University Research Committee (URC) Terms of Reference – 2021

Purpose and Function

To provide oversight of governance in relation to all elements of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 that relate to research and research training, and report to and advise Academic Senate on decisions, recommendations, and matters of interest emanating from the Committee. The domains of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 that are relevant to the Committee are specified in Appendix A1.

In particular, URC will:

- Ensure research and research training activities comply with relevant legislation and codes of practice (see Appendix A – HESF 5.2).
- Provide advice and make recommendations to Academic Senate on strategic research planning (see Appendix A – HESF 4.1, 5.3).
- Provide high-level advice to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on matters relating to research and research training (see Appendix A – HESF 1.5, 4.2, 5.3, 5.4).
- Guide, monitor, review, and endorse activities undertaken by its subcommittees and working parties (see Appendix A – HESF 5.2).
- Facilitate regular communication between the URC and the broader research community on issues relating to research and research training (see Appendix A – HESF 4.2, 5.2).
- Provide insight and give advice to Colleges to enhance the quality of research and research training (see Appendix A – HESF 5.3)
- Advise on other matters referred to the Committee by the Vice-Chancellor and/or Academic Senate (see Appendix A – HESF 4.1).

Membership of University Research Committee

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Prof Anthony Koutoulis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex-officio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair/Deputy Chair of Academic Senate</td>
<td>Prof Natalie Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Graduate Research</td>
<td>Prof Peter Frappell (acting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Deans (Research)</td>
<td>Prof Elizabeth Leane</td>
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<tr>
<td>CALE</td>
<td>Prof Elizabeth Leane</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoBE</td>
<td>Prof Natalie Stoeckl</td>
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<td>CoHM</td>
<td>Prof Tracey Dickson</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoSE</td>
<td>Prof Brett Paull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominated by Academic Senate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Senate nominee</td>
<td>Dr Louise Grimmer, Tasmanian School of Business (31/12/22)</td>
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1 The University Research Committee provides oversight of governance of the Higher Education Standards contained in Appendix 1 as relevant only to Higher Degree Research students. The University Learning and Teaching Committee provides oversight of governance of the Higher Education Standards contained in Appendix 1 as relevant to undergraduate students, including those undertaking research.
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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department/Unit</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Senate nominee</td>
<td>Assoc Prof Phillippa Taberlay</td>
<td>Tasmanian School of Medicine</td>
<td>31/12/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Senate nominee</td>
<td>Dr David Nichols</td>
<td>Central Science Laboratory</td>
<td>31/12/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Senate Nominee</td>
<td>Assoc Prof Guna Karupiah</td>
<td>Tasmanian School of Medicine</td>
<td>31/12/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appointed by the Chair</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair appointee</td>
<td>Rohan Puri</td>
<td>Postgraduate Council</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HDR Candidate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observers with speaking rights</td>
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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director, Innovation and Enterprise</td>
<td>Prof Craig Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Director, Research</td>
<td>Mr Nigel Blundell</td>
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<tr>
<td>University Librarian</td>
<td>Ms Janette Burke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Executive Officer</td>
<td>Dr Denbeigh Armstrong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretariat</td>
<td>Mr Damien Maurice</td>
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The Committee may not arrange for alternates but may co-opt members with specific expertise. Observers may be invited to attend meetings with the Chair’s permission.

**Chair and Deputy Chair**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research chairs the University Research Committee. In the absence of the Chair, the Chair may appoint an Acting Chair from the members, and that person assumes the same rights and responsibilities accorded to the Chair, including attendance at other meetings to speak to reports from the University Research Committee.

**Executive Committee**

The University Research Committee will have an Executive Committee empowered to act executively between meetings where urgent business requires such action, and to form ad-hoc working parties on matters determined by the Executive Committee. Executive Committee actions and approvals are communicated immediately to the University Research Committee via email, reported to the University Research Committee at its next scheduled meeting, and noted in the University Research Committee Minutes.

The Executive Committee comprises:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research as Chair of University Research Committee or an Acting Chair selected by the Chair and
- any other two members of the Committee selected by the Chair.

**Quorum**

A quorum consists of one half of the members plus one. Where there is no quorum the Committee may still meet to ensure that the work of Committee continues. Any recommendations made at such meetings need to be endorsed by a subsequent meeting where a quorum was present. Equivalent
quorum and approval requirements apply to resolutions without meeting via electronic communication.

**Secretariat arrangements**

A member of ODVCR will act as Committee Secretary. The Committee Secretary maintains both minutes of meetings of the Committee and records of reports and associated materials as required for official University records.

**Schedule of meetings**

The University Research Committee normally meets four to six times per year.

Videoconferencing facilities are used wherever possible to minimise travel requirements.

