



# Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) Admission, Selection and Enrolment procedure

## Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This Procedure is effective from 11 April 2024.

## Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This Procedure documents the minimum criteria and processes for admission, selection and enrolment of applicants into the University's higher degrees by research (HDR) courses.

## Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to the University's HDR courses. It does not apply to undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs or higher doctoral degrees.

## Section 4 - Policy

(4) This Procedure is pursuant to the [Higher Degrees by Research \(HDR\) policy](#).

## Section 5 - Procedure

(5) Prospective students will follow the application processes for HDR courses stipulated by the Graduate Research Academy.

### Admission criteria

(6) To be considered for selection into an HDR course, the applicant must meet the following minimum admission criteria:

- a. English language proficiency as specified in the [Admission Minimum Eligibility Criteria Procedure](#) or other language proficiency approved by the Academic Board and
- b. Course admission criteria specified in Table 1: Minimum Admission Criteria for Higher Degrees by Research.

(7) The applicant must provide evidence that they meet the minimum entry criteria outlined in Table 1 or establish to the satisfaction of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation or nominee that they have equivalent research experience with outputs that is sufficient to prepare them for HDR candidature.

(8) Relevant qualifications must have been obtained less than five years prior to application. Where qualifications do not meet this requirement, the applicant must provide an additional portfolio of evidence of equivalent research or professional experience and outputs from the last five years to demonstrate, in the University's judgement, that they

are sufficiently prepared for HDR candidature. Additional evidence may include but is not limited to: workplace experience, verified reports, reviews, conference presentations, publications and data analysis.

(9) Additional eligibility for HDR scholarships is set out in the [Higher Degrees by Research \(HDR\) Scholarships procedure](#).

**Table 1: Minimum Admission Criteria for Higher Degrees by Research**

	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Minimum admission criteria</b>
i.	Doctoral Degree	Completion of research project in a related area including a thesis which is equivalent to at least 25% of a year's full-time study at Level 8 or 9 of the Australian Qualifications Framework with achievement of a grade for the project equivalent to a Deakin grade of 70% or equivalent. OR Masters Degree (Research) in a related area.
ii.	Masters Degree (Research)	Completion of research project including a thesis which is equivalent to at least 25% of a year's full-time study at Level 8 or 9 of the Australian Qualifications Framework with achievement of a grade for the project equivalent to a Deakin grade of 65% or equivalent.
iii.	Master of Philosophy (Electromaterials) offered jointly with University of Wollongong	Bachelor plus a coursework Master Degree with a minimum Credit average (65% or GPA 3.0 out of 4.0 or equivalent), or a four year Bachelor Honours degree (with a minimum of 65%). A three year Bachelor degree (without Honours), but with a Distinction average (75%), may also be a suitable entry requirement if in the same discipline as the proposed research thesis. Research related and professional experience will also be considered when assessing qualifications.
iv.	Master of Philosophy – offered by the School of Medicine	Coursework Master degree with a minimum credit average (65% or equivalent) in the same discipline as the proposed research thesis. OR Bachelor degree with a distinction average (70% and above) for the third year or equivalent in the same discipline as the proposed research thesis. OR Completion of the pre-clinical component of the Doctor of Medicine (or equivalent degree) at the postgraduate level.
v.	Master of Surgical Research	Bachelor degree in medicine (or equivalent) AND current registration (or capacity to obtain registration prior to commencing study) to practice medicine in the jurisdiction of study (e.g. registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Registration Agency; AHPRA).
vi.	Master of Research (Business)	Bachelor degree with a minimum distinction average (70% and above, or equivalent) in the final year of study and in a cognate discipline to the proposed research thesis area. OR Coursework Master or Honours degree with a minimum distinction average (70% and above, or equivalent) in a cognate discipline to the proposed research thesis area.

(10) Meeting the minimum admission criteria does not guarantee selection into a course. Selection is based on the criteria listed in clauses 19 and 20.

(11) A current ongoing Deakin staff member will be admitted to an HDR course at Deakin where the Head of Academic Unit has assessed the application in accordance with guidelines, endorsed by Research and Research Training Committee, and is satisfied that:

- a. the risk of conflict of interest associated with supervision is not significant and a risk mitigation strategy has been developed
- b. the staff member has considered the relative merits of undertaking their study at another institution

- c. it is in the staff member's best interests to study at Deakin.

