

Higher Degree Research Policy

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Description	This policy prescribes the general requirements for the award of Higher Degree by Research qualifications.

Related documents

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

[Institutional Framework for Promoting Academic Integrity among Students](#)

[Academic Misconduct Policy - Higher Degree Research Candidates](#)

[Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[Higher Doctorates by Publication Policy](#)

[Fees and Charges Policy](#)

[Postgraduate Qualifications \(AQF Level 8 & 9\) Policy](#)

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1. SCOPE

This policy prescribes the requirements for the award of Higher Degree Research (HDR) qualifications¹. The Doctoral Degree and Masters Degree (Research) are HDR qualifications.

- 1.1 The purpose of the Doctoral Degree is to qualify individuals who apply a substantial body of knowledge to research, investigate and develop new knowledge, in one or more fields of investigation, scholarship or professional practice.

This policy prescribes the general conditions for the award of a Doctoral Degree qualification. Doctoral Degree qualifications are located at Level 10 of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and are classified as HDR. Doctoral Degree qualifications include the:

- Doctoral Degree (Research) typically referred to as the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), and
- Doctoral Degree (Professional) typically referred to as the Professional Doctorate.

- 1.2 The purpose of the Masters Degree (Research) is to qualify individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research and scholarship and as a pathway for further learning.

This policy prescribes the general conditions for the award of a Masters Degree (Research) qualification. Masters Degree (Research) qualifications are located at Level 9 of the AQF and are classified as HDR. Masters Degree (Research) qualifications include the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Degree.

- 1.3 This policy adheres to the AQF specification for the qualification types and is guided by the Australian Council of Graduate Research *Graduate Research Good Practice Principles*.

Elaboration of this policy is available on the *Higher Degrees Research Website*. Where there is an inconsistency between the policy and the website, the policy applies.

2. DEFINITIONS

AQF qualification is a completed University accredited program of learning that leads to formal certification that a graduate has achieved the learning outcomes as described in the AQF.

Components of a qualification refer to units of academic work or courses, the completion of which leads to an AQF qualification.

Coursework is a method of teaching and learning that leads to the acquisition of skills and knowledge that does not include a major research component. For the purpose of this policy, the inclusion of coursework in a program is also referred to as the *Coursework Component* or *Structured Learning*.

Discipline refers to a defined branch of study or learning consistent with the field of education classification in the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED). The ASCED includes 12 broad fields of education with each classification further divided into narrow and detailed fields of education. Some discipline qualifications are designed to deepen knowledge, skills and application and different discipline qualifications are designed to broaden knowledge, skills and application through further learning.

Domestic candidates refer to students who are an Australian citizen; or an Australian permanent resident or holder of an Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa; or a New Zealand citizen.

Elements include Schools, Departments, Research Centres, Colleges, Institutes, other budget elements in which students are enrolled, as well as central administration and support units.

Field of study refers to the main focus of work activities and/or a learning program. Refer also to Discipline.

Full-time equivalent (FTE) refers to the duration of candidature expressed as full-time equivalent where a student undertakes part-time study.

¹ This policy excludes the PhD by Prior Publication program which is a Higher Doctorate; refer to the *Higher Doctorates by Publication Policy*.

Higher Degree by Research (HDR) refers to a Research Masters or Research Doctorate where a;

- Research Masters means a Level 9 qualification as described in the AQF and where a minimum of two-thirds of the program of learning is for research, research training and independent study;
- Research Doctorate means a Level 10 qualification as described in the AQF and where a minimum of two years of the program of learning, and typically two-thirds of the qualification, is research.

International candidates refer to students who are **not** an Australian citizen; or an Australian permanent resident or holder of an Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa; or a New Zealand citizen.

Learning outcomes are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

New Program Proposal – the curriculum design document, including program outcomes, program structure, program requirements, course descriptions, learning and teaching approach, assessment regime, prerequisites, entry levels and pathways; for approval of a new program by Programs Committee.

Program Requirements refers to the curriculum and other program requirements specified in the *New Program Proposal* that can be viewed via the Programs and Courses website.

Research comprises systematic experimental and theoretical work, application and/or development that results in an increase in the dimensions of knowledge, culminating in a thesis, dissertation, exegesis or equivalent that is formally examined. The term **research** includes original, exploratory, experimental, applied, clinically or work-based and other forms of creative work undertaken systematically to increase knowledge and understanding, deploying a range of research principles and methodologies. Research is specified in the AQF learning outcomes for the Masters Degree (Research) and Doctoral Degree. The inclusion of research in a program is also referred to as the *Research Component* or *Research Outcome*.

Research Training Program is funded by the Commonwealth Government through the provision of block grants on a calendar year basis to Higher Education Providers (HEPs) to support the research training of domestic and international HDR candidates. The allocation and management of RTP funding is in accordance with the *Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017*. It is at the discretion of the University to determine how many scholarships it will support, the HDR programs that will receive support and the process by which this support is managed. Support provided may include fee offsets, stipends and allowances to assist HDR candidates with ancillary cost of a HDR program.

Schedule of Responsibilities and Authorisation for Research Training Matters (the 'Schedule') details the responsible authorities for approving or recommending on matters relating to HDR admission, candidature, examination & scholarship. The Schedule also details the approving authorities who may delegate either some or all of their responsibilities. Where there is an inconsistency between the Higher Degree Research Policy and the Schedule, the Policy applies.

3. PROGRAM AND AWARD TITLES

The AQF level and qualification type is indicated in the title (program and award title) by the following nomenclature. While it is common to list the qualification title before the field of study/discipline, the reverse order may be used (e.g. Juris Doctor [JD]). Masters (Research) program titles may include the term 'research'.

Higher Education Awards		
AQF Level and Qualification Type	Qualification Title	Abbreviation
10 Doctoral Degree	Doctor of Philosophy	PhD
10 Doctoral Degree	Doctor of (field of study)	D
9 Masters Degree (Research)	Master of Philosophy	MPhil

9 Masters Degree (Research)	Master of (field of study)	M
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4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 4.1 This policy provides guidance to assure the programs as approved by Academic Committee are consistent with candidates acquiring the AQF learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and application of knowledge and skills) as set out in the criteria and descriptors for AQF Level 10 Doctoral Degrees and AQF Level 9 Masters Degree (Research).
- 4.2 The University has also defined the characteristics that it seeks to engender in its graduates through its HDR programs. These characteristics are specified in the *Higher Degree Research Graduate Attributes Policy*.

5. PROGRAM LENGTH

- 5.1 The length of a HDR program shall be approved by Programs Committee, on the recommendation of the Board of Graduate Research. Programs Committee will give due regard to the aims of the program, the characteristics of the candidates who shall enter the program, and where applicable, professional accreditation requirements and, the length of similar programs in other institutions. The length of the program is also determined by the AQF volume of learning required. The typical program lengths are set out below. These durations are separate from the periods for which a HDR scholarship might be held, or the time for which a candidate's tuition fees may be offset through the Research Training Program. The minimum and maximum duration for each program of study are detailed in [section 8.7 Minimum and Maximum Duration of Candidature](#).

AQF Level and Qualification Type	Volume of Learning
10 Doctoral Degree	Typically 3-4 years (240-320 CP)
9 Masters Degree (Research)	Typically 1-2 years (80-160 CP)

6. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Program Content

In accrediting a HDR qualification, the Programs Committee, on the recommendation of the Board of Graduate Research establishes the award and the requirements that need to be attained for the conferral of the award. The requirements normally include one or more of the following:

- coursework component ([refer section 2, Definitions](#))
- research component. ([refer section 2, Definitions](#))

A Doctoral Degree must comprise two-years or more research, consisting of a research component. Masters Degrees (Research) must comprise two thirds or more research, consisting of a combination of a research component, research training, and independent study. The research component may comprise one or more research projects culminating in a thesis or other research output, however the research component must include a research project on a single coherent topic that constitutes at least half of the academic work required for the degree. The research requirements for Doctoral and Masters Degrees (Research) are detailed below.

