

# HDR Supervision and Resources Procedures

## Section 1 - Introduction/Background

(1) These Procedures are designed to ensure the practices and behaviours of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Supervisors enhance the experience and productivity of HDR candidates as well as comply with [Higher Education Standards Framework and Australian Quality Framework on Research Training](#).

(2) These Procedures also delineate the resources and support that faculties and the university should supply to support HDR candidates.

## Section 2 - Scope/Purpose

(3) These Procedures apply to the guidance and supervision of all HDR candidates at UOW except HDR candidates enrolled in offshore campuses if governed by the procedures of the corresponding campus.

## Section 3 - Orientation

(4) All HDR candidates must receive a comprehensive orientation during the first month of their candidature. As part of this orientation, the Graduate Research School will outline:

- a. the resources, facilities, and services that are available to all HDR candidates;
- b. the milestones and training that all HDR candidates shall complete;
- c. the roles and responsibilities of HDR candidates and Supervisors; and
- d. the forms that candidates shall complete as well as the rules, policies, and procedures that HDR candidates shall observe including regulations around research integrity and the [Code of Conduct](#).

(5) The relevant academic unit, such as the Faculty, School, or Institute, may present information that is relevant only to specific cohorts such as:

- a. safe work practices in a particular field;
- b. how to access resources and funding;
- c. other practices that are particular to this academic unit.

(6) The primary responsibility of the faculty and academic unit is to provide suitable academic supervision, advice, infrastructure, resources, and funding to support the research and development of their HDR candidates — under the jurisdiction of the Head of Postgraduate Studies and Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research.

## Section 4 - Eligibility to Supervise

(7) All HDR candidates must be supervised by at least one principal Supervisor and one co-Supervisor.

(8) UOW academics cannot supervise unless they are registered as a Supervisor. This register differentiates

academics who can and cannot act as Principal Supervisors. Registration must be renewed every 5 years.

(9) To be eligible to register as a Supervisor, individuals shall:

- a. be research active, as defined by UOW;
- b. have attained a doctoral degree or, in exceptional circumstances, completed research activity that is comparable to this level;
- c. hold a paid or unpaid academic appointment at UOW or at a global campus of this University;
- d. not work full time at one or more other organisations; and
- e. complete the requisite professional development.

(10) Academics cannot register as a Supervisor if the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Sustainable Futures) has revoked the right to supervise because, for example, of breaches to the relevant codes or investigations that indicated the academic had acted inappropriately.

(11) If First Nations academics at UOW do not fulfill these criteria but, according to the Head of Postgraduate Studies or Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research, demonstrate the capacity to guide candidates effectively on projects that are relevant to First Nations peoples, these individuals should be able to act as co-Supervisors.

(12) To be eligible to register as a Principal Supervisor, individuals shall also:

- a. complete the requisite professional development to maintain familiarity with HDR policies, procedures, and practices and to address or manage the challenges that research candidates may experience;
- b. have supervised a HDR candidate at this level, at any university, from commencement to completion or completed an expedited pathway, as defined by UOW.

(13) This expedited pathway may comprise a combination of online modules, workshops, and mentoring. In general, to complete this pathway, academics shall:

- a. have been a member of a HDR supervision panel for two or more years;
- b. have been a member of at least two HDR supervision panels;
- c. have completed at least one day of professional development around supervision;
- d. agree to seek at least four hours of mentoring about supervision during their first year as a Principal Supervisor;
- e. fulfill any other requirements imposed by their faculty or school.

(14) When an academic is obligated, but not eligible, to act as a Principal Supervisor such as when the academic is a [Discovery Early Career Researcher Award \(DECRA\)](#) recipient, the Dean of Graduate Research, in consultation with this academic and Associate Dean, Higher Degree Research (AD HDR), can modify and streamline the expedited pathway. This pathway may be approved even if the academic has not supervised candidates previously provided:

- a. the academic agree to be mentored an hour a month over a year;
- b. the mentor is a co-Supervisor on the panel in which this academic acts as a principal;
- c. the mentor is an experienced Principal Supervisor.

(15) Associates are other valuable members of supervision panels, who may be academics from other institutions, cultural advisors, subject matter experts, academics who are not research active, or industry partners, but are not eligible to register as Supervisors.

