

Research Training Ordinance

Version 3 – Commenced 19 January 2024
(Reconfirmation due 30 August 2026)

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The powers and functions of Council are established under the *University of Tasmania Act 1992 (Act)*.
- 1.2 Under the Act, and at any given point in time, Council may determine the powers and functions it will delegate to the Vice-Chancellor and other University staff to enable the efficient and effective operation of the University in pursuit of its strategic and operational objectives.
- 1.3 Delegation of Council powers and functions under this or any other instrument, does not prevent the performance or exercise of a function or power by Council.
- 1.4 Reserve powers and functions of Council and the delegation of other powers and functions are specified in other instruments.

2. Commencement and review

- 2.1 This Ordinance takes effect on 25 September 2020 and will be reviewed periodically.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 In this Ordinance:

academic unit means the secondary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, reporting directly to the College Executive Deans.

academic unit of enrolment means the academic unit in which a candidate is enrolled.

Academic Senate means the body responsible for determining standards, exercising quality control, and providing quality assurance across all the University's academic activities and for advising the Council on all academic matters relating to the University.

aegrotat award means an award of a higher degree by research conferred upon a candidate who has sustained an incapacitating injury or illness that precludes completion of the research program.

annual review of progress means a formal review and assessment of a candidate's academic progress against research program milestones conducted every 12 calendar months.

Australian Qualifications Framework means the agreed policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system.

authority of access statement means a statement made by the candidate giving authority for the thesis to be made available for loan, copying and communication in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968 and any agreement that exists between the University and an external organisation regarding the candidate's research.

candidate means a person enrolled in a higher degree by research at the University.

candidate agreement means an agreement between the University and another research institute or university for the joint administration, supervision, and examination of candidates enrolled in a joint or dual award higher degree by research.

candidature means the status conferred on a person who is enrolled as a candidate under this Ordinance.

candidature support plan means a plan designed to ensure heightened support of the candidate for the duration of their candidature.

Chair of Examiners means a person appointed to act as an independent convenor of the examination of a candidate's thesis.

commencement date means the date on which a candidate is enrolled in accordance with this Ordinance.

Confirmation of Candidature is a formal assessment to determine if candidature should continue, in accordance with section 23.

declaration of originality means a statement made by the candidate declaring that the thesis contains no material which has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the thesis, and to the best of the candidate's knowledge and belief no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis, nor does the thesis contain any material that infringes copyright, and any other University requirements from time to time.

degree period means the period within which a thesis must be submitted as prescribed in section 9.

doctoral degree means either a Doctor of Philosophy or a Professional Doctorate, unless otherwise specified.

Doctor of Philosophy means a 'Level 10' qualification as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

dual award means an arrangement whereby a doctoral degree candidate is jointly supervised and examined by the University of Tasmania and a partner tertiary education institution, is enrolled at both institutions, and receives a testamur from the University and the partner tertiary education institution.

Examiner means an expert external to the University in the field of research of the thesis who is appointed to examine the thesis against the criteria established by the University.

full-time equivalent (FTE) means the measure of the enrolment load of a candidate by which the degree period will be calculated.

full-time means a full-time equivalent of 1.0.

Graduate Research Coordinator means a University academic staff member who oversees candidature management of candidates enrolled in an academic unit in consultation with the Head of Academic Unit.

Head of Academic Unit means the head of the relevant academic unit of enrolment.

higher degree by research means a Masters by Research, doctoral degree, PhD by Prior Publication, or dual award.

Letter of offer means a document provided to an applicant that:

- provides an offer of admission to a higher degree by research; and
- provides key terms of the prospective candidature; and
- may contain conditions that must be met prior to and/or during enrolment in a higher degree by research.

Masters by Research means a 'Level 9' qualification as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

off-campus means undertaking all or part of the higher degree by research at a location other than a University campus for more than 3 calendar months continuous time.

on-campus means attending a University campus on a regular basis, undertaking approved field work or travel, or being based at an approved external site as required by the research program.

part-time means a study load of 0.5 FTE.