## **Thesis by prior publications**

(12) Applicants may apply to complete a thesis based substantially on prior publications. The applicant must demonstrate that:

- a. the prior publications could form a coherent body of original work by the applicant that demonstrates an original contribution to knowledge. For a doctoral applicant, this contribution must be significant.
- b. the prior publications have been produced within the last ten years, with the most recent publication/s normally no more than five years old. This may be varied as appropriate for particular disciplines.
- c. the research leading to the publications was conducted in a way consistent with University research integrity requirements.

(13) Applications for thesis by prior publication must be approved by the Faculty Executive Dean or Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development or their nominee in consultation with a senior academic in the discipline.

(14) Applicants for a thesis by prior publication who are successful are automatically granted block credit for prior learning of three years and will complete the course within the remaining 12 months equivalent full-time enrolment.

## **Autonomous sanctions**

(15) In the case of applicants from a country listed under the autonomous sanctions requirements, a risk assessment must be carried out by the University's Autonomous Sanctions Risk Assessment Panel using the approved form to determine whether enrolment of the applicant would be in breach of the requirements the [Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 \(Cth\)](#).

## **Transfers from other HDR courses**

(16) An applicant who is enrolled in an HDR at another institution may apply to transfer to Deakin. The period of elapsed candidature at the previous institution may be taken into account in setting their maximum completion date.

## **Recognition of prior learning**

(17) Applicants may request recognition of prior learning only for coursework by including a written request and supporting evidence in their application. Such requests will be assessed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and credit for prior learning will:

- a. be granted only for coursework components of the degree course
- b. not be granted in respect of qualifications or work that are prerequisites for admission.

## **Selection**

(18) The selection process aims to be fair and transparent and to ensure that admitted students have the academic preparation and proficiency in English needed to successfully participate in their HDR course, whatever the method of application and basis of admission.

(19) The Head of Academic Unit or nominee will assess the suitability of the applicant for the course, including by interview if necessary. They will consider:

- a. whether the applicant meets the minimum admission criteria
- b. whether the applicant can meet the standards of responsible and ethical behaviour and conduct expected of all students of the University, as set out in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

- c. the alignment of the proposed field of study with faculty/institute and University research priorities
- d. the feasibility of the applicant's completing the proposed research project within the normal period of candidature
- e. the availability for the duration of the course of at least two appropriate supervisors who have undertaken in writing to supervise the applicant
- f. the availability of adequate resources and facilities according to clause 20
- g. opportunity and support to apply for available scholarships and grant funding
- h. the applicant's intended place or places of study
- i. whether the enrolment is to be full-time or part-time
- j. the availability of suitable examiners
- k. the applicant and their project has been assessed by Deakin under the autonomous sanctions requirements and have been determined as low risk or been approved by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

(20) Minimum resources and facilities required for higher degrees by research students are set out in Table 2.

**Table 2: Minimum resources for higher degrees by research students**

	On campus	On campus	Off campus	Off campus
	Full-time	Part-time	Solo	Embedded*
Bookable workstation	Yes	Yes	-	A*
Office facilities including scanner/copier, printer, mail, stationery	Yes	Yes	N/A	A
Access to communal tearoom/kitchen	Yes	Yes	-	A
Internet and email access, including reasonable remote access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PC with standard OS and software	Yes	Access to pool	-	A
Software privileges generally equivalent to staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Library privileges equivalent to staff	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Off campus library services	-	-	Yes	Yes
Central support towards registration and/or travel to assist in attending and presenting at one conference during candidature (\$5000 total).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A defined level of financial support for field work, conference, attendance, and other activities directly arising from their candidature, which will be determined by the Academic Unit and notified to the students as part of the induction process.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

\* Embedded with a partner institution (e.g. CSIRO, DIRI) A= specified in partner agreement.

(21) The Head of Academic Unit or nominee will make a recommendation to the Faculty Executive Dean or Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development or their nominee for the applicant to be admitted.

(22) The University is not obliged to admit an applicant even where they meet the selection criteria.