6.2 Doctor of Philosophy

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is awarded on the basis of a program of independent supervised study that produces significant and original research outcomes culminating in a thesis, dissertation, exegesis or equivalent for independent examination by at least two external expert examiners of international standing.

Research is the defining characteristic of the PhD and as such comprises a research component only, with the exception of the discipline specific PhD programs in Psychology. PhD candidates, under supervision, are responsible for developing and carrying out a prescribed program of research for the specified period of the program (refer [section 8.7 Minimum and Maximum Duration of Candidature](#)).

In some instances, a candidate may be required to complete discipline-specific skills training and/or a coursework component in addition to the research component in order to enhance the candidate's research related skills and knowledge. Inclusion of specific skills training and/or a coursework component in the PhD program will be approved by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School (at the point of admission), on the recommendation of the Dean (Research) and must be completed to the satisfaction of the Dean, (Research).

In cases where a PhD program contains a specified coursework component applicable to all candidates (i.e. discipline specific PhD programs in Psychology), the particular structure of the degree will require approval from Programs Committee. In such cases the research component of the program will be of at least two years duration and must comprise two-thirds or more of the qualification. Successful completion of all components will be required for the award of the degree.

6.3 Professional Doctorate

The Professional Doctorate degree is awarded for an integrated program of structured learning and independent supervised study that produces significant and original research outcomes in the context of professional practice, culminating in a thesis, dissertation, exegesis or equivalent for independent examination by at least two external expert examiners of international standing.

Research is the defining characteristic of the Professional Doctorate and is oriented to the improvement of professional practice. The Professional Doctorate is comprised of both a research component and a coursework component. Candidates, under supervision, are responsible for developing and carrying out a prescribed program of research for the specified period of the program (refer [section 8.7 Minimum and Maximum Duration of Candidature](#)).

The coursework component will include advanced coursework designed to enhance the candidate's capacity to make a significant contribution to original knowledge in the discipline (or cross-disciplinary field) and/or research integrated practice developed in collaboration with a relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body.

The content and structure of the program will be chosen with due regard to the objectives of the program, the characteristics of potential candidates, professional and industry needs. The coursework and the research component of the program should be integrated and complementary. The program requirements will be set out in the New Program Proposal including any special admission requirements and the level of assessment performance required for the coursework component. The research component of the program will be of at least two years duration.

The structure of the program must be designed such that candidates will be required to work with, and be assessed by, a number of different academic staff. The requirements for submission and examination of the assessable material including the opportunity for revision or re-submission will be specified in the New Program Proposal where this is not in accordance with [section 9 Examination](#). Successful completion of all components will be required for the award of the degree.

6.4 Masters Degrees (Research)

The Masters Degree (Research) is awarded for an integrated program of structured learning and independent supervised study that produces a substantial piece of research in the form of a thesis, dissertation, exegesis or equivalent for independent examination by at least two

expert examiners, at least one of whom is external to the University and of international standing.

Candidates, under supervision, are responsible for developing and carrying out a prescribed program of research for the specified period of the program (refer [section 8.7 Minimum and Maximum Duration of Candidature](#)).

The content and structure of the program will be chosen with due regard to the objectives of the program. The coursework and the research component of the program should be integrated and complementary. The program requirements will be set out in the New Program Proposal including any special admission requirements and the level of assessment performance required for the coursework component. At least two-thirds of the program will be devoted to research, research training and independent study.

The structure of the program must be designed such that candidates will be required to work with, and be assessed by, a number of different academic staff. The requirements for submission and examination of the assessable material including the opportunity for revision or re-submission will be specified in the New Program Proposal where this is not in accordance with [section 9 Examination](#). Successful completion of all components will be required for the award of the degree.

Refer also to the *Postgraduate Qualifications (AQF Level 8 & 9) Policy* for Masters Degree (Research) program requirements.

6.4.1 Master of Philosophy

The degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) is awarded on the basis of a program of independent supervised study that produces a substantial piece of research in the form of a thesis, dissertation, exegesis or equivalent for independent examination by at least two external expert examiners of international standing.

The MPhil is distinguished from other Masters Degrees (Research) by its program structure which is comprised of a research component only. MPhil candidates, under supervision, are responsible for developing and carrying out a prescribed program of research for the specified period of the program (refer [section 8.7 Minimum and Maximum Duration of Candidature](#)).

In some instances, a candidate may be required to complete discipline-specific skills training in addition to the research component in order to enhance the candidate's research related skills and knowledge. Inclusion of specific skills training in the MPhil program will be approved by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School (at the point of admission), on the recommendation of the Dean (Research) and must be completed to the satisfaction of the Dean (Research).

7. ADMISSION

7.1 Principles

7.1.1 The HDR admission requirements and practices are designed to put into effect the following principles:

- Admission offers are made to applicants who are judged to have the background and abilities to have a reasonable expectation of success in the program to which they are made an offer and who are likely to benefit from higher degree research study.
- Admission offers are made broadly on merit and based on demonstrated achievement, especially academic achievement, but may also take account of other factors such as demonstrated commitment and specific achievements related to particular fields of endeavour.
- In its admissions, the University seeks to engage with and serve its communities, including the residents of the region in which the University is located.
- The University may also seek to achieve strategic objectives through its admissions.

7.2 Qualifications for Candidature

7.2.1 Doctoral Degree

An applicant for admission as a Doctoral candidate will hold:

- a bachelor degree with class I honours or class IIA honours (AQF Level 8) or a masters degree (AQF Level 9), incorporating a significant research component of a standard comparable to a bachelor degree with class IIA honours, from an Australian higher education institution or a qualification recognised as comparable by the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR); or
- a record of research, or a qualification granted by a professional or other body deemed by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School to be of a standard comparable to a bachelor degree with class IIA honours. Refer to [section 7.2.8 Establishing Equivalence](#).

A grade of 6 on a 7-point scale for the research component and an overall GPA of 5.5 on a 7-point scale for a Masters (or equivalent) program is required for the standard to be deemed comparable to a bachelor degree with class IIA honours. Where the research component is ungraded an applicant's performance will need to be demonstrated by the reports of the thesis examiners in order to be deemed comparable to a grade of 6 by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School. If examiners' reports are not available a copy of the thesis may be examined in accordance with the honours examination criteria appropriate to the discipline. Examiners' reports from this process will be accepted for the purpose of determining admission. To determine equivalency to a bachelor degree with class I honours, refer to the *Higher Degree Research Scholarship Policy*.

7.2.2 Masters Degree (Research)

An applicant for admission as a Masters Degree (Research) candidate will hold:

- a bachelor degree with at least class IIB honours (AQF Level 8) incorporating a significant research component, from an Australian higher education institution or a qualification recognised as equivalent by the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR); or
- a record of research, or a qualification granted by a professional or other body deemed by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School to be of a standard comparable to a bachelor degree with class IIB honours. Refer to [section 7.2.8 Establishing Equivalence](#).

A grade of 5 on a 7-point scale for the research component and an overall GPA of 5 on a 7-point scale for a program is required for the standard to be deemed comparable to a bachelor degree with class IIB honours. Where the research component is ungraded an applicant's performance will need to be demonstrated by the reports of the thesis examiners in order to be deemed comparable to a grade of 5 by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School. If examiners reports are not available a copy of the thesis may be examined in accordance with the honours examination criteria appropriate to the discipline. Examiners' reports from this process will be accepted for the purpose of determining admission.

Variations to the qualifications required for entry to a Masters Degree (Research) program as detailed above may be approved by Academic Committee based on the aims of the program and will be specified in the program requirements. Refer also to Admission Criteria in section 11.2 of the *Postgraduate Qualifications (AQF Level 8 & 9) Policy*.

For the purpose of this policy, the phrase 'significant research component' referred to in [section 7.2.1 Doctoral Degree](#) and [section 7.2.2 Masters Degree \(Research\)](#) is a research component of at least 40 Credit Points (CP). The research component may include a research methodology course equivalent to 10CP. As a guide, 40CP of research equates to at least one full-time equivalent semester of research. The research must have resulted in the completion of a major piece of supervised but essentially independent research and writing that has been formally examined. The research component may include a comparable project based on or manifested in rigorous theoretical, creative, empirical, and/or design enquiry that included completion of an exegesis.

