ASCRA has been reviewed and approved.

5. Change of campus of enrolment

5.1.   A candidate will normally be enrolled at the University campus:

   a.   nearest their place of residence, or

   b.   for external (off campus) candidates, the campus of their primary supervisor, or

   c.   for international students, the campus to which their course is CRICOS registered.

5.2.   A candidate may apply to the University to change their campus of enrolment to another University campus closer to their place of residence by submitting the Change of Load, Mode or Campus form and supporting documentation.

5.3.   A candidate who is based within reasonable commuting distance of the University, regardless of their mode of study, is expected (within reason and where practicable) to attend on-campus supervision meetings and seminars, and to participate in the research culture of their academic unit of enrolment.

5.4.   Where a candidate is based outside reasonable commuting distance of the University, a communication plan will be developed in consultation with the primary supervisor and GRC to ensure they have the necessary support and regular interactions required for undertaking their HDR.

6. Change of mode of study

6.1.   A candidate will be enrolled in one of the following modes of study in accordance with the *HDR Admissions, Selection & Enrolment Procedure*:

   a.   on-campus: attending a University campus on a regular basis unless on approved field work or travel

   b.   off-campus (on-shore): undertaking all or part of the HDR at a location other than a University campus for more than three (3) months continuous time

   c.   off-campus (off-shore): undertaking all or part of the HDR at a location other than a University campus for more than three (3) months continuous time

6.2.   A candidate may apply to the University to change their mode of study by submitting the [Change of Load, Mode or Campus](#) form and supporting documentation.

6.3.   Where a candidate seeks to spend more than three (3) calendar months of continuous time away from their campus of enrolment, they will apply to change their mode of study from on-campus to off-campus (on-shore or off-shore). An application will provide evidence that risk assessments and controls have been put in place to cover their travel and research activity in accordance with the University's *Health and Safety Policy* and *Travel Procedure*.

   a.   International on-shore candidates who hold a student visa will not spend more than 33% of the total course duration in off-campus study mode from the campus to which their course is CRICOS registered

   b.   Where an application from an international candidate on a student visa, to permanently change their mode from on-campus to off-campus (off-shore), is approved, the candidate's confirmation of enrolment (eCoE) will be cancelled

   c.   A candidate will update their contact details with the University as set out in Section 13.1 of this procedure.

6.4.   The following periods away from the University will not be classified as completing all or part of a program off-campus:

   a.   on-shore fieldwork for periods of less than three (3) calendar months of continuous time away from a candidate's campus of enrolment; and

   b.   revisions completed away from a candidate's campus of enrolment after a thesis examination.

7.   Selection and enrolment of coursework units

7.1.   A candidate will complete core units for their coursework degree as set out in the course and unit handbook.

7.2.   In consultation with their supervisory team, a candidate will select appropriate elective units that contribute towards skills required for completion of the HDR or for their future career.

8.   Exemption and credit of coursework requirements

8.1.   A candidate may apply for full or partial exemption from, or credit towards, the Graduate Certificate in Research.

8.2.   A candidate seeking full exemption from X5A or exemption from one or both core units, will complete the following MyLO units:

   a.   HDR Induction

   b.   Research Integrity at the University of Tasmania (RIEU101)

   c.   Safety and Wellbeing Induction, and

   d.   Human and/or Animal Research Ethics Training where applicable.

8.3.   Applications for exemption or credit are to be made using the prescribed [RPL/Exemption from X5A](#) form.

9.   Program transfer

9.1.   A candidate may request to transfer between the following HDR programs:

   a.   Masters by Research to a Doctor of Philosophy, or

   b.   Doctor of Philosophy to a Masters by Research, or

c. Professional Doctorate to a Doctor of Philosophy, or

d. Change of course code at the same level (MRes to MRes, or PhD to PhD, or Professional Doctorate to Professional Doctorate), which may include a change in academic unit of enrolment.

9.2. A candidate may request a program transfer by submitting the relevant form and must include all supporting documentation where required.

9.3. Program transfer requirements for Section 9.1.a and 9.1.b are set out in the *HDR Academic Progress Procedure*.

9.4. Where a candidate requests to transfer from a Professional Doctorate to a Doctor of Philosophy, the academic unit will map any passed coursework units against the units for the Graduate Certificate in Research. This documentation must be included with the request to transfer.

