

HDR Admissions Procedures

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) These Procedures are designed to ensure that admission decisions and processes are applied fairly, consistently, as well as efficiently and increase the likelihood the selected candidates have developed the academic, personal, and language capabilities to thrive during their degree.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) These Procedures apply to admission into HDR courses at UOW.

(3) These Procedures do not apply to offshore campuses. These campuses are governed by separate procedures.

Section 3 - Student Applications

(4) To apply directly to a HDR course at UOW, applicants should follow the procedure stipulated in the admission information webpage that is linked to the [Graduate Research School webpage](#).

(5) To apply directly to a HDR course at UOW-Dubai, applicants should follow the procedure that are customised to this campus, accessible from [this webpage](#).

Section 4 - Minimum Academic Requirements

(6) To be eligible to receive an offer, HDR applicants need to fulfill the minimum academic requirements, as specified in the [Course Finder](#) for each course.

(7) HDR applicants whose academic qualifications do not fulfill these eligibility criteria may still receive an offer if, according to the relevant Head of Postgraduate Studies, they have demonstrably and independently completed research activity, such as published journal articles, if:

- a. their proposed research project utilises a similar methodology or theoretical framework to this past research activity;
- b. the quality of their research exceeds the level expected of applicants who fulfil the standard admission pathway; and
- c. the justifications of this offer are recorded in the online student record.

(8) For example, depending on other considerations, the Head of Postgraduate Studies may decide to admit PhD applicants who have:

- a. published two Q1 journal articles or equivalent as first author;
- b. in addition to completing an Honours or postgraduate degree, been engaged as a research assistant at UOW or a partner of UOW for over six months; or

c. completed some other combination of comparable activities and qualifications.

(9) In exceptional circumstances, HDR applicants whose academic qualifications do not fulfill the eligibility criteria may still receive an offer if:

- a. the Head of Postgraduate Studies or Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research can demonstrate these candidates will receive special assistance to override limitations in their research capabilities;
- b. the Dean of Graduate Research endorses, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Sustainable Futures) approves, this admission.

Section 5 - Minimum English Language Requirements

(10) To be eligible to receive an offer, HDR applicants must fulfill the minimum levels of English language proficiency, as specified in the [Course Finder](#) for each course.

(11) The Admissions Procedures stipulate these minimum levels of English language proficiency as well as the methods to assess these levels.

(12) The relevant Head of Postgraduate Studies is the delegated authority who can approve the faculty assessment of English language proficiency.

(13) The faculty may decide the minimum level of English proficiency has:

- a. not been fulfilled;
- b. been fulfilled;
- c. been fulfilled, subject to the condition the applicant complete additional subjects or training, such as “Fundamentals of HDR writing”, but only if the Dean of Graduate Research approves.

Section 6 - The Approach to Assess Student Applications

(14) To be eligible to enrol, HDR applicants need to demonstrate the minimum levels of English proficiency, as specified in the [Course Finder](#) for each course.

(15) To assess student applications, potential Supervisors as well as the relevant Head of Postgraduate Studies and Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research of each faculty shall use the online HDR student system. All decisions about admission and the justifications of these decisions shall be recorded on this online system.

(16) To prevent significant conflicts of interest, university staff who contribute to admission decisions should not be in a close personal, business, or legal relationship with the applicants or Supervisors outside work or should demonstrate why these relationships will not bias their decisions in accordance with the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

(17) Some applicants have not developed the resilience, character, capabilities, or values that are suited to this degree or research environment. To identify these concerns, Supervisors should interview HDR applicants, usually online, before they accept these candidates and evaluate samples of their writing as well.

(18) If qualifications or experience of applicants are borderline, at least one academic outside the likely supervision panel should participate in these interviews to promote an equitable, independent decision.

(19) The interview should be noted on the online student record.

(20) To decide whether to accept an applicant who has fulfilled the minimum academic requirements and English language proficiency, the Supervisors and Head of Postgraduate Studies shall also consider:

- a. the degree to which the qualifications of applicants are recent;
- b. the availability of sufficient resources, support, and supervision to support the proposed research;
- c. the compatibility of this research project with the priorities of the University;
- d. whether the project is unaffected by sanctions, defence controls, foreign arrangements, or foreign interference.

