

# Macquarie University Code of Higher Degree Research (HDR) Practice and Code of Supervisory Practice

The Universities Australia document 'Universities and their Students: Principles for the Provision of Education by Australian Universities 2005' aims to provide 'guidelines for maintaining and monitoring academic quality and standards in research higher degrees' (p. 1). This document provides a foundation for Macquarie's Code of HDR Practice.

This Code of HDR Practice augments the Rules of the University, and the Intellectual Property, Ethics, Equity and OHS policies. The Code is incorporated in the *Higher Degree Research Guide for Candidates and Supervisors*.

Macquarie University offers the following postgraduate research degrees: PhD, Professional Doctorates and MPhil. The rules and specific entry requirements relating to each of these degrees are found in the *Calendar of Governance, Legislation and Rules* ([www.handbook.mq.edu.au](http://www.handbook.mq.edu.au)).

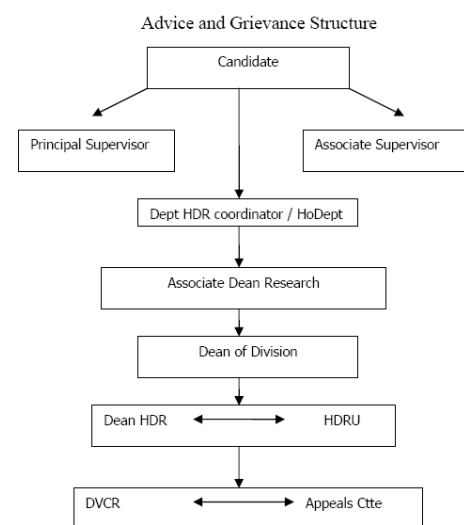
## 1. Responsibilities of the University

- 1.1 The entry requirements for candidates are contained within the University Degree Rules. Applicants for research degrees should have demonstrated a capacity for quality research through Honors programs, or a research component in a Master's or Postgraduate Diploma program, or through post-graduate research preparation certificates, and/or through previous publication activity. International students have additional language entry requirements which are described in the *Higher Degree Research Guide*.
- 1.2 In addition to the University's overall requirements, prospective candidates must also comply with Divisional and Departmental entry requirements. These may include prior experience in a specific discipline, the capacity of a Department to provide supervision in the topic area, the ability of the Division to provide access to equipment required for the specific research project etc.
- 1.3 The University provides a Central Commencement Program (CCP) twice yearly and on-line where the University's HDR expectations and candidacy policies are outlined. This program provides an orientation to research and support programs. Each Division provides a Divisional Commencement Program (DCP) which supplements the CCP with a program that outlines Divisional and Departmental expectations and support activities. Participation in both of these activities is mandatory for HDR candidates.
- 1.4 All candidates receive the *Higher Degree Research Guide* on enrolment. This provides information regarding the various stages of research candidacy from commencement to examination and details of the support infrastructure of the university. The *Higher Degree Research Guide* also contains information regarding grievance and appeals processes and harassment. The latest version of the *Higher Degree Research Guide* is available on the HDRO website.
- 1.5 The Research Office provides information regarding grant opportunities for HDR candidates, Intellectual Property, Ethics, and Research Management.
- 1.6 The Higher Degree Research Office (HDRO) provides HDR management and administrative support, including information regarding the application and examination process, and the criteria against which candidate's research activity is assessed. Doctoral research theses are assessed by three external examiners and MPhil theses by two external examiners.

1.7 Macquarie provides support for the development of supervisory staff through the provision of the Colloquium on Research Supervision (CRS) and related research support programs. Macquarie University is reviewing best practice on supervisor registration programs to build on the CRS program.