It is expected that the applicant's prior learning will be in the same discipline as the proposed research topic. Where prior learning is in a different discipline to the research topic, additional information may be required to determine the suitability of the applicant to undertake the program.

It is expected that the applicant's prior learning will have occurred within the last ten years. Where an applicant's prior learning was not completed within this period additional information may be required to determine the suitability of the applicant to undertake the program

An approved minimum period of professional practice may be required where specified in the program requirements.

Other criteria may be developed according to the field of study for the program where specified in the program requirements (e.g., portfolios, auditions, interviews, eligibility for registration etc.).

7.2.3 Establishing Equivalence

Where an applicant does not hold a Bachelor Honours or Masters degree as defined in [section 7.2.1 Doctoral Degree](#) and [section 7.2.2 Masters Degree \(Research\)](#) a case will need to be documented that equates the applicant's qualification(s) and relevant research experience and/or research outputs to be of a comparable standard. Applicants seeking admission on this basis will need to demonstrate to the University learning and skills that are equivalent to an Australian Bachelor Honours Degree as per the AQF specifications. The AQF Learning Outcomes include:

- cognitive skills to review, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge to identify and provide solutions to complex problems with intellectual independence;
- cognitive and technical skills to demonstrate a broad understanding of a body of knowledge and theoretical concepts with advanced understanding in some areas;
- cognitive skills to exercise critical thinking and judgement in developing new understanding;
- technical skills to design and use research in a project;
- communication skills to present a clear and coherent exposition of knowledge and ideas to a variety of audiences.

Equivalence may be based on the following:

- Where the argument is based on a qualification other than Bachelor Honours or Masters as defined in [section 7.2.1 Doctoral Degree](#) and [section 7.2.2 Masters Degree \(Research\)](#), the case for equivalency should be based on documented information about the structure and research content of the program and the applicant's performance in the coursework and research component of the program. If an applicant holds a Bachelor Honours degree in a professional area (for example, law, medicine or engineering) that does not contain an adequate amount of research, further justification should be provided where the applicant intends to pursue a program of study in the same discipline in which the Honours degree was awarded. Applicants seeking admission on this basis will need to demonstrate to the University learning and skills that are of a comparable standard, with reference to the AQF specifications above. If the applicant holds an incomplete higher degree by research, a case for equivalency will not be accepted on the basis of incomplete higher degree research candidature alone.
- Where the argument is based in part on research experience and/or demonstrated leadership in a profession or industry, documentary evidence on the applicant's Curriculum Vitae of relevant research experience should be provided and the case for equivalency should clearly outline how this experience is of a comparable standard. The case and supporting evidence should detail:
 - a) the type of research activity;
 - b) the level and quality of the work;
 - c) the duration (to be included as evidence, research experience must have been sustained over a period of six months or more);
 - d) the recency of relevant work; and
 - e) evidence of how the learning and skills demonstrated through the activity or work undertaken are of a comparable standard, with reference to the AQF specifications above.

- Where the argument is based in part on publications or other research outputs, comprehensive evidence of the publications/research outputs should be provided. The outputs must meet the standards as specified in the table below. It is expected that the outputs meet the Australian Government's definition of research² and be relevant to the proposed area of study. Applicants must clarify their individual contributions for any jointly-authored outputs evidenced in support of an application by including written authorship statement for the output. The age of an output will be taken into account in the assessment of its contribution towards a case for equivalence. Value will be placed on the recency and relevancy of the output to the proposed field of research. A publication must be accepted by the journal/publisher prior to the point of application in order to be considered as evidence.

Publication/Research Output	Standard Required
Journal article - The applicant's contribution to the publication will be taken into account when determining the value of the publication towards a case for equivalence to a Bachelor Honours Degree. The value of the contribution is to be determined by discipline specific practices e.g. first author of one, or second author of two refereed publications.	Meets the ERA Submission Guidelines definition of research ² , is published in a scholarly journal of international standard, is peer reviewed and has an ISSN (International Standard Serial Number). Confirmation that the journal is 'Refereed' on the Ulrich's database, or a similar register is required as evidence of peer review.
Conference paper - The applicant's contribution to the publication will be taken into account when determining the value of the publication towards a case for equivalence to a Bachelor Honours Degree with Class I. The value of the contribution is to be determined by discipline specific practices e.g. first author of one, or second author of two refereed conference papers.	Meets the ERA Submission Guidelines definition of research ² , be published in full (e.g. in the conference proceedings), be peer reviewed, and be presented at conferences, workshops or seminars of national or international significance available to the wider audience. Proof of peer review can be in the form of a statement in proceedings that full papers are refereed, or a statement from the conference organiser/editor.
Book or book chapter – Must be written by a single author or by joint authors who share responsibility for the whole book.	Meets the ERA Submission Guidelines definition of research ² , be a work of scholarship, has an ISBN (International Standard Book Number), and be peer reviewed.
Creative work or performance	Meets the ERA Submission Guidelines definition of research ² and has been published or made publicly available. A research statement that identifies the research component of the creative work is to be included, detailing the research background, contribution and significance.
Research Grant	Competitive external grant where applicant is first-named or can demonstrate significant role in grant application development.

² As set out in the [Excellence in Research for Australia \(ERA\) Submission Guidelines](http://www.arc.gov.au/sites/default/files/filedepot/Public/ERA/ERA%202015/ERA_2015_Submission_Guidelines.pdf), research is defined as 'the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.' ERA 2015 Submission Guidelines can be accessed at: http://www.arc.gov.au/sites/default/files/filedepot/Public/ERA/ERA%202015/ERA_2015_Submission_Guidelines.pdf

7.3 Requirements for Candidature

In addition to the academic qualifications required for candidature as detailed in [section 7.2 Qualifications for Candidature](#), the following criteria need to be satisfied for admission:

- the proposed topic is appropriate for higher degree research and consonant with the academic aims and objectives of the Element to which admission is sought. Where the proposed program of work involves more than one Element, one will be designated as the host Element, which will normally be the Element of the principal supervisor;
- the Element is able to provide the necessary research place, supervision, resources and facilities; and there is an appropriate fit between the applicant, research environment, available resources and supervision;
- the provision of educational services consequent upon approval of the application for candidature will not expose the University to a risk of contravening any applicable law, including any international embargoes, sanctions or controls which regulate the University's operations from time to time; and
- the proposed program of work can be completed within the maximum period of candidature for the degree.
- Candidates are required to have on-campus enrolment. An applicant wishing to pursue a HDR program as a remote candidate will require the approval of the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School, on the recommendation of the Dean (Research) and Head of Element or delegate. Remote candidature may only be approved where the candidate:
 - has a high likelihood of success as evidenced by qualifications and research experience;
 - has a well-defined commitment to participate in the research culture of the University;
 - has adequate supervision, including the provision of local supervision; and
 - is able to attend the University for an agreed minimum period, including on campus completion of the Griffith Graduate Research School's Higher Degree Research Orientation Program (refer to [section 8.4 Induction and Training](#)), the Confirmation of Candidature Milestone (refer to [section 8.16.3 Confirmation of Candidature and Supervision Arrangements](#)), and the Thesis and Candidature Review Milestone (refer to [section 8.16.5 Thesis and Candidature Review Milestone](#)).

7.4 Supervision

The Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School will, after consultation with the Dean (Research) and Head of Element or delegate, appoint not fewer than two staff members as supervisors, at least one of whom will be designated principal supervisor. Others will be designated associate supervisors. Additional supervisors may also be appointed from within or outside the University. Requirements for the appointment of supervisors are specified on the Higher Degree Research website as well as the *Higher Degree Research Supervisor Accreditation Policy*.

Responsibilities of supervisors are specified in the *Code of Practice for the Supervision of Higher Degree Research Candidates*. All reasonable endeavours will be taken to ensure that appropriate supervision is maintained throughout the period of candidature. The Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may at any time appoint another person as supervisor where absence, illness or other circumstances prevent the supervisor continuing in that role.