PhD by Prior Publication means a qualification awarded to University employees to formally recognise established researchers who do not already hold a doctoral degree and who have substantial international standing in their respective fields based on their record of academic publication while an employee of the University.

posthumous award means an award of a higher degree by research that is conferred after the death of the candidate.

primary supervisor means a supervisor appointed in accordance with this Ordinance who is responsible for ensuring that a candidate is aware of and understands all academic, administrative, and regulatory requirements they must meet.

Professional Doctorate means a 'Level 10' qualification as defined in the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Pro Vice-Chancellor means the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Graduate Research.

research active means an individual who pursues research on an ongoing basis proportionate to their academic level of appointment.

research plan means a document that outlines, within the degree period, the direction, and milestones of the research program.

research program means the program of study and research training to be undertaken by a candidate over the course of candidature.

research project means the focus and purpose of the research to be undertaken by a candidate.

satisfactory academic progress means a candidate is meeting agreed milestones to the standard required of the degree.

special leave means a leave of absence approved for cultural, compassionate, or compelling reasons.

supervisor means a supervisor of a candidate for a higher degree by research and includes primary, and co-supervisors as defined in University approved procedure.

thesis means using one or more media, a substantial and intellectually coherent product, or product(s) such as a thesis, dissertation and artefacts, or exegesis and portfolio of creative works and/or performance, that embodies the results of the candidate's research.

University means University of Tasmania.

University approved procedure means a procedure formally approved in writing by the University.

4. Purpose

4.1 The purpose of this Ordinance is to:

- a) describe the requirements and principles governing research training and the admission to, and progression and examination of, higher degree by research candidates; and
- b) provide the framework that ensures academic standards and integrity in the University's research training; and
- c) set clear responsibilities and accountabilities for decisions affecting higher degree by research candidates; and
- d) ensure that the University's research training processes are transparent and that decisions affecting higher degree by research candidates are consistent and fair.

5. Scope

5.1 This Ordinance applies to:

- a) higher degrees by research offered by the University
- b) applicants for admission to a higher degree by research
- c) candidates
- d) all University staff responsible for the supervision, administration, and management of higher degrees by research and candidates at the University.

6. Reviews of Decisions

6.1 Decisions related to any and all matters contained within this Ordinance are subject to review and appeal in accordance with University approved procedure.

PART 1 – FUNDAMENTALS OF THE DEGREE

7. General Matters

7.1 Research is the defining characteristic of higher degrees by research.

7.2 The research program for a higher degree by research must include a research component and may include a coursework component.

7.3 The research component of a research program must:

- a) represent at least two-thirds of the research program; and
- b) consist of research carried out under supervision into an approved topic; and

c) be documented in a thesis.

7.4 Where the requirements of a higher degree by research program include a coursework component, the research program must include:

- a) the number of credit points required and
- b) details of any course(s) required to be undertaken and/or the set of courses from which the candidate may select their study program.

8. Thesis

8.1 In respect of doctoral degrees, the thesis for a:

- a) Doctor of Philosophy must demonstrate that the candidate has made an original, significant, and extensive contribution to knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice; and
- b) Professional Doctorate must demonstrate that the candidate has made an original, significant, and extensive contribution to knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of professional practice.

8.2 The thesis for a Masters by Research must demonstrate that the candidate has advanced and integrated understanding of a complex body of knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice.

8.3 The thesis for a PhD by Prior Publication must demonstrate that the candidate has made an original, significant, and extensive contribution to knowledge and understanding of the subject in the field of study while an employee of the University.

9. Degree Periods

9.1 A higher degree by research must be completed within the degree periods prescribed within this section 9, subject to reduction or extension in accordance with section 9.7.

9.2 Subject to sections 15.2 and 15.3 the degree period begins on the commencement date.

9.3 The degree period for a Doctor of Philosophy and Professional Doctorate is:

- a) a minimum period of 2 years FTE; and
- b) a maximum period of 4 years FTE.