## Section 5 - The Role of Supervisors

(16) The responsibility of Supervisors is to offer advice, support, mentoring, and feedback to enhance the research skills, personal qualities, and career opportunities of candidates. The responsibility of all Supervisors is to:

- a. help candidates develop their research questions as well as design, implement, and communicate their approach to resolve these questions effectively and efficiently;
- b. maintain regular contact with the candidate and introduce other practices that enable candidates to work efficiently and to submit their thesis on time;
- c. enable candidates to maintain progress and to fulfill their milestones;
- d. ensure candidates access or purchase the resources they need to complete their research;
- e. deliver constructive feedback, such as feedback on written drafts or proposals, promptly, sensitively, but openly;
- f. help candidates resolve problems around the research and support the wellbeing of these individuals;
- g. facilitate the professional and career development of HDR candidates;
- h. encourage responsible, ethical, and safe research practices.

(17) The additional responsibilities of Principal Supervisors are to:

- a. decide whether to supervise a HDR applicant and to facilitate the admission process, responsibly and collegially, with consideration of supervisor workload and the life circumstances, such as financial support, of the applicant;
- b. comply with the [Commencement of Candidature Form](#) — and thus advise HDR candidates of their rights and responsibilities as well as negotiate how the Supervisors and candidate should collaborate;
- c. with the assistance of candidates and the faculty, assemble the supervision panel and arrange replacements if Supervisors depart;
- d. coordinate the supervision panel and resolve discrepancies among panel members;
- e. reach agreement on authorship and acknowledgements on publications that arise from the research project, prioritising the interests of candidates — in accordance with the Authorship Policy;
- f. monitor carefully and convey sensitively the performance of their candidates relative to the prescribed milestones and expected standards;
- g. regularly meet with candidates to identify possible impediments to progress as well as measures that could address these impediments;
- h. complete the annual progress report and, at other times, report impediments to progress or concerns to the Head of Postgraduate Studies (HPS) or AD HDR;
- i. maintain compliance with all University codes and policies around HDR candidature, including Workplace Health and Safety, Bio-Safety, Research Misconduct, Code of Practice, Human Research Ethics, and Animal Ethics;
- j. advise the Head of Postgraduate Studies of the names and credentials of suitable examiners; and
- k. advise the HDR candidate on when the thesis is ready to be submitted.

## Section 6 - Supervisory appointments

(18) Academics at Level C or below shall not supervise more than 10 HDR candidates — and shall not act as Principal Supervisor for more than 5 of these candidates whilst these candidates are completing their research.

(19) Academics at Level D or above shall not supervise more than 15 HDR candidates — and shall not act as Principal Supervisor for more than 7 of these candidates whilst these candidates are completing their research.

(20) In exceptional circumstances, academics who have established a record of exemplary supervision may negotiate to supervise more candidates if:

- a. this limit to their load would demonstrably impede the progress of HDR candidates;
- b. some of the candidates they supervise are enrolled part-time.

(21) The Head of Postgraduate Studies can endorse or reject the request of an academic staff member to supervise a particular candidate. The Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research, after consultation with the Head of Postgraduate Studies, may reject these endorsements provided they can provide justifications for these decisions to the Supervisor. These decisions shall be guided by:

- a. the teaching, research, and administrative load of staff;
- b. the supervisory performance of these staff;
- c. disciplinary variations around the role of HDR Supervisors; and
- d. other considerations.

(22) The Dean of Graduate Research, usually after consultation with the Head of Postgraduate Studies or Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research, can also reject a proposed supervisory appointment.

(23) To prevent significant conflicts of interest, whether actual, perceived, or potential:

- a. the principal supervisor and at least one co-supervisor should not be the line manager of a candidate who is working at UOW on a continuing basis or a fixed-term contract;
- b. academics should not supervise a candidate with whom they have developed a significant personal, business, or legal relationship.

(24) If any of the Supervisors are likely to leave the university, or are unavailable for more than a month, they should either continue to supervise remotely, organise a suitable replacement, or contact the Head of Postgraduate Studies as soon as practicable.

## **Section 7 - Supervisory Panels**

(25) Before the research proposal review is completed, the Principal Supervisor shall confirm that each candidate is assigned at least one registered Supervisor who has:

- a. developed expertise in the relevant discipline or field of research;
- b. developed expertise in the methodology and methods; and
- c. is likely to be employed at the University during the entire candidature.

(26) Whenever possible, at least one person on the supervision panel, including associates, should be:

- a. an early-career researcher who could benefit from a role in this project;
- b. a potential end-user of the research; or
- c. a person who has developed expertise in the setting or industry in which the research will be conducted, such as a First Nations community or hospital.

(27) Each supervision panel, including associates, shall include at least two paid staff members of the University.

(28) To enable candidates to raise concerns with a Supervisor, Supervisors of the same candidate should not have developed close personal, business, or legal relationships outside the workplace. The Associate Dean, Higher Degree

Research, however, can approve exceptions if these Supervisors:

- a. can demonstrate the necessity of this supervisory arrangement,
- b. can demonstrate how they will manage the risks, such as the imbalance of power.