If for any reason after candidature has been confirmed, the University is unable to provide suitable supervision arrangements, the candidate may be granted special leave of absence of up to twelve months. During this time, the University, in consultation with the candidate, will attempt to make arrangements to continue the candidature either at the University or at another institution.

7.5 English Language Requirements

International applicants are required to meet the following prescribed minimum English language proficiency (ELP):

- an overall band score of 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with no band score less than 6.0; or

- a minimum score of 575 on the Paper-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) including a score of no less than 5.0 on the Test of Written English (TWE); or
- a score of 79 on the Internet-based (IBT) TOEFL with no sub-score less than 19; or
- a score of no less than 3+ in each skill of the International Second Language Proficiency Rating (ISLPR); or
- a minimum grade of C on the Cambridge Certificate in Advanced English (CAE); or
- a minimum grade of C on the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE); or
- a minimum score of 58 in Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic), with a minimum of 50 in all Communicative Skills.

The test should not be more than two years old at the time of application. Further, ISLPR tests will only be accepted if conducted by ISLPR Language Services. While the test scores required by the University are the minimum for most disciplinary areas, some elements may require higher levels of proficiency.

An applicant may be exempted from the requirement to provide an ELP test score if the applicant's tertiary level studies were completed within the specified timeframe and in one of the countries listed in *Schedule A: English Language Qualifications Accepted by Griffith University for Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Higher Degree Research Admission*.

An applicant may also be exempted from the requirement to provide an ELP test score if the applicant has completed at least two years full-time work experience in an English speaking professional work environment, or has successfully completed the Griffith English Language Institute (GELI) Direct Entry Program (DEP), in accordance with the requirements as specified in *Schedule A: English Language Qualifications Accepted by Griffith University for Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Higher Degree Research Admission*.

7.6 Recognition of Prior Learning

7.6.1 Prior Higher Degree Research

Prior higher degree research undertaken at this or another recognised institution may be recognised towards the HDR program provided that it has not been recognised for another award and has been completed at the same level. Whilst prior research may be recognised towards the research component of the HDR program, candidates will be expected to complete any coursework requirement relevant to the degree as specified in the program requirements, unless credit has been granted (refer [section 7.6.2 Credit for Coursework](#)).

7.6.1.1 Domestic Candidates

Periods of study towards the research degree within three years prior to commencement in the HDR program will be deducted from both the period of the Research Training Program (RTP) Domestic Fee Offset support and the minimum and maximum thesis submission dates for candidates seeking recognition of this prior research study. Normally candidates will only be approved to transfer from another institution where they have sufficient RTP Domestic Fee Offset tenure remaining to allow a minimum of one year full-time equivalent enrolment at the University.

If more than three years has passed since the previous enrolment recognition of prior higher degree research may be approved at the discretion of the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School. Normally if more than three years has passed, recognition of prior higher degree research will not exceed one-year equivalent full-time work for doctoral programs, or six months equivalent full-time work for Masters Degree (Research) programs. Recognition will not result in a reduction in the minimum and maximum submission dates, except with the permission of the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School.

7.6.1.2 International Candidates

Recognition of prior higher degree research may be approved at the discretion of the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School. Recognition will not result in a reduction in the minimum and maximum submission dates, except with the permission of the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School. Normally, candidates will only be approved

to transfer from another institution where they are able to complete a minimum of 1 year equivalent full-time enrolment at the University.

7.6.2 Credit for Coursework

Credit for coursework may be granted toward the coursework component of higher degree research programs on the basis of study previously completed. The inclusion of a coursework component in a Doctorate or Masters Degree (Research) program, and provision for award of credit, will be specified in the program requirements. Credit may not be granted toward any dissertation or research component (refer to [section 7.6.1 Prior Higher Degree Research](#) above for recognition of prior higher degree research).

For Doctorate programs, credit may be granted for prior doctoral level coursework. The maximum amount of credit that may be granted towards a Doctorate program will not exceed one-year full-time or equivalent (80CP).

For Masters (Research) programs, refer to section 14 of the *Postgraduate Qualifications (AQF 8 & 9) Policy* for credit requirements and amounts.

A candidate can apply for credit at the point of admission. Applications for credit are to be made via the *Credit for prior learning application* form.

Candidates should consult with their HDR Convenor, Program Director, or Course Convenor for further information.

Coursework undertaken in HDR programs within the University which formally allow for a conversion to another HDR program (as per [section 8.10 Changes to Candidature Status](#)) may be counted towards satisfying the coursework requirements of the program to which the candidate has transferred. The amount of credit that may be granted for a program as advised above shall not apply and an application for credit does not need to be lodged.

Refer also to the *Credit for Prior Learning Policy*.

7.7 Admission and Readmission Procedures

An intending applicant must complete and submit an approved application for admission. At the time an application for admission is submitted, applicants are required to complete a declaration which includes a statement that all information provided for the purpose of admission to the University is true and correct.

Admission offers may be withdrawn if it is determined that such offers were made on the basis of inaccurate, incomplete, fraudulent, or misleading information supplied by the applicant or a certifying authority, or where an applicant is excluded from any tertiary institution or tertiary program, and has not so advised the University, at any time up to the commencement of the program to which admission is sought. In the circumstance of supplying inaccurate, incomplete or misleading information the person shall not be eligible to apply for admission to the University for a period of two years and in the circumstance that fraudulent information was supplied, the person is ineligible to apply for admission to the University.

Applicants who have previously withdrawn from a HDR program at this institution will need to seek readmission to their program. Applicants will be subject to the admission policies applicable at the time readmission is requested and may be required to resubmit a research proposal and seek appropriate supervision.

Applicants who have previously been withdrawn due to termination of candidature as per [section 8.18 Termination of Candidature](#) may apply for readmission provided that at least one year has elapsed since the date of withdrawal. Where candidature was terminated (i.e. candidate excluded from the program or University) as a result of academic misconduct or other disciplinary grounds, the period of exclusion from applying for readmission will be in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy – Higher Degree Research Students* or the *Student Administration Policy*.

Applicants who have previously been enrolled as a HDR candidate at this or another university who have failed the examination for the degree normally will not be admitted as a candidate.

Deans (Research), after consultation with relevant Heads of Element and the Program Director (where applicable) are responsible for making a recommendation for admission to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School.

7.8 Admission Offers

Following approval of an application for admission an offer letter will be issued that is valid for six months. An offer will automatically lapse if the applicant has not enrolled within six months or sought an extension to the commencement date.

Admission offers are made for the following types of places:

7.8.1 Domestic Candidate Places

Research Training Program (RTP) support is provided for those HDR programs the University determines on the basis of advice from the Board of Graduate Research will receive RTP support. Domestic candidates (refer [section 2 Definitions](#)) who are offered a place in an RTP-supported HDR program at Griffith University will be provided with an RTP Domestic Fee Offset place, as per the University's *Research Training Program (RTP) Domestic Fee Offset Guidelines*. This tuition fee offset funded through the Commonwealth Government will be supplemented by support from Griffith University in order to extinguish liability of the HDR candidate to pay tuition fees during the tenure of the RTP Domestic Fee Offset place. The maximum period of tenure is up to four years full-time equivalent for a Doctoral degree and two years full-time equivalent for a Masters Degree (Research) calculated from the date of commencement.

Domestic candidates enrolled in programs that the University determines will not receive RTP support are required to pay tuition fees as specified in the *Fees and Charges Policy*.

7.8.2 International Candidate Places

International candidates are required to pay tuition fees as specified in the *Fees and Charges Policy*.

7.9 Review and Appeal

Applicants for admission to a HDR program who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their application for admission may request a review of the decision in accordance with the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* and *Student Review and Appeals Procedures*.