9.4 The degree period for a Masters by Research is:

- a) a minimum period of 1 year FTE; and
- b) a maximum period of 2 years FTE.

9.5 The degree period for a PhD by Prior Publication is:

- a) a minimum period of 9 months FTE; and
- b) a maximum period of 1 year FTE.

9.6 The degree period for a dual award is:

- a) a minimum and maximum period as specified in the candidate agreement.

9.7 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may under conditions provided in the relevant University approved procedure:

- a) approve a reduction of the minimum degree period; or
- b) approve a period of extension beyond the maximum degree period.

PART 2 – ADMISSION AND CREDIT**10. Application for Admission**

- 10.1 English is the language of instruction at the University.
- 10.2 An application for admission to a higher degree by research must be made in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 10.3 An applicant for admission to a higher degree by research must meet academic entry and English language proficiency requirements in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 10.4 The academic unit must consider applications for admissions into higher degrees by research and may recommend that the Pro Vice-Chancellor admits an applicant only when:
 - a) the applicant's qualifications satisfy requirements in accordance with section 10.3; and
 - b) a thesis on the proposed research project will satisfy the requirements for the higher degree by research; and
 - c) the academic unit has the necessary physical, financial, compliance, and supervisory resources necessary to support the applicant to complete candidature.
- 10.5 Upon receipt of the Head of Academic Unit's recommendation in accordance with section 10.4 the Pro Vice-Chancellor may approve or reject an application for admission into a higher degree by research.
- 10.6 Where the Pro Vice-Chancellor approves an application for admission, the Pro Vice-Chancellor will send a letter of offer to the applicant.
- 10.7 An applicant for admission to a higher degree by research must satisfy any additional pre-enrolment conditions stated in the letter of offer prior to enrolment in the degree.
- 10.8 The letter of offer and its terms must be formally accepted by the applicant in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 10.9 The letter of offer will lapse where the applicant fails to accept the letter of offer in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 10.10 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may withdraw a letter of offer where:
 - a) an offer is made based on incomplete, inaccurate, fraudulent, or misleading information supplied by the applicant or certifying authority; or
 - b) an applicant has been excluded from any tertiary institution or tertiary program, and has not so advised the University.
- 10.11 An applicant who is already enrolled in a higher degree by research at another Australian tertiary education institution may seek to transfer their candidature and research project to the University in accordance with University approved procedure.

11. Credit

- 11.1 Credit for prior learning may only be granted for the course work component of a research program.
- 11.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may grant credit for prior learning where relevant in accordance with University approved procedure.

- 11.2 Credit for prior learning may be granted through recognition of prior formal learning in a unit, course or qualification or informal learning not undertaken through a recognised educational institution.
- 11.3 To ensure that applicants and candidates are not disadvantaged and that the integrity of the research program and higher degree by research qualification are maintained, credit for prior learning will be granted in accordance Australian Government requirements.
- 11.4 Credit granted will not normally exceed one third of the coursework requirements of the research program in which credit is being sought.
- 11.5 The granting of credit for prior learning is not automatic, and the applicant will be required to apply for credit for prior learning at the time of application or within six months of the commencement date.
- 11.6 The Pro Vice-Chancellor will only approve an application for credit for prior learning made under this Ordinance where:
- a) the applicant demonstrates the attainment of learning outcomes against the research program course and unit level learning outcomes; and
 - b) the prior formal or informal learning was successfully completed or obtained within the period of:
 - i. 10 years immediately before admission to the research program; or
 - ii. in circumstances the Pro Vice-Chancellor regards as exceptional, any longer period approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor.

PART 3 – SUPERVISION AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT

12. Supervisors

- 12.1 The University will maintain a register of supervisors.
- 12.2 The inclusion of a supervisor on the register must be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor.
- 12.3 A person is eligible to be entered onto the register of supervisors where they:
- a) hold a doctoral degree or have a record of scholarly achievement that the Pro Vice-Chancellor considers equivalent; and
 - b) are research active; and
 - c) are an academic employee or an adjunct or clinical title holder of the University.
- 12.4 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may remove a supervisor from the register of supervisors where the supervisor no longer complies with section 12.3 or when the Pro Vice-Chancellor, in accordance with University approved procedure, determines that the supervisor's performance is unsatisfactory.