(21) The Principal Supervisor should endorse and the Head of Postgraduate Studies should approve requests of candidates to enrol part time unless:

- a. the corresponding delay in completion could substantially diminish the feasibility or significance of this project;
- b. the corresponding delay in completion is inconsistent with scholarship conditions and other regulations;
- c. the candidate is receiving a stipend, in which case the [HDR Scholarship Policy](#) and Research Training Program Procedures apply.

(22) To grant potential HDR candidates enough time to reach decisions, plan their move to UOW, and secure a visa, the Head of Postgraduate Studies should process applications within 6 weeks.

Section 7 - Offers of Admission

(23) As soon as practicable, HDR applicants will receive:

- a. an unconditional offer;
- b. a conditional offer,
- c. a packaged offer of two or more courses of study, such as the Bachelor of Research and Master of Research, or
- d. no offer.

(24) All offers must be issued in writing and comply with the UOW offer letter template, approved by the Dean of Graduate Research.

(25) The offer letter is a contract between UOW and the candidates that stipulates the rights and obligations of candidates including:

- a. the course, Faculty, and Supervisors;
- b. the latest date at which the applicant can commence candidature;
- c. whether they enrolled full time or part time;
- d. the maximum course duration;
- e. the title of their thesis and the field of education;
- f. the milestones, subjects, and training requirements the candidate must fulfill;
- g. tuition fees and other charges;
- h. tuition protection and refunds of charges;
- i. instructions on how to accept, reject, or change the offer as well as how to enrol;
- j. standard conditions of candidature;
- k. conditions of enrolment that apply to specific courses, such as security checks or health requirements for students undertaking clinical work.

(26) After they receive a written offer of admission, applicants may:

- a. accept the offer, by following the instructions specified in the written offer;
- b. apply to defer entry in compliance with these Procedures;
- c. decline the offer; or
- d. not respond, in which case the offer will lapse after the deadline on the offer letter.

(27) If applicants fail to enrol in any subject in the first session of their course and have not been granted a deferral or leave of absence, their offer of admission lapses.

(28) Students may be offered an integrated undergraduate and postgraduate offer or some other blend of courses if they do not fulfill the UOW direct entry requirements, called a package offer.

(29) Students will be admitted to the next level of study only after their eligibility to progress has been confirmed. Students do not need to submit a new application but may need to indicate they are seeking to be admitted, in accordance with their original offer.

(30) A packaged offer may include an offer to study a relevant English language course at UOW College Australia and an offer to study a formal course at the University conditional on completion of the language course at the required level, issued by the Dean of Graduate Research on behalf of the University.

(31) If the student is domestic, a packaged offer may enable candidates to complete a Bachelor of Research and then enter the second year of a Master of Research.

Section 8 - Deferring an Offer

(32) After receiving an offer, applicants may choose to defer but only until census date of the following session. To defer, applicants must submit a formal, online request, in compliance with the offer letter.

(33) To decide whether to accept the request, the Head of Postgraduate Studies should consider:

- a. the needs of the applicant;
- b. the availability of Supervisors, resources, and facilities;
- c. the feasibility of the research if delayed;
- d. the conditions of relevant scholarships; and
- e. other considerations and regulations.

(34) Applicants who do not enrol by the updated commencement date will need to submit a new application if they want to be admitted.

(35) If applicants fail to comply with requirements around the deferment, as prescribed by the University, the deferred offer may be withdrawn.

Section 9 - Readmission

(36) If candidates have discontinued a course of study or failed to enrol or re-enrol by the due date, applications to resume the course will be treated as a new application for admission and will be subject to the usual competitive, selection process.

Section 10 - Appeal Process

(37) If the applicants had satisfied all University and course selection requirements and had also lodged the application correctly on time, they can appeal unfavourable admission decisions if they believe:

- a. the [HDR Award Rules](#), HDR Admissions Procedures, or other relevant University policies were not applied correctly; or
- b. the University has overlooked relevant circumstances.