## Outcome of application

(23) The Faculty Executive Dean or Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development or their nominee will consider the

recommendation of the Head of Academic Unit or nominee and decide whether to admit the applicant. They will advise the Graduate Research Academy who will then notify the applicant of the decision in writing.

(24) Where an offer of candidature is made it will include the following terms and conditions of candidature:

- a. any credit granted
- b. the nominated supervision team and supervision arrangements
- c. the place or places of study
- d. whether the enrolment is full-time or part-time
- e. the date of commencement of candidature
- f. the maximum completion date
- g. compulsory requirements such as coursework (including required grades), research integrity training and occupational health and safety
- h. terms and conditions of any scholarship or offer the applicant is asked to consider
- i. any other relevant terms or conditions.

(25) The University may withdraw an offer at any time prior to acceptance.

(26) The University may decline to make an offer, withdraw an offer or terminate a student's enrolment where an offer has been made on the basis of incomplete, inaccurate, fraudulent or misleading information supplied by the applicant or certifying authority. In these circumstances, fees paid may be forfeited.

(27) Applicants who are not successful may make a complaint according to the [Student Complaints Resolution procedure](#).

(28) International students who are studying on campus will be enrolled full-time.

## **Deferral of enrolment**

(29) Applicants may apply to the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development for deferral of their studies. The Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development will normally allow students to defer for up to 12 months. The Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development may consider requests from students for longer deferral periods in exceptional circumstances. Deferrals may be limited by requirements of HDR scholarships.

## **Induction**

(30) Students must participate in an induction to research provided by the Graduate Research Academy that includes codes of conduct, ethics, occupational health and safety, intellectual property and any additional matters that are required for the research to be undertaken.

## **Candidature engagement**

(31) Supervisors, in collaboration with their students, will complete a [Candidature Engagement Form](#) within the first three months of candidature.

(32) The principal supervisor will ensure that potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest for the student or the proposed project are declared, appropriately managed and overseen by the Head of Academic Unit.

## **Annual leave**

(33) The student is entitled to take up to 20 working days' recreation leave annually from candidature on approval by their principal or executive supervisor. Leave accrues on a fortnightly basis. It is included in the candidature duration

and can be accrued from year to year.

## **Parental leave**

(34) Students (except for specified international students according to clause 39) who have or will have responsibility for the care of a child either by birth (by themselves or their partner) or adoption are entitled to a single continuous period of up to 52 weeks of parental leave from the course. The student must provide a medical certificate to confirm their pregnancy and expected date of birth, or a birth or placement certificate as well as a statutory declaration that they will be the only primary care giver for the period of the leave (except for up to six weeks when there can be two primary carers of the child).

(35) Students (except for those international students specified in clause 39) are entitled to two weeks partner leave when:

- a. their partner is pregnant or the parent of a newborn child, or when the student adopts a child under the age of five years, and
- b. the student will not be the primary carer.

The leave must be taken during the pregnancy or within three months after the date of the birth or placement of the child.

(36) Students may request an additional period of birth-related or primary carer leave of up to 52 weeks, to be primary carer for the same child at any time, up to when the child reaches five years of age.

## **Changes to candidature**

(37) A student may apply for:

- a. changes to the terms and conditions of candidature
- b. intermission of candidature
- c. changes to the research topic.

(38) Changes to candidature will be made according to the processes stipulated by the Graduate Research Academy. Changes may be approved by the Faculty Executive Dean or Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development or their nominee.

(39) Intermission, including for compassionate reasons, must be requested where a student is not able to work on their research and annual leave is not appropriate. The following restrictions apply to intermission:

- a. The period of intermission will not exceed 12 calendar months in total over the period of candidature, irrespective of whether the student is full or part-time.
- b. Intermission will not be granted in the first 12 months of candidature unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- c. The student is not allowed to work on the degree program during the period of intermission.

Intermission excludes parental leave.

(40) International students who are studying in Australia may only apply for intermission, parental leave or partners leave for documented compassionate or compelling reasons. They must seek the approval of the International Student Support Officer before making an application for intermission and if approved, will ensure that evidence supporting their application is maintained throughout the period of intermission.

(41) Where a student applies to change their research topic and they are from a country listed under the autonomous sanctions requirements, the change must also be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development and a

new autonomous sanctions assessment must be carried out using the appropriate form. Depending on the country of origin, approval from the Department of Home Affairs may also be required.