8. CANDIDATURE MANAGEMENT AND REQUIREMENTS

Program requirements that vary from section 8 Candidature Management and Requirements will be specified in the New Program Proposal. Candidates enrolled in the coursework component of a Doctoral or Masters Degree (Research) program may need to seek approval from the Program Director and/or Course Convenor in addition to the approval requirements as detailed below. Candidates in receipt of a scholarship should also refer to their scholarship conditions of award. Responsibilities for approving or recommending on all matters relating to HDR candidature are detailed in the *Schedule of Responsibilities and Authorisation for Research Training Matters*. The Schedule also details the approving authorities who may delegate either some or all of their responsibilities. Where there is an inconsistency between the Policy and the Schedule, the Policy applies.

8.1 Standard of Academic Conduct

Candidates are expected to conduct all research in accordance with the *Griffith University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and to undertake their program in accordance with accepted standards of academic conduct. It is expected that candidates will undertake learning and research with integrity by acting in an honest and truthful way, demonstrating respect for others work, being responsible for their actions and showing fairness in every part of their academic work. A breach of integrity in a coursework component will be dealt with under the *Institutional Framework for Promoting Academic Integrity among Students* and the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* and a breach in the research component will be dealt with under the *Academic Misconduct Policy - Higher Degree Research Students*.

8.2 Ethical Issues

A candidate may not commence any research work that involves humans or animals unless an appropriate ethical clearance has been obtained from the relevant University ethical review body. Failure to obtain or maintain appropriate clearance may constitute research misconduct and/or academic misconduct, refer to [section 8.1 Standard of Academic Conduct](#).

8.3 Intellectual Property

Candidates will have ownership of intellectual property directly related to their research project, unless other arrangements have been mutually agreed in advance by the candidate and the University. (Refer to the University's *Intellectual Property Policy*.)

8.4 Induction and Training

Candidates are required to complete the Griffith Graduate Research School's Higher Degree Research Orientation Program within the first six months of candidature.

8.5 Publishing

Doctoral candidates who commenced their candidature from 2011 are expected to have at least one peer reviewed output accepted for publication during candidature. The output must be produced under supervision and during the period of candidature. The publication requirements, including exceptions for creative works, are detailed on the *HDR website*.

8.6 Employment

Full-time HDR candidates should consult with their principal supervisor in regard to the decision to undertake paid employment while in the HDR program. Decisions as to the undertaking of paid employment will be on the proviso that the activity does not impede progress within the HDR program. When the candidature is full-time, it is expected that no more than 15 hours per week during normal working hours (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday) will be spent undertaking paid employment. International candidates must comply with the conditions of their student visa with regard to paid employment.

The limit on paid employment will normally be different to that set out in the paragraph above for candidates in receipt of a stipend scholarship to undertake the HDR program. Such candidates will primarily be subject to the paid employment requirements set out in the conditions of award for that scholarship.

8.7 Minimum and Maximum Duration of Candidature

8.7.1 Doctorate

- The expected completion period is within three to four years for full-time Doctoral candidature and six to eight years for part-time Doctoral candidature.
- The minimum and maximum duration of full-time PhD candidature will be two years and four years respectively. The minimum and maximum duration of full-time Professional Doctorate candidature will be according to the program requirements.
- The minimum and maximum duration of part-time PhD candidature will be three years and eight years respectively. The minimum and maximum duration of part-time Professional Doctorate candidature will be according to the program requirements.

8.7.2 Masters Degree (Research)

- The minimum and maximum duration of full-time MPhil candidature will be one year and two years respectively. The minimum and maximum duration of all other full-time Masters Degree (Research) candidature will be according to the program requirements published on the Programs and Courses website and in accordance with the *Student Administration Policy*.
- The minimum and maximum duration of part-time MPhil candidature will be two years and four years respectively. The minimum and maximum duration of all other part-time Masters Degree (Research) candidature will be according to the program requirements published on the Programs and Courses website and in accordance with the *Student Administration Policy*.

8.7.3 Doctorate/Masters Degree (Research)

- The minimum and maximum duration of candidature may be adjusted for those candidates who have enrolled in but not completed a higher degree research program at the same level at this or another institution. (Refer to [section 7.6 Recognition of Prior Learning](#)).

8.8 Enrolment Status

Candidates enrolled in a Doctoral or Masters Degree (Research) program that contains a coursework component are required to enrol in courses by the due date as specified in the offer of admission or readmission or as specified in the academic calendar as the due date for enrolment in courses each trimester. Candidates who enrol after the due date may be charged a late enrolment fee. The University reserves the right to reject an enrolment transaction which is conducted after the due date. Candidates must also comply with the enrolment dates as stipulated in the *Student Administration Policy*.

Candidates are required to enrol in courses as specified in the program requirements, according to their approved academic load status of either full-time or part-time. Candidates are responsible for ensuring they are accurately enrolled each trimester in order to meet the time-based requirements of their higher degree research program, including the minimum and maximum duration of candidature (refer [section 8.7 Minimum and Maximum Duration of Candidature](#)), and the tenure of their RTP Domestic Fee Offset (as applicable) (refer [section 7.8.1 Domestic Candidate Places](#)).

A candidate who fails to enrol in courses for a trimester, or withdraws from all courses in a trimester will be deemed to have withdrawn from the program.

For further information regarding enrolment status and change of enrolment refer to the *Student Administration Policy*.

8.9 Changes to Supervision

On the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate, the Dean (Research) may approve an appointment or change of supervision. Where the appointment of a supervisor from another Group is requested, approval of the participating Dean (Research) is also required.

The appointment of a new/alternative supervisor should only be requested where the appointment is appropriate (i.e. sufficiently expert in the area of research, accredited to supervise, and has time available and an appointment of sufficient duration to supervise).

Requirements for appointment of supervisors are specified on the Higher Degree Research website as well as the *Higher Degree Research Supervisor Accreditation Policy*.

8.10 Changes to Candidature Status

8.10.1 Full-Time to Part-Time and Part-Time to Full-Time

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor, the Head of Element or delegate may approve an application to change from full-time to part-time candidature or from part-time to full-time candidature.

8.10.2 Change of Candidature from a Doctoral to Masters Degree (Research) Program

On the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate and the principal supervisor, the Dean (Research) may approve an application to convert a Doctoral candidature to a Masters Degree (Research) program. Candidates enrolled in a Professional Doctorate program may only convert their candidature to a Masters Degree (Research) program where specified in the program requirements.

The period completed as a Doctoral candidate will be deducted from the candidature duration for the purpose of determining the minimum and maximum length of the Masters Degree (Research) candidature, also taking into account the duration requirements where a Masters Degree (Research) contains a mandatory coursework component.

8.10.3 Change of Candidature from Masters Degree (Research) to a Doctoral Program

On the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate and the principal supervisor, the Dean (Research) may approve an application to convert a confirmed Masters Degree (Research) candidature to a Doctoral Program. Candidates enrolled in a Masters Degree

(Research) program other than the MPhil may only convert their candidature to a Professional Doctorate program where specified in the program requirements. The period completed as a Masters Degree (Research) candidate will be deducted from the candidature duration for the purpose of determining the minimum and maximum length of the Doctoral candidature.

8.11 Candidature Located away from the University (Remote Candidature)

On the recommendation of the Dean (Research), Head of Element or delegate and the principal supervisor, the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may approve a candidate's request to be located predominantly away from the University, otherwise referred to as Remote Candidature. A transfer to remote candidature may only be approved where the candidate:

- has a high likelihood of success as evidenced by progress made during candidature, and the work remaining to be completed;
- has a well-defined commitment to participate in the research culture of the University;
- has adequate supervision, including the provision of local supervision; and
- is able to attend the University for an agreed minimum period following the transfer to remote status including on campus completion of the Griffith Graduate Research School's Higher Degree Research Orientation Program (refer to [section 8.4 Induction and Training](#)) the Confirmation of Candidature Milestone (refer to [section 8.16.3 Confirmation of Candidature and Supervision Arrangements](#)) and the Thesis and Candidature Review Milestone (refer to [section 8.16.5 Thesis and Candidature Review Milestone](#)), as applicable to the stage of candidature at point of transfer.