13. Graduate Research Coordinators

- 13.1 Each academic unit must have at least one Graduate Research Coordinator to support higher degree by research candidates enrolled in that academic unit.
- 13.2 Graduate Research Coordinators are appointed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor provided they meet criteria established by the Pro Vice-Chancellor, on recommendation from the Head of Academic Unit.

- 13.3 Persons nominated for the role of Graduate Research Coordinator must:
- a) be an academic level C, D or E University staff member within the academic unit; and
 - b) be a current supervisor, or have been a supervisor, within the past 2 years; or
 - c) be an academic level B for whom the Head of Academic Unit has nominated a mentor.

14. Minimum Requirements of Supervisory Team

- 14.1 The supervisory team is appointed by the Head of the Academic Unit. Such appointments are subject to consideration of any potential conflicts of interest in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 14.2 A supervisory team must have:
- a) a primary supervisor; and
 - b) at least one other supervisor.
- 14.3 Where a supervisory team of an enrolled candidate does not meet minimum requirements the Head of Academic Unit will assume supervision for up to three months and seek to identify a new supervisory team.
- 14.4 Where the requirements in 14.2 cannot be met:
- a) if eligible, the candidate may apply to reset their candidature in accordance with section 25, or
 - b) the candidature will be cancelled in accordance with section 31 of this Ordinance.

PART 4 – CANDIDATURE

15. Commencement and Enrolment

- 15.1 An applicant who accepts all conditions and satisfies pre-enrolment conditions contained within the letter of offer, will be enrolled as a candidate on a full-time or part-time basis on or before the commencement date specified in the letter of offer.
- 15.2 An applicant may apply to delay the commencement date in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 15.3 Applications to delay the commencement date are approved or rejected by the Pro Vice-Chancellor.
- 15.4 In addition to the Pro Vice-Chancellor's withdrawal rights at section 10.10, the Pro Vice-Chancellor may withdraw the letter of offer where, by the specified commencement date or any approved delays to that date, the applicant does not:
- a) meet the pre-enrolment conditions stated in the letter of offer; or
 - b) enrol in the higher degree by research.
- 15.5 Applicants are admitted to a higher degree by research with a probationary candidature status until their candidature is confirmed in accordance with section 23.1.

16. Variations to Enrolment

- 16.1 A candidate may apply to vary their enrolment in accordance with University approved procedure.

- 16.2 Variations to enrolment must be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor.
- 16.3 A candidate enrolled in a Masters by Research degree at the University may apply to the Pro Vice-Chancellor to upgrade their candidature to a Doctor of Philosophy provided they have met the requirements specified in the University approved procedure.
- 16.4 A candidate may withdraw from candidature at any time during the degree period.
- 16.5 A person who has voluntarily withdrawn from candidature may reapply for admission to a higher degree by research in accordance with University approved procedure, provided there are no outstanding fees, charges and fines owing to the University.
- 16.6 Enrolment as a candidate automatically ceases where:
 - a) a candidate withdraws from candidature in accordance with section 16.4; or
 - b) a candidate's enrolment in a higher degree by research is cancelled in accordance with section 31; or
 - c) a candidate's candidature is terminated in accordance with section 32; or
 - d) a candidate's examination outcomes are finalised, and any internal appeals of those outcomes have been exhausted.