## Miscellaneous obligations

(42) A student may not be enrolled or enrol in another course, including at another institution, while enrolled in a Deakin HDR without the approval of the Faculty Executive Dean or Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development.

(43) Students are responsible for ensuring that the University has their correct contact details and for regularly checking their mail and Deakin email for University correspondence. International students are required to notify the University within seven days of a change of address.

(44) Where an HDR student is to be offered ongoing employment at Deakin, the Head of Academic Unit will ensure that there is no conflict of interest or any risk of disadvantage to the student in relation to their course.

(45) An international student who receives Australian permanent resident status must inform the Graduate Research Academy and the Division of Student Administration immediately upon notification and provide evidence of the change.

## Withdrawal from candidature

(46) Students may withdraw from their course at any time by notifying the HDR Candidature Manager in writing. Withdrawal may result in an academic and/or financial penalty as outlined on the [Deakin Fees website](#).

## Termination of candidature

(47) A student's enrolment may be terminated by the University in the following circumstances:

- a. the student has not met conditional enrolment requirements
- b. the student has provided false or misleading information in relation to an application for admission
- c. the student has breached [academic](#) or [research integrity](#) or is proved to have engaged in [student misconduct](#) and termination of candidature has been determined as part of the outcome
- d. the student has not met requirements of candidature including:
  - i. enrolment or re-enrolment processes
  - ii. completion of the annual review of candidature by the required date
  - iii. submission of the thesis by the maximum completion date
  - iv. maintaining satisfactory academic progress according to the [Higher Degrees by Research \(HDR\) Academic Progress procedure](#)
- e. where staff at the University have tried to contact the student in writing and received no reply for one month, and an intermission or leave has not been authorised
- f. the student has failed to pay tuition fees or other fees by the specified deadline
- g. it is determined by the Executive Director, Student Services that termination should occur in the interests of the student or the University (for example, where a student is deceased)
- h. where the student or their project is no longer determined as low risk or approved by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade under the autonomous sanctions requirements
- i. the Faculty Executive Dean or Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development determine that, within six months of candidature commencement, it is not possible to come to an agreement about changes to the project or supervision arrangements.

(48) The Graduate Research Academy will inform the student in writing that their enrolment has been terminated and the reasons for it. If the grounds are for non-payment of fees, the Division of Student Administration will inform the

student and provide the student with a limited time to resolve the situation. A student whose enrolment has been terminated ceases to be a student of the University.

## **Readmission**

(49) A former student whose enrolment has been terminated for non-payment of fees may apply to the Division of Student Administration for reinstatement of their enrolment.

(50) A former student whose enrolment has been terminated for the reasons in clause 47 excluding the payment of fees, or termination for unsatisfactory progress without the right to be re-admitted, may apply to be re-admitted via the HDR application process outlined in this procedure. The Faculty/Institute will only approve re-admission of a student after termination of enrolment if there is evidence that the student is able to achieve satisfactory academic progress.

## **Section 6 - Definitions**

(51) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. Academic Unit: a School, Department, the National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation Institute or an Institute that reports directly to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation.
- b. block credit: credit granted towards whole stages or components of a course, such as a trimester/s or a year/s of full-time study in that course, rather than for specific units.
- c. candidature: the period of time during which a person is a student for their HDR.
- d. credit for prior learning (CPL): credit granted for relevant prior learning.
- e. Head of Academic Unit nominee: a senior member of academic staff who is qualified as a principal supervisor.
- f. higher degree by research (HDR): a doctoral degree or a research masters degree in which an approved program of research leads to an original contribution to the field of research and/or practice.
- g. international student: not an Australian citizen or permanent resident or New Zealand citizen.
- h. maximum completion date: the prescribed time limit for the degree, which is the date by which the thesis must be submitted, including any approved extensions.
- i. partner: a person who (regardless of sex or gender) lives in a relationship as a couple with another person on a genuine domestic basis. The definition also includes a former spouse or de facto partner of the student.
- j. recognition of prior learning (RPL): a process used to assess an individual's relevant prior learning (including formal, informal and non-formal learning) to determine the credit that may be granted.



## Status and Details

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