A Dean (Research) may specify a minimum period during which a candidate must attend the University and, where appropriate, the provision of local supervision.

8.12 Short-term period of study away from the University

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor, a candidate's application to pursue part of the program of study and research outside the University for periods longer than three months may be approved by the relevant authority specified in the *Schedule of Responsibilities and Authorisation for Research Training Matters*. Approval of the principal supervisor must be sought for periods of less than and up to three months. Study away may be granted for one period or for periods totalling not more than 12 months. Candidates requiring more than twelve months away should apply under the previous section (i.e. remote candidature).

8.13 Suspension of Candidature

8.13.1 Leave of Absence and Special Leave of Absence

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor, a candidate's application for leave of absence may be approved by the relevant authority specified in the *Schedule of Responsibilities and Authorisation for Research Training Matters*. Leave of absence may be granted for one period or for periods totalling not more than 12 months over the duration of a candidature. Leave will not normally be granted in the first 6 months of candidature except for exceptional cases.

In special circumstances approved by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School, a further 12 months special leave of absence may be granted. Leave of absence and special leave of absence will be deemed as temporary cessations of candidature and will not be counted as part of the period of candidature for the degree.

The Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may, after consultation with the candidate's principal supervisor and Dean (Research), require a candidate to take leave of absence or special leave of absence.

Leave of absence or special leave of absence will not be granted where the provisions for short-term periods of study away from the University would more properly apply. Retrospective applications normally will not be approved.

8.13.2 Sick Leave

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor, the Head of Element or delegate may approve sick leave for a candidate who submits a medical certificate within a month of a period of illness in excess of ten working days. The period will be recognised as a temporary

cessation of candidature. Sick leave may be granted for one period or for periods totalling up to 12 weeks for the entirety of candidature.

8.13.3 Parental Leave

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor, the Head of Element or delegate may approve an application for maternity, paternity or adoption leave. The approved period will not be counted as part of the period of candidature for the degree.

Maternity or adoption leave may be granted for one period totalling up to twelve months for the entirety of candidature.

Paternity leave may be granted for one period totalling up to five days for the entirety of candidature.

8.13.4 Leave During the Coursework Component of a Program

Candidates enrolled in the coursework component of a Doctoral or Masters Degree (Research) program who are granted leave are also required to complete the course requirements, request leave of absence or withdraw from courses, in accordance with the *Student Administration Policy*.

8.14 Variation to Period of Candidature

In exceptional circumstances a Dean (Research), on the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate and the principal supervisor, may approve an extension to the maximum period of candidature of up to six months full-time equivalent (FTE). Extensions beyond this period require approval from the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School and will not normally be granted.

The candidate will be required to continue their enrolment in the program and pay the required fees, where applicable. Where a candidate does not submit within the maximum period of candidature or an application to extend the maximum period of candidature is not approved, the candidature will lapse forthwith.

On the recommendation of the Dean (Research), the Head of Element or delegate and the principal supervisor, the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may approve an application to submit a thesis prior to the minimum submission date. This does not apply to candidates completing a program that includes a coursework component. Such candidates are required to complete the specified number of credit points for both the coursework and research components prior to submission of the research component, as specified in the program requirements.

8.15 Concurrent Enrolment

8.15.1 Enrolment in Another Program of Study

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor and the Dean (Research), the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may approve a request to apply for concurrent enrolment in another program of study at this or another University during the period of candidature.

8.15.2 Enrolment in Postgraduate Courses

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor, the Head of Element or delegate may approve a request for a PhD or MPhil candidate to undertake postgraduate coursework to support their studies. Approval of the relevant course convenor will also be required.

8.16 Review of Progress

Progress of all candidates will be monitored annually via completion of an early candidature milestone, a confirmation of candidature milestone, a mid-candidature milestone, a thesis and candidature review milestone, or a progress report. Where the progress of a candidate is identified as being at risk, a candidate may be placed under review. Where the progress review requirements for a program varies from the requirements as detailed in section 8.16 of this policy, the requirements will be specified in the New Program Proposal.

8.16.1 Progress Report

Candidates are required to complete a report on progress each year, due on the anniversary of the candidate's date of commencement. In years where a candidature milestone is completed, completion of a progress report is not required. Candidates complete the progress

report in conjunction with their principal supervisor. The principal supervisor will be responsible for recommending continuation of candidature, continuation of candidature with specific conditions, or termination of candidature. The progress report will be assessed by the Head of Element or delegate as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Where the report is assessed as unsatisfactory, the report will be evaluated by the Dean (Research) who will approve continuation of candidature, continuation of candidature with specific conditions, or recommend to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School that candidature be terminated (refer to [section 8.18 Termination of Candidature](#)). The Head of Element or delegate or Dean (Research) may require a candidate to provide additional written reports; to pursue additional courses, seminars or other activities; or to provide additional evidence of progress at other times during the candidature. Supervisors may also be required by the Head of Element or delegate or Dean (Research) to provide additional written reports on progress. In cases where the delegate is also a candidate's principal supervisor the Head of Element may not delegate authority.

8.16.2 Early Candidature Milestone

The early candidature milestone is expected to take place about six months FTE after commencement for a Doctoral candidate and three months FTE for a Masters Degree (Research) candidate, or as determined by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School upon admission to the program. The purpose of this milestone is to assess if the candidate has a viable research project, define the education/training requirements and resources needed by the candidate to ensure timely completion, and identify any problems or difficulties that have caused or are likely to cause an impediment to progress. The format for this milestone will be prescribed and administered by each Group and may include a written and/or oral component. The milestone will be assessed by the Head of Element or delegate, on the recommendation of the principal supervisor, as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Where the report is assessed as unsatisfactory, the report will be evaluated by the Dean (Research) who will assess the milestone as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If a candidate's progress is unsatisfactory a proposed education/training program will be put in place for the candidate and documented, with progress to be reassessed at a date to be determined by the Dean (Research).

The Dean (Research), on the recommendation of the principal supervisor, may approve an extension of up to six months FTE for a Doctoral candidate and three months FTE for a Masters (Research) candidate. Extensions beyond this period require approval from the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

8.16.3 Confirmation of Candidature and Supervision Arrangements

All candidates will be reviewed for confirmation of candidature, including supervision arrangements, excepting candidates who have changed candidature from Masters Degree (Research) to Doctoral candidature under [section 8.10.3 Change of Candidature from a Masters Degree \(Research\) to a Doctoral Program](#). Further, where a candidate was previously enrolled at another institution and submits documentation demonstrating satisfactory completion of a candidature confirmation procedure at that institution, the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School, on the recommendation of the Dean (Research), will determine upon admission whether a candidate is required to complete the confirmation procedure at Griffith University.

The review of Doctoral candidates will occur around the first twelve months of enrolment in the case of full-time candidates, and the first eighteen months of enrolment in the case of part-time candidates. The review of Masters Degree (Research) candidates will occur around the first six months of enrolment in the case of full-time candidates, and the first twelve months of enrolment in the case of part-time candidates, or as determined by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School (refer Higher Degrees Research Website for timeframes and requirements).

Where a major change in the direction of the research has occurred or in exceptional circumstances, the Dean (Research), on the recommendation of the principal supervisor, may approve an extension to the confirmation of candidature due date of up to six months FTE for a Doctoral candidate and three months FTE for a Masters Degree (Research) candidate. Extensions beyond this period require approval from the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School and will not normally be granted, unless the circumstances are exceptional.

As part of the confirmation procedure the candidate must present a research seminar together with a written submission. The seminar and written submission will be assessed by: the

principal supervisor/s; associate supervisor/s (if available); and an independent assessor who is nominated by the principal supervisor and approved by the Dean (Research) on the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate,

On receipt of a recommendation from the Head of Element or delegate, the Dean (Research) will:

- a) Confirm candidature and supervision arrangements; or
- b) postpone the confirmation date for no more than six months to allow the candidate a further opportunity to resubmit and present the research proposal, or to allow the effectiveness of the supervisory arrangements to be assessed. The Dean (Research) may assign an Under Review status to the candidature for the period of the postponement (refer section 8.16.6 Under Review Status); or
- c) recommend to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School that the candidate has not met the requirements for confirmation of Doctoral candidature and should be admitted to one of the University's Masters Degree (Research) programs (if currently enrolled in a Doctoral program); or
- d) recommend to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School that candidature be terminated (refer [section 8.18 Termination of Candidature](#)). A recommendation to terminate candidature may be made where the candidate has not met the requirements for confirmation of candidature, or where the supervisory arrangements cannot be confirmed.

