

Maximum Time Completion of Programs Schedule

Schedule to the [Awards and Graduation Policy](#)

Section 1 - Introduction

- (1) This Schedule supports the implementation of the [Governance Rule](#) and [Program Design and Management Manual](#) and sets out the maximum time for students to complete their program in order to receive the relevant award.
- (2) In the event of an inconsistency between lower level policy documents and a Rule(s) or Schedule to the Rule(s), the Rule(s) made by Council prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

Section 2 - Program Structures

- (3) For individual program requirements, refer to the relevant awards and programs schedule.

Section 3 - Policy Provisions/Principles

Coursework Students

- (4) For Coursework students who commenced enrolment in the program on or after 1 January 2011.

Program Duration:	
The formula for calculation of maximum time is $N+2$ where N is equal to the usual full-time duration of the program, except for undergraduate honours programs.	
Enabling program	Not applicable
Undergraduate diploma of 80 units	4 years
Undergraduate program of 240 units	8 years
Undergraduate program of 320 units	10 years
Undergraduate program of 400 units	12 years
Undergraduate Honours program	3 years
Postgraduate coursework program of 40 units	3 years
Postgraduate coursework program of 80 units	4 years
Postgraduate coursework program of 120 units	5 years
Postgraduate coursework program of 160 units	6 years
Postgraduate coursework program of 240 units	8 years

(5) The period refers to elapsed years from the date of admission, inclusive of periods of leave of absence, exclusion or academic suspension.

Higher Degree by Research Students

(6) For candidates enrolled in Higher Degree by Research programs, the stated program duration applies, regardless of the commencement date of the candidature. The program durations for the Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy are set to reflect the Australian Government Research Training Scheme grant conditions. The maximum time period is calculated from the date of the student's commencement in the program.

Master of Philosophy	The maximum time for completion of the program is two years (full time equivalent) exclusive of periods of leave of absence, exclusion or academic suspension.
Doctor of Philosophy	The maximum time for completion of the program is four years (full time equivalent) exclusive of periods of leave of absence, exclusion or academic suspension.
Higher Doctoral Degree	The maximum time for completion of the program is one year from admission to candidature, with no provision for part-time enrolment or leave of absence, exclusion or academic suspension.

Section 4 - Relaxing Provision

(7) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any case, the President of Academic Senate, on the recommendation of the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor or relevant College Pro Vice-Chancellor, may relax any provision of this Schedule provided that the relaxation:

- a. does not compromise compliance with external obligations (including but not limited to contractual, legislative or accreditation requirements);
- b. does not override a decision made under a formal delegation of authority;
- c. does not replace a decision that is subject to a formal delegation of authority; and
- d. gives due consideration to the principles of procedural fairness.

Section 5 - Reporting

(8) The President of the Academic Senate will report all applications of the relaxing provision of this Schedule to the Academic Senate.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	12th November 2025
Review Date	12th November 2025
Approval Authority	President Academic Senate
Approval Date	11th November 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Belinda Yourn Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic & Global)
Enquiries Contact	John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance Student Central

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Academic Senate" - The Academic Senate of the University as described in the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Council" - The governing authority of the University established under section 8A of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Enabling program" - A tertiary preparation program offered to domestic students.

"Award" - When referring to a University qualification, this term means an academic qualification approved by Academic Senate that is conferred when a student has met the relevant program requirements. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Candidature" - The period of time between acceptance of offer and termination, withdrawal from, or completion of a higher degree by research program, including periods when a candidate is not enrolled.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Candidate" - With regard to Higher Degree by Research it has the same meaning as student. For all other instances it is a person considered for appointment to a position.

"Postgraduate" - Any qualification being at the level of Graduate Certificate or above.

"Program" - When referring to learning, a program is a sequence of approved learning, usually leading to an Award. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Undergraduate" - Refers to any qualification up to and including the level of a Bachelor Honours degree.

"Unit" - When referring to an academic unit, unit means the proportional amount of academic credit allotted to a course. This term is used to define the requirements for a program award of the University and indicate a student's enrolment load. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.