17. Attendance Requirements

- 17.1 For every calendar year a full-time candidate must spend 48 weeks, and a part-time candidate must spend 24 weeks, undertaking the research program.
- 17.2 A candidate enrolled in a higher degree by research must undertake the research program on-campus, except where the Pro Vice-Chancellor has approved in accordance with University approved procedure:
 - a) a candidate to undertake all or part of the research program off-campus; and/or
 - b) the enrolment of a candidate in a research program for which there is a third-party partnership agreement and place of candidature is specified in the associated candidate agreement.
- 17.3 Prior to the approval of off-campus candidature, the Pro Vice-Chancellor must be satisfied that:
 - a) if all or part of the research program is proposed to be undertaken outside the University at another university or other tertiary education institution, all the following requirements will be met:
 - i. any coursework proposed to be undertaken at the tertiary education institution as part of the research program will be substantially comparable in quality to equivalent coursework offered by the University for the research program (or comparable programs); and
 - ii. the tertiary education institution will have satisfactory research facilities available to the candidate for the research program; and
 - iii. all reviews under sections 23 and 24 of the candidate's progress in the research program will be satisfactorily completed; or
 - b) if all or part of the research program is proposed to be undertaken outside the University at a location that is not another university or other tertiary education institution, all the following requirements will be met:
 - i. supervision arrangements will be available to the candidate for the research program that will be substantially comparable in quality to supervision

arrangements that will be available to the student for the research program when the candidate is at the University; and

- ii. the candidate will have access to satisfactory resources to undertake the research program; and
- iii. all reviews under section 23 and 24 of the candidate's progress in the research program will be satisfactorily completed.

17.4 A candidate must not engage in any academic course of study leading to a qualification that is not an essential part of their higher degree by research.

17.5 The University will require a candidate who does not comply with section 17.4 to withdraw from the academic course of study leading to a qualification that is not an essential part of their higher degree by research. If upon request by the University, the candidate fails to withdraw from that course, the Pro Vice-Chancellor may cancel the candidate's enrolment in the higher degree by research in accordance with section 31.

18. Annual and Sick Leave

18.1 All candidates are entitled to 20 working days leave for recreational purposes and 10 working days sick leave in each full-time equivalent year of enrolment. Such leave will not change the degree period.

19. Cultural, Special, and Parental Leave Provisions

19.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates are entitled to 1 additional working day of leave to participate in National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Observance Committee (**NAIDOC**) activities and events during NAIDOC week, in each full-time equivalent year of enrolment. Such leave will not change the degree period.

19.2 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may grant special leave for a period not exceeding 5 working days in each full-time equivalent year of enrolment. Such leave will suspend candidature.

19.3 A candidate who is considered a primary carer is entitled to a maximum of 12 months unpaid parental leave for each pregnancy or legal adoption during their degree period. Such leave will suspend candidature.

19.4 A candidate who is the partner of a primary carer is entitled to 10 working days of parental leave for each birth or adoption at the time of the birth or adoption during their degree period. Such leave will suspend candidature.

19.5 Proof of pregnancy or adoption must be provided when applying for parental leave under sections 19.3 or 19.4.

20. Leave of Absence and additional leave

20.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may approve applications for a leave of absence required because of a candidate's personal circumstances where the primary supervisor, Graduate Research Coordinator and Head of Academic Unit confirm that there will be no adverse impact on the satisfactory completion of the research program within the revised expiry date of the degree period.

20.2 Where a requested leave of absence would:

- a) occur prior to Confirmation of Candidature;
- b) result in more than 12 months of total leave of absence over the course of the degree period;

- c) occur within:
 - iv. 3 months full-time equivalent prior to the expiry of the degree period for the Masters by Research; or
 - v. 6 months full-time equivalent prior to the expiry of the degree period for the doctoral degree.

the Pro Vice-Chancellor will not approve the leave of absence unless:

- d) the Head of Academic Unit provides satisfactory evidence that:
 - i. the research program will be able to be properly resourced with respect to supervision, funding, and access to facilities until the revised expiry date of the degree period; and
 - ii. by the revised expiry date of the degree period the thesis:
 - 1. is expected to be submitted; and
 - 2. will still form a supervised, independent, and substantial contribution to knowledge; and
- e) the Pro Vice-Chancellor forms the view, based on satisfactory evidence, that the leave of absence is needed for:
 - i. parental leave; or
 - ii. medical leave relating to serious illness or injury of the candidate; or
 - iii. carer's leave relating to serious illness or injury of the candidate's partner or other immediate family member; or
 - iv. exceptional circumstances, as determined by the Pro Vice-Chancellor.