The Committee should not meet unless there is sufficient business to warrant a meeting being held. When there is insufficient business to justify a committee meeting but there is an urgent matter for consideration, the Committee Secretary may gain a decision by consulting committee members via electronic communication.

**Sub-Committees and Working Parties**

The University Research Committee is assisted by the Research Integrity and Ethics Committee (RIEC), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), Non-Traditional Research Outputs Audit Group (NTROAG), Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) Working Party, UTAS Publications Audit Group, and Defence Export Controls (DEC) Advisory Group.

The Committee may establish working parties to assist its work.

**Reporting**

The University Research Committee reports to Academic Senate after each meeting.
Appendix A:

The University Research Committee will provide oversight of governance in relation to the following domains of the [Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015](#):

**Orientation and Progression (HESF 1.3)**

- Methods of assessment or monitoring that determine progress within or between units of study or in research training validly assess progress and, in the case of formative assessment, provide students with timely feedback that assists in their achievement of learning outcomes.

**Learning Outcomes and Assessment (HESF 1.4)**

- On completion of research training, students have demonstrated specific and generic learning outcomes related to research, including:
  - a. a detailed understanding of the specific topic of their research, within a broad understanding of the field of research
  - b. capacity to scope, design and conduct research projects independently
  - c. technical research skills and competence in the application of research methods, and
  - d. skills in analysis, critical evaluation and reporting of research, and in presentation, publication and dissemination of their research.

- Assessment of major assessable research outputs for higher degrees by research, such as theses, dissertations, exegeses, creative works or other major works arising from a candidate’s research incorporates assessment by at least two assessors with international standing in the field of research, who are independent of the conduct of the research, competent to undertake the assessment and do not have a conflict of interest, and:
  - a. for doctoral degrees, are external to the higher education provider, and
  - b. for masters degrees by research, at least one of whom is external to the higher education provider.

- The outputs arising from research training contribute to the development of the field of research, practice or creative field and, in the case of doctoral degrees, demonstrate a significant original contribution.

**Qualifications and Certification (HESF 1.5)**

- Qualifications, other than higher doctoral or honorary qualifications, are awarded only if a course of study leads to the award of that qualification and all of the requirements of the course of study have been fulfilled.

- Higher doctoral qualifications require significant, sustained original contributions to a field of research over and above the requirements of a doctoral degree and are awarded in accordance with the higher education provider’s specific policies and academic governance requirements for the award of Higher Doctoral Degrees.

- When an Australian Higher Education Qualification is offered, the course of study leading to the qualification is either self-accredited under authority to self-accredit or accredited by TEQSA and the learning outcomes for the qualification are consistent with the level classification for that qualification in the *Australian Qualifications Framework*.

- Awardees of qualifications are issued with authorised certification documentation including a testamur, and either a record of results or an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement (graduation statement) that state correctly:
  - the name of the registered higher education provider issuing the documentation
  - the full name of the person to whom the documentation applies
  - the date of issue
• the name and office of the person authorised by the higher education provider to issue the documentation, and
• if the qualification is recognised in the Australian Qualifications Framework, the testamur and/or the graduation statement is certified with either the logo of the Australian Qualifications Framework or the words, ‘This qualification is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework’ (shared ToR with ULTC).

• All certification documentation issued by the higher education provider is:
  o unambiguously issued by the registered higher education provider
  o readily distinguishable from other certification documents issued by the higher education provider
  o protected against fraudulent issue
  o traceable and authenticable
  o designed to prevent unauthorised reproduction, and
  o replaceable by the higher education provider through an authorised and verifiable process.

• Testamurs state correctly, in addition to the requirements for all certification documentation:
  o the full title of the qualification awarded, including the field or discipline of study
  o any subsidiary component of the qualification (such as integrated honours, an area of specialisation or a major study), and
  o if any parts of the course of study or assessment leading to the qualification were conducted in a language other than English, except for the use of another language to develop proficiency in that language.

• Records of results state correctly, in addition to the requirements for all certification documentation:
  o the full name of all courses and units of study undertaken and when they were undertaken and completed
  o credit granted through recognition of prior learning
  o the weighting of units within courses of study
  o the grades and/or marks awarded for each unit of study undertaken and, if applicable, for the course overall
  o where grades are issued, an explanation of the grading system used
  o where a course of study includes a significant particular focus of study such as honours, an area of specialisation or a major study, a definition of that component of significant focus, and
  o any parts of a course or units of study or assessment that were conducted in a language other than English, except for the use of another language to develop proficiency in that language.

• Graduation statements contain, in relation to a particular course of study and the qualification awarded, the information contained in a record of results, presented in a form that conforms with the requirements for an Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement.

• Students who complete one or more units of study that do not lead to the award of a qualification have access to an authorised record of results for the units undertaken.