(29) Soon after commencement and occasionally during the candidature, the supervision panel and candidates should meet to discuss the roles of each member. For instance:

- a. one Supervisor and not necessarily the Principal Supervisor might act as the main contact of candidates,
- b. one Supervisor or associate might act as a subject matter expert on a specific topic, and
- c. one Supervisor or associate might act as an apprentice who is developing their skills in supervision.

(30) During this discussion, these individuals should agree on the relative contribution in time that each Supervisor will dedicate to the project. The Principal Supervisor might not be the main contributor but should assume at least 25% of the supervision responsibilities.

(31) The supervisory load of academics should be included in workload models. This load should depend more on their level of contribution and not on whether these Supervisors are assigned as the Principal Supervisor or Co-Supervisor.

## **Section 8 - Changes in the Supervision Panel Initiated by Candidates**

(32) If candidates feel their relationship with their Supervisor is unproductive, they may seek advice from their Head of Postgraduate Studies on whether and how to change this supervisory arrangement. The Head of Postgraduate Studies may approve this change. The Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research, after consultation with the Head of Postgraduate Studies or candidate, can reject these changes provided this decision is justified to the affected Supervisors.

(33) If HDR candidates who plan to remove a Supervisor from the supervision panel feel unable to communicate this information to this Supervisor, they should convey this decision to their Principal Supervisor, Head of Postgraduate Studies, or Associate Dean, Higher Degree Research who shall then inform the relevant Supervisor of the decision as sensitively as possible.

(34) If HDR candidates are receiving a stipend, and the stipend is attached to a set of conditions such as the conditions of a grant these candidates must fulfill these conditions, even if their supervision panel changes. For example, candidates may not be able to change their topic substantially, otherwise, the stipend may be withdrawn.

(35) If Principal Supervisors are unable to fulfill their responsibilities over an extended period, such as more than two months, they shall:

- a. discuss this arrangement with the candidate as soon as practicable;
- b. delegate this role to an academic who is eligible to be a Principal Supervisor such as a Co-Supervisor in consultation with the Head of Postgraduate Studies;
- c. ensure the Graduate Research School is informed of this arrangement.

(36) If a Principal Supervisor is unable to supervise over an extended period, but has not arranged a replacement, candidates shall contact the Head of Postgraduate Studies to organise another Principal Supervisor. To assist the Head of Postgraduate Studies, candidates should discuss alternatives with other academics, including their supervisors. If a replacement cannot be located promptly, the Head of Postgraduate Studies, Associate Dean, Higher Degree Research, and Dean of Graduate Research are jointly responsible to resolve this shortfall.

(37) In response to a conflict between a candidate and a Supervisor, the candidate may ask this Supervisor how to best resolve this matter. If the matter is not resolved, the candidate should then seek advice from their other Supervisors, and then the Head of Postgraduate Studies, and finally the Associate Dean, Higher Degree Research if necessary. If the matter is relevant to multiple faculties or remains unresolved, candidates may also seek guidance from the Dean of Graduate Research.

(38) If HDR candidates believe their Supervisors, academic unit, or other University portfolios have not fulfilled their responsibilities in accordance with HDR policies or procedures, they should consult the [Higher Degree Research Student Academic Complaints Policy](#).

## Section 9 - Development of Supervisors

(39) The Graduate Research School, Academic Units, and other portfolios shall offer regular workshops and developmental opportunities to enhance the capacity of supervisors to fulfil their supervisory responsibilities. These activities should impart knowledge and skills in how to:

- a. motivate and support diverse candidates, such as deliver supportive feedback;
- b. conduct exemplary research; and
- c. comply with relevant laws, codes, rules, policies, and procedures, including the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and the [Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships](#).

(40) To develop and to implement these activities:

- a. the Graduate Research Committee shall agree on the minimum level of training and development that academics must complete to be eligible to register as a Supervisor Principal Supervisor,
- b. the Graduate Research Committee, in consultation with First Nations staff, shall agree on the minimum level of cultural training and development that academics must complete before they can supervise First Nations candidates,
- c. academic units or line managers of Supervisors may impose other minimum or recommended levels of Supervisor training and development, if approved by the Dean of Graduate Research.

(41) Academic units and Line Managers must evaluate the performance of supervisors, such as the progress, satisfaction, attrition, and output of their candidates as well as address unsatisfactory performance and reward excellent performance.