20.3 Where the Pro Vice-Chancellor is unable to approve an application under section 20, the University may request the candidate to withdraw from their higher degree by research course in accordance with section 16. If the candidate fails to withdraw from the higher degree by research, the Pro Vice-Chancellor may cancel their enrolment in accordance with section 31.

20.4 Degree period expiry dates are adjusted to account for any period of approved special leave, parental leave, and leave of absence from candidature.

20.5 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may cancel a candidate's enrolment in accordance with section 31 where:

- a) a candidate who is not on approved leave of absence has not engaged with their studies for a period of 3 months and the University has exhausted all reasonable options to contact the candidate; or
- b) a candidate has not engaged with their studies for a period greater than 24 months due to approved leave under section 20.1 and the candidature, if continued, can no longer satisfy the requirements for the research program.

21. Compliance with the Conditions of Candidature

21.1 A candidate must comply with the material conditions of candidature imposed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor in the letter of offer.

21.2 Grounds to terminate candidature in accordance with section 32 may be established where a candidate has been given:

- a) notice that they have failed to comply with material conditions of candidature imposed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor in the letter of offer; or

- b) notice that they have failed (which the Pro Vice-Chancellor reasonably regards as material) to comply with a procedural or administrative requirement set out in this Ordinance or any applicable University policy or procedure; and
- c) a reasonable opportunity to rectify the failures set out in sections 21.2a) or b) but has not done so.

22. Satisfactory Academic Progress

- 22.1 A candidate must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress throughout their candidature.
- 22.2 A candidate's academic progress will be formally reviewed and documented every 12 calendar months from the commencement date.
- 22.3 The first review will be Confirmation of Candidature in accordance with section 23.
- 22.4 Thereafter and subject to candidature being confirmed an annual review of progress will occur every 12 calendar months in accordance with section 24, until the thesis is submitted for examination.

23. Confirmation of Candidature

- 23.1 A candidate's academic progress and ability to complete the higher degree by research within the maximum degree period will be formally assessed at a Confirmation of Candidature meeting conducted in accordance with University approved procedure, no later than:
 - a) 12 months' full-time equivalent for doctoral candidates; or
 - b) 6 months' full-time equivalent for Masters by Research candidates; or
 - c) commencement of candidature for PhD by Prior Publication candidates.
- 23.2 The candidate may invite an additional person of support to attend the Confirmation of Candidature meeting who is not:
 - a) a current higher degree by research candidate; or
 - b) a legal representative.
- 23.3 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may confirm a candidate in their higher degree by research where the candidate meets the requirements for Confirmation of Candidature as detailed in University approved procedure.
- 23.4 Candidature will not be confirmed in cases where the candidate has not:
 - a) met the requirements of Confirmation of Candidature as stated in University approved procedure by the nominated date; or
 - b) complied with all material conditions in the letter of offer or otherwise imposed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor throughout candidature.
- 23.5 Where Confirmation of Candidature is not granted, the Pro Vice-Chancellor may in accordance with University approved procedure either:
 - a) offer the candidate a single extension to the confirmation period of no more than 3 months full-time equivalent under a candidature support plan; or
 - b) transfer the candidature to a Masters by Research degree (doctoral degree candidates only); or
 - c) terminate candidature in accordance with section 32.

24. Annual Review of Progress

- 24.1 A candidate must in accordance with University approved procedure:
- a) provide to the University evidence of satisfactory academic progress in their candidature; and
 - b) participate in an annual review of progress meeting every 12 calendar months.
- 24.2 The candidate may invite an additional person of support as set out in section 23.2 to attend the annual review of progress interview.
- 24.3 The Graduate Research Coordinator may determine whether the candidate has demonstrated satisfactory academic progress and may specify conditions of candidature to apply following an annual review of progress interview in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 24.4 Where a candidate has not made satisfactory academic progress and has been given a reasonable opportunity to rectify that failure by the University, but has not done so, the Graduate Research Coordinator may recommend to the Pro Vice-Chancellor that:
- a) a candidature support plan be implemented; or
 - b) candidature be converted to a Masters by Research degree (doctoral degree candidates only); or
 - c) the candidate's enrolment be cancelled in accordance with section 31; or
 - d) the candidate's candidature be terminated in accordance with section 32.