• Any documentation issued with the award of an honorary qualification unambiguously identifies the qualification as an honorary qualification.
Research (HESF 4.1)

- Research and its associated activities are conducted in accordance with a research policy framework that is designed to achieve:
  - a. ethical conduct of research and responsible research practice
  - b. clarification of ownership and management of intellectual property
  - c. successful management of research partnerships
  - d. clarification of requirements for publication and authorship, and
  - e. resolution of allegations of misconduct in research.

- Research is conducted, or overseen, by staff with qualifications, research experience and skills relevant to the type of research undertaken and their role.

- A system for accurate and up-to-date recording of the research outputs of staff and research students is maintained.

Research Training (HESF 4.2)

- Research training is guided by an institutional research training policy framework that is designed to achieve:
  - a. definition and recognition of the rights and responsibilities of research students and supervisors
  - b. induction and orientation of research students and supervisors to their roles
  - c. monitoring of the progress of research students
  - d. assessment and examination of students' work
  - e. independence of examiners
  - f. presentation and communication of research outputs by students, and
  - g. resolution of disputes.

- Students are admitted to research training only where the training can be provided in a supervisory and study environment of research activity or other creative endeavour, inquiry and scholarship, and the supervision and resources required for their project are available.

- Each research student is supported by continuing supervisory arrangements, including:
  - a. a principal supervisor who holds a doctoral degree, or has equivalent research experience, and who is active in research and publishing in, or otherwise making original contributions to, a relevant field or discipline
  - b. at least one associate supervisor with relevant research expertise, and
  - c. the principal supervisor is a member of the staff of the higher education provider, or has a relevant adjunct appointment, or is otherwise formally contracted and accountable to the provider for supervisory duties.

- Research students participate in an induction to research that includes codes of conduct, ethics, occupational health and safety, intellectual property and any additional matters that are necessary for the type of research to be undertaken.

- Coursework that is included as a formal assessable requirement in a course of study that involves research training, whether as a component of or an adjunct to the research training, meets the academic governance and quality assurance requirements required of other coursework offered by the higher education provider.

Academic and Research Integrity (HESF 5.2)

- There are policies that promote and uphold the academic and research integrity of courses and units of study, research and research training activities, and institutional policies and procedures address misconduct and allegations of misconduct.
• Preventative action is taken to mitigate foreseeable risks to academic and research integrity including misrepresentation, fabrication, cheating, plagiarism and misuse of intellectual property, and to prevent recurrences of breaches.
• Students are provided with guidance on what constitutes academic or research misconduct and the development of good practices in maintaining academic and research integrity.
• Academic and research integrity and accountability for academic integrity is maintained in arrangements with any other parties involved in the provision of higher education, including placements and joint award of qualifications.

Monitoring, Review and Improvement (HESF 5.3)

• All accredited courses of study are subject to periodic (at least every seven years) comprehensive reviews that are overseen by peak academic governance processes and include external referencing or other benchmarking activities.
• A comprehensive review includes the design and content of each course of study, the expected learning outcomes, the methods for assessment of those outcomes, the extent of students’ achievement of learning outcomes, and also takes account of emerging developments in the field of education, modes of delivery, the changing needs of students and identified risks to the quality of the course of study.
• Comprehensive reviews of courses of study are informed and supported by regular interim monitoring, of the quality of teaching and supervision of research students, student progress and the overall delivery of units within each course of study.
• Review and improvement activities include regular external referencing of the success of student cohorts against comparable courses of study, including:
  o analyses of progression rates, attrition rates, completion times and rates and, where applicable, comparing different locations of delivery, and
  o the assessment methods and grading of students’ achievement of learning outcomes for selected units of study within courses of study.
• All students have opportunities to provide feedback on their educational experiences and student feedback informs institutional monitoring, review and improvement activities.
• All teachers and supervisors have opportunities to review feedback on their teaching and research supervision and are supported in enhancing these activities.
• The results of regular interim monitoring, comprehensive reviews, external referencing and student feedback are used to mitigate future risks to the quality of the education provided and to guide and evaluate improvements, including the use of data on student progress and success to inform admission criteria and approaches to course design, teaching, supervision, learning and academic support.

Delivery with Other Parties (HESF 5.4)

• Work-integrated learning, placements, other community-based learning and collaborative research training arrangements are quality assured, including assurance of the quality of supervision of student experiences.
• When a course of study, any parts of a course of study, or research training are delivered through arrangements with another party(ies), whether in Australia or overseas, the registered higher education provider remains accountable for the course of study and verifies continuing compliance of the course of study with the standards in the Higher Education Standards Framework that relate to the specific arrangement.

Academic Governance (HESF 6.3)

• Students have opportunities to participate in academic governance.