## Section 10 - Minimum resources

(42) UOW must supply adequate and equitable access to space, facilities, and resources, including labs and equipment, for all HDR candidates. As a minimum, usually within the two weeks of candidature, candidates should be granted access to:

- a. a shared office, a lockable filing cabinet or a comparable provision, and a shelf to store books, papers, and similar objects; full-time candidates shall be assigned sole use of these facilities whereas, if resources are limited, part-time candidates may need to book to share these facilities;
- b. a laboratory space that is furnished with the equipment and facilities that are standard in the corresponding field of research, if applicable to the project;
- c. their office and laboratory after hours;
- d. an e-mail account, internet access on campus, as well as specialist computing facilities and software that are relevant to the project of each candidate such as word processing, spreadsheets, referencing software,

statistical software, and anti-virus software;

- e. reasonable levels of office supplies, printing, and photocopying;
- f. all library services including journal databases, interlibrary loans, and document delivery;
- g. a range of support, counselling, remedial, and professional development opportunities, such as the opportunity to tutor, demonstrate, and mark assignments at the appropriate level of pay; and
- h. representation in relevant forums at school, faculty and University levels.

(43) Candidates shall be consulted and advised before changes in this infrastructure that could affect their research. The Infrastructure and Property Division, in consultation with the academic unit, shall address the feedback and concerns of candidates.

(44) The workspace in which candidates study shall, if possible:

- a. exceed 4 square metres;
- b. be private and, for example, comprise no more than nine other people who can hear the candidate speak on a mobile phone;
- c. be located close to HDR candidates or early career researchers in a relevant research field.

(45) To utilise standard computer software, candidates are encouraged to use their personal devices, such as laptops, unless:

- a. an Academic Unit has decided to supply computers to candidates;
- b. candidates are unable to afford these devices, in which case the university, in consultation with the Student Accessibility and Inclusion Team, may supply a laptop or similar device;
- c. their personal device deviates from the security software and protocols of UOW; or
- e. candidates need to use specialist IT software or hardware that is already available in their lab space.

(46) If candidates need customised support, because of a medical condition or disability for example:

- a. they should seek assistance from the relevant services at UOW around accessibility and inclusion;
- b. they should inform the Head of Postgraduate Studies of this need before they commence;
- c. the University shall introduce reasonable adjustment, consistent with [Disability Policy Students](#).

(47) If HDR candidates are working with a third party, such as an industry partner, this third party could offer the minimum resources in lieu of the University. In these instances:

- a. the resources that HDR candidates can access must be documented; and
- b. the Academic unit must approve these arrangements.

(48) Whenever possible, candidates shall be granted the right to purchase a parking permit if, to complete their research, they need to park on campus because, for example:

- a. they regularly need to transport heavy equipment or resources;
- b. they need to conduct research activities on campus both before 4 pm and after 6 pm on the same day;
- c. they need to leave and to return to campus regularly on the same day.

(49) Candidates who are studying by distance should be granted access to the same minimum resources as other candidates — except when these resources cannot be delivered electronically.

(50) The Supervisors, Head of Postgraduate Studies, and Associate Dean, Higher Degree Research assume the

responsibility to confirm that HDR candidates receive the resources they need to complete their research.

## Section 11 - Concerns about Supervision or Support

(51) If concerns have been raised about a Supervisor, the Head of School, Head of Postgraduate Studies, or Associate Dean - Higher Degree Research may, depending on the level of severity and evidence, recommend to the Executive Dean that:

- a. the registration of this supervisor be revoked, either permanently or transiently;
- b. the Supervisor complete relevant developmental activities to redress these concerns;
- c. in exceptional circumstances, a cohort of Supervisors, such as all the Supervisors in one school, complete relevant developmental activities a provision that is useful if the Executive Dean, for some reason, does not want to target one Supervisor;
- d. the role of this Supervisor be restricted.

(52) The relevant Executive Dean can endorse, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Sustainable Futures), in consultation with the People and Culture Division and General Counsel, may approve this decision.

(53) These recommendations may be implemented in response to:

- a. breaches of the relevant codes, such as the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) or the [Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships](#);
- b. an investigation that indicated the Supervisor had acted inappropriately;
- c. a failure to complete the minimum level of developmental activities or comply with the [Commencement of Candidature Form](#); and
- d. consistent patterns of behaviour that are likely to impair the wellbeing or productivity of HDR candidates — provided these patterns of behaviour are confirmed by multiple candidates or staff, either during formal investigations or from informal, confidential, or even anonymous sources.

## Section 12 - Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Academic Unit	Academic units that manage HDR candidates are the UOW Schools and AIIM
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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<b>Effective Date</b>	6th May 2024
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<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Eileen McLaughlin Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research and Sustainable Futures)
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Simon Moss Dean of Graduate Research
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Graduate Research School