25. Resetting Candidature

- 25.1 Where, prior to Confirmation of Candidature:
- a) the University can no longer satisfy section 10.4c); or
 - b) an event beyond the control of the candidate or the University, prevents the candidate from conducting the research project in accordance with the research plan; and
 - c) in the view of the Head of Academic Unit all reasonable options to adjust the project have been exhausted; and
 - d) the research project, if continued, can no longer satisfy the requirements for the degree; then
 - i. the Head of Academic Unit must immediately advise the Pro Vice-Chancellor that candidature can no longer continue; and
 - ii. on receipt of advice from the Head of Academic Unit, the Pro Vice-Chancellor advises the candidate that they may apply to reset their candidature.
- 25.2 Applications to reset candidature must meet the requirements in section 10.4b) and c).
- 25.3 Where the conditions specified in section 10.4b) and c) cannot be met, the candidate will be asked to withdraw and if they refuse, the Pro Vice-Chancellor may cancel their enrolment in accordance with section 31.

PART 5- EXAMINATION

26. Language of the Thesis

- 26.1 The thesis will be written in English subject to section 26.2 and 26.3.
- 26.2 A candidate may apply to the Pro Vice-Chancellor for approval for all or part of the thesis to be written in an Australian Indigenous language. In giving or withholding

approval, the Pro Vice-Chancellor must have regard to the University's resources (physical, financial, compliance, and supervisory) to enable the candidate to complete candidature.

- 26.3 Where all or part of the language of a thesis submitted for examination as part of a dual award is proposed to be a language other than English, the proposal must first be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor.
- 26.4 Where the Pro Vice-Chancellor approves for all or part of a thesis to be written in a language other than English and where:
- a) the examination will be conducted in the language approved in sections 26.2 and 26.3, the thesis submitted for examination must contain an extended abstract in English that includes an introduction, chapter outline and conclusion; or
 - b) the examination will be conducted in English, the full thesis submitted for examination must be translated into English by a registered translator.

27. Thesis requirements

- 27.1 The thesis must contain a declaration of originality and the appropriate authority of access statement.
- 27.2 If applicable, the thesis must include statements relating to ethical conduct, published work, and co-authorship.

28. Submission of Thesis for Examination

- 28.1 A higher degree by research thesis will be examined in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 28.2 A candidate must submit their thesis for examination within:
- a) the maximum degree period as set out in section 9.3, or
 - b) any approved extension under section 9.7; or
 - c) any approved changes to the maximum expiry date of the degree period under sections 19 and 20.
- 28.3 To be eligible to submit a thesis for examination, a candidate must:
- a) be a currently enrolled candidate; and
 - b) not have exceeded the degree period including any extensions; and
 - c) have been enrolled in the higher degree by research degree for which they are seeking to be examined for the minimum degree period in accordance with section 9; and
 - d) have successfully completed all coursework required by the research program, if any; and
 - e) have achieved Confirmation of Candidature; and
 - f) have completed research to the standard and specification of the program in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework; and
 - g) provide an academic integrity report of originality of the full thesis.
- 28.4 The failure of a candidate to submit their thesis for examination in accordance with section 28.2 establishes a ground for the Pro Vice-Chancellor to cancel the candidate's enrolment in their higher degree by research in accordance with section 31.

- 28.5 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may approve the submission of a body of work for examination for an aegrotat award or posthumous award in a higher degree by research in accordance with University approved procedure where:
- a) an enrolled candidate has sustained an incapacitating injury or illness that precludes completion of the research program or has died; and
 - b) the candidate was enrolled in the research program at the time of injury, illness, or death; and
 - c) at the time of injury, illness or death, the candidate had completed sufficient research work such as study design, data collection, literature reviews, draft chapters, papers and publications, progress reports or other assessable evidence to indicate that, had the death or incapacity not intervened, they would have satisfied the requirements for the award of the higher degree by research; and
 - d) it can be confirmed that the conferral of the award of the higher degree by research will not cause offence or undue stress to the relatives of the deceased candidate or the incapacitated candidate.