(38) Applicants must lodge a written statement, specifying the grounds for this appeal, to the Dean of Graduate Research, 10 or fewer days after the admission decision was communicated.

(39) If the written appeal is submitted on time, the Dean of Graduate Research or nominee may review the appeal and admission application in consultation with the staff who contributed to this admission decision. If the appeal was directed against the decision of the Dean of Graduate Research, this Dean will nominate the Student Ombudsman as the nominee.

(40) When appraising the appeal, the Dean of Graduate Research or nominee will decide whether to:

- a. deny the appeal; or
- b. uphold the appeal and thus offer admission to the current or next available offering of the course.

(41) The Dean of Graduate Research or nominee must notify the applicant of this decision within 20 working days of the University receiving the written appeal.

Section 11 - Transparency, Monitoring, and Review of Admissions

(42) The University shall publish accurate, accessible, and timely information in English to prospective candidates about admission requirements and features of each course including the design of courses, the schedules of subjects, the prerequisites and assumed knowledge, modes of delivery, application dates, arrangements to recognise prior learning, credit transfer arrangements, and pathways to employment.

(43) For each HDR course, the relevant Head of Postgraduate Studies and Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research will confirm that academic requirements as well as any additional criteria and requirements to be admitted are published in [Course Finder](#).

(44) Although [Course Finder](#) specifies the standard admission pathways, including minimum academic records, alternative admission pathways or evidence of research capability may be considered.

(45) The University will maintain appropriate records on admission decisions so that:

- a. the effectiveness of admission criteria can be evaluated; and
- b. the degree to which the various admissions pathways of students affect performance can be monitored and reviewed.

(46) Documentation supporting admissions decisions must be retained according to the [GA-47-General retention and disposal authority: higher and further education](#).

(47) The Academic Quality and Standard Subcommittee(AQSS) will regularly monitor and review policies, procedures,

and decisions around admission to courses and report the results to Academic Senate via the University Education Committee (UEC).

Section 12 - General Savings Clause

(48) To accommodate exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Sustainable Futures) may relax any provisions of these Procedures.

Section 13 - Roles and Responsibilities

(49) In addition to the responsibilities of the principal supervisor, HPS, AD-HDR, and Dean of Graduate Research that are stipulated in these Procedures, staff should be aware of additional roles and responsibilities that are relevant to HDR Admissions.

(50) The Dean of Graduate Research shall conduct reviews and updates of these policies, in accordance with UOW timeframes.

(51) In addition to the responsibilities specified in these Procedures, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Sustainable Futures) is responsible for:

- a. instructing that no further offers are to be issued and approve the withdrawal of current offers to a HDR course for which the Strategic Course Portfolio Committee has accepted a notice of discontinuation;
- b. approving the re-admission of a student excluded from UOW or another institution, on the recommendation of the relevant faculty; and
- c. approving changes to course admission requirements introduced outside the course approval and re-approval cycle, including changes to minimum English language requirements.

(52) In addition to the responsibilities specified in these Procedures, faculties are responsible for:

- a. recommending course-level admission requirements for approval by Academic Senate as part of the course approval and review cycle and, outside that cycle, by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Sustainable Futures);
- b. approving an alternative assessment of English language proficiency;
- c. approving a course transfer;
- d. maintaining records of selection processes and decisions undertaken within the faculty.

(53) Academic Senate is responsible for:

- a. approving and re-approving course-level admission requirements as part of the course approval and review cycle;
- b. conducting quality assurance of admission processes and procedures by receiving reports and conveying recommendations to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Sustainable Futures), faculties, the Student Administration Services Division as appropriate.

(54) The University, through the appropriate Delegated Authority, is responsible for offers to students who meet the admission requirements for a packaged offer that involves a UOW College English language course.

(55) Positions with Delegated Authority to reach admissions decisions are specified in the [Delegations of Authority Policy](#).

Section 14 - Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidate	A student enrolled in a Doctorate or Research Masters at UOW and whose body of work is incomplete or is under examination

Status and Details

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