## 2. Divisional and Departmental Responsibilities

- 2.1 Each Head of Department (HoD) ensures that potential candidates fulfill Divisional and Departmental admission requirements. It is their responsibility to ensure that the potential candidate has sufficient research background to undertake the degree, that the department has the space, facilities and resources to undertake the project satisfactorily, and that there is high quality supervision available for the candidate.
- 2.2 Each research proposal should be considered carefully prior to the potential candidate's admission to ensure that the proposed project is of sufficient breadth and entails high quality intellectual inquiry. The project should be sufficient for the completion of the degree undertaken and care should be taken that potential projects are not so large that they impede the possibility of successful completion within the period of enrolment. There must be a clear relationship between the potential candidate's project and the research interests and capacity of departmental staff.
- 2.3 The Dean of Division will ensure that high quality supervision is provided to candidates throughout their candidature. Candidates should have at least a principal supervisor and one other supervisor (associate supervisor, adjunct supervisor or co-supervisor). The principal supervisor has overall responsibility for the candidate's progress, including where a candidate is involved in a large collaborative project with a large panel of supervisors, on or off campus.
- 2.4 The Divisions and Departments are responsible for facilitating a supportive intellectual environment, e.g. through the provision of workshop/seminar series for candidates to develop their skills at presenting their work and to foster their integration into a cohesive research community.
- 2.5 Opportunities should be developed for candidates to participate in the research life of the Division through interactions with other scholars, visiting scholars and each other.
- 2.6 Each Department will ensure that conflicts that may arise between supervisor and candidate are quickly solved, and the advice and grievance resolution structure (above) is utilized as appropriate.
- 2.7 Departments and Divisions will implement the Ethics and OHS policies of the university. Departments and Divisions are required to supplement University Ethics and OHS information in regard to their specific contexts as appropriate and make this information available to their HDR candidates in written and on-line formats.
- 2.8 HoDs should ensure that the Divisional/departmental workload formula appropriately acknowledges HDR supervisory activity.
- 2.9 The university would not normally allow staff who are also currently enrolled as a research candidate to act as supervisor unless the staff member already holds a doctoral degree. In exceptional circumstances a currently HDR enrolled staff member without a doctoral degree may be permitted to be an associate or co-supervisor.



### 3. Code of Supervisory Practice: HDR Supervisory Panel

3.1 Each HDR candidate will have a supervisory panel of a principal supervisor and at least one other supervisor to support their research.

The **Principal Supervisor** has the main supervisory responsibility for the candidate. The person must be a full-time or part-time member of Macquarie's academic staff with an appointment of three years or longer and be research active. The principal supervisor is responsible for directing the work of the candidate and for ensuring that the candidate meets all administrative and academic requirements. The Principal Supervisor normally must be located in the same Department in which the candidate is registered. The Principal Supervisor co-ordinates the supervisory team, and is a mentor for any Co-Supervisors.

An **Acting Supervisor** is appointed as a short term replacement for the Principal Supervisor for periods of up to six months only and as the need arises. The title is also applicable to a person who holds administrative supervisory responsibility before the research component of the research degree commences.

The **Associate Supervisor** has a lesser fractional supervisory load than the Principal Supervisor. The Associate Supervisor may be located in another Division or Department or may have specific research expertise which is required by the candidate. The Associate Supervisor must be a full-time or part-time member of Macquarie's academic staff with an appointment of three years or longer and be research active.

The **Co-Supervisor** is an academic staff member new to supervision who is gaining experience in and knowledge of supervisory practices. Staff with appointments of less than three years, including Casual academic staff, may undertake this role.

The **Adjunct Supervisor** is an external supervisory appointment, including Honorary staff and Emeritus Professors. An Adjunct Supervisor has special expertise required for the candidate's project (e.g. as an Industry partner for an APAI candidate, or an overseas University partner). Adjunct Supervisors are entitled to remuneration for their supervisory contribution (see the HR policy on Adjunct Supervision).

3.2 All supervisors must be approved by the Dean of Division and either hold a doctoral degree or be deemed by Macquarie University to be equivalent to holding a doctoral degree.

3.3 Supervisors should have an understanding of the university's current HDR rules, policies and guidelines so that accurate advice and support is given to candidates. The supervisor's primary role is to provide academic support throughout the candidature to enable the candidate to achieve a high standard of research activity and output.

3.4 The principal supervisor should support the candidate to complete a thesis through:

- Planning the research program;
- Project management strategies where transparent goals and expectations for the research are articulated;
- Exposition of relevant standards for the research;
- The identification of appropriate resources;
- Advice on authorship and co-authorship conventions especially as they relate to single author/co-authored papers for a thesis by publication and in journal article format, which is the University's preferred thesis model.