On receipt of a recommendation (c, or d) from the Dean (Research), the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School will determine that either:

- a) candidature is terminated (refer [section 8.18 Termination of Candidature](#)); or
- b) offer the candidate admission to one of the University's Masters Degree (Research) programs (if currently enrolled in a Doctoral program); or
- c) the confirmation date is postponed for no more than six months (if confirmation has not previously been postponed); or
- d) candidature and supervision arrangements are confirmed.

8.16.4 Mid-Candidature Milestone

The mid-candidature milestone is to be completed by all candidates confirmed in their HDR program prior to 1 January 2017. The mid-candidature milestone is expected to take place about 24 months FTE after commencement for a Doctoral candidate and 12 months FTE for a Masters Degree (Research) candidate. The purpose of this milestone is to assess if the candidate is on track to complete the thesis and submit by the due date, assist the candidate to publish during candidature, and identify any problems or difficulties that have caused or are likely to cause an impediment to progress. The format for this milestone will be prescribed and administered by each Group and may include a written and/or oral component. The milestone will be assessed by the Head of Element or delegate, on the recommendation of the principal supervisor, as attained or not yet attained. Where the report is assessed as not yet attained, the report will be evaluated by the Dean (Research) who will assess the milestone as attained or not yet attained. If a candidate has not yet attained this milestone a timeline and strategy is to be developed and put in place for the candidate and documented, with progress to be reassessed at a date to be determined by the Dean (Research).

The Dean (Research), on the recommendation of the principal supervisor, may approve an extension of up to six months FTE for a Doctoral candidate and three months FTE for a Masters Degree (Research) candidate. Extensions beyond this period require approval from the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

8.16.5 Thesis and Candidature Review Milestone

The thesis and candidature review milestone is to be completed by all commencing candidates and continuing candidates not yet confirmed in their HDR program prior to 1 January 2017. The thesis and candidature review milestone is expected to be completed within the period 30 to 36 months FTE after commencement for a Doctoral candidate and 18 months FTE for a Masters Degree (Research) candidate, or as determined by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School upon admission to the program. Extensions to the due date

will not normally be considered. In exceptional circumstances, the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may approve an extension, on the recommendation of the Dean (Research) and principal supervisor. Normally, extensions beyond a cumulative period of six months (FTE) for a Doctoral candidate or three months (FTE) for a Masters Degree (Research) candidate will not be approved.

The purpose of this milestone is to provide a formative review of the candidate's work completed toward the thesis. The milestone allows the candidate to gather feedback to guide the final stages of thesis development and assure the quality of the thesis to be submitted for examination. As such, the milestone is developmental in purpose with the following functions: review the candidate's thesis plan; review the candidate's progress and timeline for completion; review the candidate's publication plan (if applicable to the program); provide the candidate an opportunity to present their research findings and explain the significance and originality of their work; and identify and resolve any difficulties that have caused or are likely to cause an impediment to completion.

As part of the thesis and candidature review milestone the candidate must present a research seminar together with a brief written submission. The seminar and written submission will be reviewed and feedback provided by the Thesis and Candidature Review Panel. The Panel is comprised of: the Head of Element or delegate as Chair; the principal supervisor and associate supervisor(s); and an independent assessor who is nominated by the principal supervisor and approved by the Dean (Research) on the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate.

Following the seminar, and on receipt of a recommendation from the Head of Element or delegate, the Dean (Research) will approve the milestone status of 'completed' and may impose conditions for continuation of candidature and completion of the research work, such as amendment to the thesis plan or timeline for completion. Where issues with the research work or progress towards timely program completion are identified, the Dean (Research) may assign an Under Review status to the candidature (refer section 8.16.6 Under Review Status).

8.16.6 Under Review Status

The under review status is an enhanced monitoring process that may be assigned to a candidate to assist them toward the successful completion of their program. The under review status is a supportive measure that ensures candidates who are not progressing as expected are provided with additional support and guidance.

The Dean (Research) will approve the assignment of an under review status for a candidate, on the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate and principal supervisor. The Head of Element or delegate will develop a Candidature Progression Action Plan in conjunction with the candidate and supervisory team, and will assess adherence to the plan at the conclusion of the under review period.

A candidate may be placed under review in the following circumstances:

- the candidate does not complete a candidature milestone by the required date
- the outcome of milestone completion includes the recommendation to place the candidate under review
- the candidate does not submit their thesis by their original maximum submission date
- the candidate does not meet the expectations of their supervisory team, e.g. submit requested work for review, attend scheduled meetings etc.
- the candidate requests to place their candidature under review.

8.17 Withdrawal of Candidature

Candidates may request to withdraw from their program at any time. The University may also withdraw a candidate from their program due to non-enrolment (refer to [section 8.8 Enrolment Status](#)); where candidature has lapsed (refer to [section 8.14 Variation to Period of Candidature](#)); or due to non-payment of fees (refer to the *Fees and Charges Policy*).

8.18 Termination of Candidature

The Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may terminate candidature if the candidate has failed to make satisfactory progress, meet any candidature requirements or comply with any other condition imposed by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School or Dean (Research), or on the determination that academic misconduct has taken place.

Candidature may be terminated only after a reasonable attempt has been made by the supervisor/s and the Dean (Research) to ensure that the candidate has been:

- clearly warned of shortcomings in performing the research and/or in meeting candidature requirements;
- advised of ways in which such shortcomings might be remedied; and
- given an opportunity to respond to these warnings.

On receipt of a recommendation from the Dean (Research), the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School will determine that either the candidature be terminated, or that candidature continues. In the latter case the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may prescribe special conditions to be fulfilled. In the case of a Doctoral candidate, the candidate may be offered admission to one of the University's Masters Degree (Research) programs.

Where candidature is terminated, a candidate may apply for readmission to their program or for admission into a new higher degree by research program providing that at least one year has elapsed since termination of candidature. A record of candidature having been terminated will be retained on the Student System in perpetuity and a noting of 'Candidature Terminated on (date)' will be recorded on the candidates Unofficial Academic Transcript for a period of five years from the date of termination.

Where candidature is to be terminated as a result of academic misconduct the procedure for terminating candidature (i.e. candidate excluded from the program) will also be in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy – Higher Degree Research Students*. The period of exclusion from applying for readmission will be in accordance with the *Academic Misconduct Policy – Higher Degree Research Students*.

A candidate who is dissatisfied with the decision to terminate candidature may request a review of this decision to the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor within 10 working days of notification of the decision. The application for review is to be made using the *Review of Decision* form in accordance with the University's *Student Review and Appeals Policy* and *Student Review and Appeals Procedures*.

A candidate who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review may lodge an appeal against termination within 10 working days of notification of the decision. Under the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* and the *Student Review and Appeals Procedures*, the appeal must be in writing using a new *Review of Decision* form and be lodged with the Secretary of the University Appeals Committee in accordance with the instructions in the *Student Review and Appeals Procedures*, and be accompanied by supporting documentation where relevant.

The responsible body for determining the appeal under the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* shall be the University Appeals Committee.

9. EXAMINATION

9.1 Coursework Component (where applicable)

The Course Convenor is responsible for ensuring that a grade is recommended for all students enrolled in a course/s which comprise the coursework component of the program (where applicable to the program structure) (refer Section 6.1 & Section 12 of the *Assessment Policy*).

Candidates are required to satisfactorily complete their coursework at the required achievement level specified in the program requirements, before submitting their research component for examination.