9.5. Where a change of academic unit is required, the request will be reviewed and endorsed by both the releasing and accepting supervisory team/s, GRCs and HoAUs.

9.6. Where a change in academic unit also changes the associated college, and the candidate is in receipt of a living allowance and/or tuition fee scholarship(s), the Associate Dean of Research (ADR) of the new college will review and endorse the request.

9.7. A request to transfer programs will be approved by the Dean. The Dean may request additional information to support the application prior to making a decision.

9.8. The candidate will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application to their University email account

9.9. Where the request is approved:

a. the candidate's enrolment details will be updated to reflect the new enrolment, and

b. where a transfer request is for an on-shore international candidate, they will be issued with a new letter of offer and International Compliance will issue a new confirmation of enrolment (eCoE) to enable to candidate to update their visa.

9.10. The date of commencement in the new degree will be backdated to the date the candidate enrolled in the degree from which they are transferring.

10. Transfer to another Australian institution

10.1. A candidate wishing to transfer to another university may obtain documentation about their candidature and an Equivalent Full-Time Student Load (EFSTL) statement, from GRO on request at the point of withdrawal. A candidate in receipt of a scholarship will refer to the *HDR Research Training Program and Other Scholarships Procedure* for any implications on their scholarship.

10.2. An international candidate within their first six months of candidature will obtain a release from International Compliance before they can transfer to another institution. This release will not automatically be approved, and strong compassionate and compelling reasons must be provided by the candidate.

11. Resetting candidature

11.1. The University will investigate reasonable options to assist a candidate to successfully complete their candidature at the University in accordance with *Research Training Ordinance*.

11.2. Where a candidate accepts an invitation from the Dean to apply to reset their candidature, the GRC will work with the candidate and the current or a new primary supervisor to match the candidate's skills and qualifications with a new project.

11.3.   Once a new project is agreed, the candidate will complete a Reset Candidature form, which will be endorsed by the academic unit of enrolment and approved by the Dean before candidature can be reset.

11.4.   Where resetting candidature is approved, the candidate will be withdrawn from their original course and enrolled in a new course attempt. Where a candidate is in receipt of a scholarship, the scholarship may also be reset.

11.5.   Where resetting candidature is approved for an onshore international candidate, GRO will issue a new letter of offer and International Compliance will issue a new confirmation of enrolment (eCoE) to enable to candidate to update their visa.

12. Withdrawal from candidature

12.1.   A candidate may request to withdraw from their HDR by submitting the Withdraw from Candidature form. Where it is not possible to submit an electronic form, GRO will accept notification of withdrawal by email. Unless specified in the email, the effective date of withdrawal will be the sent date of the email.

12.2.   It is strongly encouraged that a candidate discusses their intention to withdraw with their supervisory team and GRC prior to submitting the form.

12.3.   Failure to notify GRO of a withdrawal of candidature will result in elapsed enrolment time being included in any future enrolment tenure calculations for an HDR at this or another Australian university.

12.4.   For an international candidate, if GRO is not officially notified at the time withdrawal occurs:

  a.   fees will continue to be charged and the candidate will be required to pay those fees, and

  b.   a candidate on a student visa may be in breach of its conditions.

12.5.   For a candidate in receipt of a scholarship, refer to the *HDR Research Training Program & Other Scholarships Procedure* for implications on withdrawing from candidature.

13. Miscellaneous obligations

13.1.   A candidate will notify the University of any change to personal details and will provide information on other circumstances that may affect the candidate's progress as soon as possible after such circumstances change:

  a.   changes to a candidate's address will be updated in eStudent

  b.   changes to a candidate's name and citizenship will be made via Uconnect.

13.2.   International candidates will be responsible for being aware of and adhering to any visa conditions.

Related procedures

HDR RTP & Other Scholarships Procedure

HDR Academic Progress Procedure

HDR Supervision & Academic Support Procedure

Defence Export Controls Procedure

University Travel Procedure

Extension of CoE – International Compliance Procedure

Research Ethics Procedure

Versions

Version	Action	Approval Authority	Responsible Officer/s	Approval Date
1	Approved	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	Dean of Graduate Research	3 Dec 2020

Definitions

Academic unit | credit | candidate | exemption |Dean of Graduate Research | Graduate Research Coordinator | higher degree by research (HDR) | primary supervisor | study load | student mode