3.5 Supervisors are each responsible for ensuring that:

- The research project is planned appropriately with the candidate through an evaluation of the proposed research topic;
- The scope of the research is sufficient for the degree;
- The supervisory panel has the necessary theoretical, methodological and disciplinary knowledge to support the research;

- The candidate obtains any necessary Ethics approvals to conduct the research.
- 3.6 Supervisors should negotiate an agreement on meeting frequency with the candidate, both as a panel and individually, which is to be formally evaluated at 6 monthly intervals to reflect the changing priorities of the particular project and candidacy stages.
  - 3.7 The outcomes of formal supervisory meetings (such as the agreed aspects of work to be undertaken between sessions) should be recorded in a manner that facilitates the continuing progress of the candidate (e.g. email records).
  - 3.8 As a general guide, the principal supervisor and candidate should meet (or be in equivalent contact) at least fortnightly and usually more frequently in the first year of research, in addition to any laboratory or bench consultations.
  - 3.9 Supervisors should monitor carefully the performance of the student relative to the standard required for the degree, and ensure that inadequate progress or work below the standard generally expected is brought to the candidate's attention and documented, and the student is given an opportunity to improve the quality of the research. The supervisors should help with developing solutions to problems as they are identified. Continuing unsatisfactory progress should be reported to the Dean, and formally advised to the student.
  - 3.10 Supervisors should give timely feedback on written work, focusing on the content and style of the thesis drafts.
  - 3.11 At the time of submission supervisors should certify that the thesis is properly presented and conforms with the university's rules for submission of theses. Supervisors should confirm that the thesis is at a standard suitable for examination.
  - 3.12 The examination process – including the selection of examiners for the thesis – is outlined in the *Higher Degree Research Guide*. Supervisors should check the HDRO website regularly to familiarize themselves with the submission process.
  - 3.13 Supervisors should participate in the university staff development programs for research supervision.

#### **4. Responsibilities of Higher Degree Research Candidates**

- 4.1 Prior to an application for admission being made, prospective candidates should contact researchers in their area of interest to determine the feasibility of their research project. Admission into the degree is also dependent on the candidate's academic qualifications for postgraduate research, and the availability of quality supervision in the area supported by appropriate infrastructure and resources.
- 4.2 HDR candidates should undertake research activity as agreed with their principal supervisor and panel related to their research project.
- 4.3 Candidates should become familiar with the HDR rules and expectations as set out in the degree Rules, the *Higher Degree Research Guide* and their Division and Departmental publications.
- 4.3 Candidates are responsible for:
  - Being proactive in setting up meetings with their supervisory panel and individual supervisors (either face to face, or using electronic media);
  - Becoming independent researchers with supervisory guidance resulting in the self-regulation of research activity;
  - Regular formal and informal reviews of progress with supervisors;
  - Providing formal progress reports as required, through the principal supervisor, at periods specified by the university;
  - Research quality and practices, safety, personal ethical responsibility;
  - Developing a research budget in consultation with the supervisor;

- Acquiring information about relevant research funding schemes.

4.4 Candidates should be aware of grievance resolution procedures for research related issues.

4.5 Candidates who are undertaking a thesis including published work should be aware of the authorship and co-authorship conventions of their discipline. In addition, candidates and their supervisors should adhere to the Vancouver Protocol which states that: “Authorship credit should be based only on substantial contributions to 1) conception and design, or analysis and interpretation of data; and to 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and on 3) final approval of the version to be published. Conditions 1, 2, and 3 must all be met. Participation solely in the acquisition of funding or the collection of data does not justify authorship. General supervision of the research group is not sufficient for authorship.”

4.6 Candidates should participate actively in the research life of the department and the division.

4.7 The primary responsibility of the candidate is to work in collaboration with their supervisors to produce a thesis which fulfills the degree requirements and is presentable according to the accepted practices of the University.

**See also:**

Universities Australia (2005) *Universities and their Students: Principles for the Provision of Education by Australian Universities:*

[http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/documents/publications/policy/statements/Principles\\_final\\_Aug2005.pdf](http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/documents/publications/policy/statements/Principles_final_Aug2005.pdf)

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research

<http://www.research.mq.edu.au/policy/policies/code>

*Higher Degree Research Guide for Candidates and Supervisors:*

[http://www.research.mq.edu.au/students/current\\_students/hdrguide](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/students/current_students/hdrguide)

*Macquarie Research Strategic Plan:*

[http://www.research.mq.edu.au/policy/strategic\\_directions](http://www.research.mq.edu.au/policy/strategic_directions)

*Macquarie Intellectual Property and Commercialisation Policies:*

<http://www.research.mq.edu.au/policy/policies>