9.2 Submission of Thesis or other Major Research Output

A candidate will be enrolled in a program at the time the thesis (or other major research output as specified in the program requirements), is submitted for examination and will have completed all milestone and publication requirements. A former candidate who did not submit a thesis within the period of candidature, may, if authorised to do so by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School, on the recommendation of the candidate's principal supervisor and Dean (Research), submit the thesis within a period of three years from the lapse of candidature. This may be subject to any conditions imposed by the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School, such as a minimum period of re-enrolment.

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor, the Dean (Research) may approve a candidate's notice of intention to submit the thesis for examination. This notice should be submitted at least two months prior to the thesis submission. If there are any matters that will prevent the candidate from submitting the thesis by the due date indicated, for example outstanding fees or charges, such matters are to be addressed prior to submission of the notice.

On the recommendation of the principal supervisor, the Dean (Research) may approve a candidate's thesis submission approval application. In endorsing the thesis for examination, the principal supervisor confirms that the thesis is properly presented and is *prima facie* worthy of examination. The thesis is deemed as officially submitted once the required forms have been completed and the thesis is submitted to the Griffith Graduate Research School. Those candidates in receipt of a scholarship(s) will have their scholarship(s) terminated as of the submission date.

A candidate may apply to submit the thesis for examination without the recommendation of the principal supervisor or approval of the Dean (Research) in support of the thesis submission. In this case, the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School will invite comment from involved parties, but may not prevent a candidate from submitting the thesis for examination.

Candidature will end when the thesis is submitted.

9.3 Appointment of Examiners

9.3.1 Requirements for Appointment as Thesis Examiner

Assessment of a HDR thesis (or other major research output) will be by examiners of international standing in the field of research, who are independent of the conduct of the research, competent to undertake the assessment, and without any real or perceived conflict of interest.

To be appointed to an examination panel, examiners will hold a degree at least equivalent to, or possess equivalent professional experience, to the degree they are examining. Equivalent professional experience is defined as a record of demonstrated research ability and professional performance considered by the Dean (Research) as equivalent to the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) learning outcomes of the degree being examined.

A person must not be appointed as an examiner or as the Chairperson of Examiners if the person:

- is, or has been, a supervisor of the candidate;
- has acted as an assessor for the candidate's Confirmation of Candidature or Thesis and Candidature Review Milestone seminars;
- has made a significant contribution to the work/has been connected with the candidate's research;
- is identified by the University as having any other major conflict of interest as per the Conflict of Interest Guidelines (Appointment of HDR thesis examiners).

9.3.2 Doctoral and MPhil

Upon notification of intention to submit a thesis (or other major research output), and after nomination by the principal supervisor/s and the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate, the Dean (Research) will appoint:

- at least two examiners and one reserve examiner (or a third examiner if a live performance is part of the examination), all of whom will be external to the University. For Professional

Doctorate programs, one of the external examiners may be drawn from the relevant profession or industry.

- a Chairperson of Examiners who is an academic staff member of the University. The Chairperson of Examiners will not be an examiner.

9.3.3 Masters Degree (Research)

Upon notification of intention to submit a Masters Degree (Research) thesis (or other major research output) (excluding MPhil – refer [section 9.3.2 Doctoral and MPhil](#)), and after nomination by the principal supervisor/s and the recommendation of the Head of Element or delegate, the Dean (Research) will appoint:

- at least two examiners and one reserve examiner (or a third examiner if a live performance is part of the examination), at least one of whom will be external to the University. Where Masters Degree (Research) programs require both examiners to be external to the University, this will be specified in the program requirements.
- a Chairperson of Examiners who is an academic staff member of the University. The Chairperson of Examiners will not be an examiner.

9.3.4 The Examination Panel

The examiners and the Chairperson of Examiners will constitute the examination panel.

9.4 The Examination

Members of the examination panel normally may not consult with one another. The examiners will make a separate report and recommendation to the Chairperson of Examiners on the merit of the thesis submitted for examination.

Any member of the examination panel wishing to enter into a dialogue with an examiner, a supervisor, a candidate or the Chairperson of Examiners should direct any request to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School. A supervisor or candidate may not initiate contact with an examiner or Chairperson of Examiners or vice versa.

In the case of an examination including an exhibition or performance of a professional practice component, depending on the program, the candidate may be required to attend and discuss the product of their professional practice with the examiners. The candidate's supervisor/s will not be present.

For PhD and MPhil candidates, an examiner will recommend:

- the degree be awarded to the candidate; or
- the degree be awarded to the candidate subject to minor amendments, including typographical errors, being completed; or
- the candidate be required to submit to an oral or written defence of the thesis; or
- additional work be undertaken, the thesis revised and then resubmitted; or
- the candidate be considered for a Masters Degree of the University; or
- the degree be not awarded to the candidate.

For Professional Doctorate and all other Masters Degree (Research) candidates, an examiner will recommend:

- the research component be awarded a pass; or
- the research component be awarded a pass subject to minor revisions; or
- the candidate be required to submit to an oral or written defence of the thesis or other work; or
- additional work be undertaken, the research component revised and then resubmitted; or
- the option of an appropriate Masters Degree when available, dependent upon the amount and standard of work completed in the relevant professional doctorate; or
- the research component be failed.

The Chairperson of Examiners is responsible for considering reports of examiners and for making a recommendation to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School on the outcome of the examination.

The Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School will determine the outcome of the examination. A decision to fail the research or award a Masters Degree in lieu of a Doctoral Degree will be made by the Board of Graduate Research.

9.5 Reconciliation of Examination Reports

Where there is substantial disagreement between the examiners about whether the degree should be awarded, the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School may approve that:

- an oral or written examination be conducted;
- an additional examiner be appointed to report on the thesis/research output ; and/or
- an adjudicator examiner be appointed who will consider and report on the thesis/research output and other work submitted and on the reports of the examiners.

9.6 Resubmission of the Thesis/Research Output

A candidate who has been given the opportunity to resubmit the thesis/research output for re-examination shall submit the revised thesis/research output, a list of all amendments, and a statement indicating how the revised thesis/research output responds to the points contained in the examiners' reports, within 12 months after the decision allowing resubmission.

9.7 Review of Examination Outcome

Insofar as the outcome of an examination of a HDR thesis (or major research output) affects a candidate's eligibility to graduate (refer to section 10: Eligibility to Graduate), a candidate may request a review of the examination outcome in accordance with the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* and *Student Review and Appeals Procedures* on the following grounds:

- procedural irregularities in the conduct of the examination; and/or
- documented evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of one or more of the examiners.

A request for review of the examination outcome on the basis of academic judgement will not be considered.

10. ELIGIBILITY TO GRADUATE AND CONFERRAL OF DEGREE

10.1 Eligibility to Graduate

A candidate is eligible to graduate when all requirements for the degree have been completed, this may include:

- a coursework component (if applicable);
- recognition of prior learning (if applicable);
- thesis or research output submitted and examined; and
- the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School determines the outcome of the examination is satisfactory for the award of the degree.

A candidate who is deemed ineligible to graduate shall not be awarded the degree and will be provided with the reasons for this decision.

A candidate who is dissatisfied with the decision that they are ineligible to graduate may request a review of this decision to the Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor within 10 working days of notification of the decision. The application for review is to be made using the *Review of Decision* form in accordance with the University's *Student Review and Appeals Policy* and *Student Review and Appeals Procedures*.

A candidate who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review may lodge an appeal within 10 working days of notification of the decision. Under the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* and the *Student Review and Appeals Procedures*, the appeal must be in writing using a new

Review of Decision form and be lodged with the Secretary of the University Appeals Committee in accordance with the instructions in the *Student Review and Appeals Procedures*, and be accompanied by supporting documentation where relevant. The responsible body for determining the appeal under the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* shall be the University Appeals Committee.

10.2 **Conferral of Degree**

The Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School certifies that the candidate has satisfied the requirements for the degree and approves that the award be conferred.³

³ Council 4/2012 resolved to delegate authority to the Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School to approve the granting of higher degree by research awards, and doctorates and higher doctorates by publication awards to candidates who have satisfied the requirements for the award of a degree.