29. Examination of the Thesis

- 29.1 The examination of a higher degree by research thesis will be conducted in accordance with University approved procedure and must be an independent, transparent, and confidential process, free from actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest.
- 29.2 A Chair of Examiners appointed in accordance with University approved procedure, will act as an independent convenor throughout the examination process of a candidate's thesis.
- 29.3 The higher degree by research thesis must be examined by at least two examiners who are experts of international standing in the discipline/field of research who are external to the University, independent of the conduct of the research and without any actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest.
- 29.4 Each examiner must provide the University with a written report on the thesis and recommend an outcome in accordance with University approved procedure.

30. Outcome of Examination and Completion of Requirements

- 30.1 A candidate must address all revisions to the thesis recommended by the examiners and submit their revised thesis within the nominated timeframe, or any approved extension to that timeframe, in accordance with University approved procedure.
- 30.2 The failure of a candidate to submit their revised thesis within the nominated timeframe, and any extension to that timeframe, establishes a ground for the Pro Vice-Chancellor to cancel the candidate's enrolment in the higher degree by research in accordance with section 31.
- 30.3 A candidate will be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of the award of a higher degree by research where:
- a) the candidate's thesis has satisfied the requirements of the higher degree by research; and
 - b) the candidate has passed all coursework requirements for the degree in which they are enrolled; and
 - c) any conditions of candidature imposed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor have been met; and

- d) the candidate has met all financial obligations related to tuition fees, charges, and fines.
- 30.4 When a thesis is accepted for the award of a higher degree by research, the candidate must lodge the final version of the thesis and any supplementary material with the University.
- 30.5 Where the requirements of the award of a higher degree by research have been satisfied, the Pro Vice-Chancellor will recommend to Academic Senate that the higher degree by research be awarded and be forwarded to Council for conferral of the degree.
- 30.6 Where a candidate fails to satisfy the requirements of the higher degree by research 30.3 the candidate will receive a fail grade.

PART 6 – CANCELLATION OR TERMINATION

31. Cancellation of Enrolment

- 31.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor may cancel a candidate's enrolment in accordance with this Ordinance and University approved procedure.
- 31.2 Where the Pro Vice-Chancellor decides to cancel a candidate's enrolment under this Ordinance, the Pro Vice-Chancellor must:
- a) in making the decision to cancel enrolment, determine whether a candidate whose candidature stands to be cancelled will:
 - i. be eligible to reapply for admission to a higher degree by research; or
 - ii. be eligible to apply for readmission to submit their thesis for examination; or
 - iii. receive recognition of academic credit for study and research completed, where applicable; or
 - iv. in the case of doctoral degree candidates, be permitted to transfer to a Masters by Research degree.
 - b) advise the candidate in writing of the decision.
- 31.3 A candidate may appeal the decision to cancel their enrolment within a time limit specified in University approved procedure, after which point in time, or if the appealed decision is upheld, their enrolment is cancelled.

32. Termination of Candidature

- 32.1 A candidate's candidature may be terminated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor in accordance with this Ordinance and University approved procedure.
- 32.2 Where the Pro Vice-Chancellor decides to terminate a candidate's candidature under this Ordinance, the Pro Vice-Chancellor must advise the candidate in writing of the decision.
- 32.3 A candidate may appeal the decision to terminate their candidature within a time limit specified in the University approved procedure, after which point in time, or if the appealed decision is upheld, their candidature is terminated.
- 32.4 Termination of candidature is final, and readmission to a higher degree by research will not be permitted.

Made by Council on 28 August 2020.

Version 3 minor amendments (position title changes) approved by Director Governance and Compliance on 19 January 2024.

[Version history](#)