

Masters Degree (Research) Awards and Programs Schedule

Schedule to [Higher Degree by Research Policy](#)

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) As a higher education provider authorised to self-accredit, the University of Newcastle is responsible under the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#) for ensuring that programs comply with the Provider Course [Program] Accreditation Standards. This Schedule provides the detailed principles and criteria that underpin the self-accreditation process for each Masters Degree (Research) award that may be delivered and conferred by the University of Newcastle.

(2) This Schedule supports the implementation of the [Higher Degree by Research Policy](#). The Rules describe each type of higher degree by research qualification offered by the University and provide descriptions of authorisations for program management.

(3) Within the Schedule the general program principles and structures have been tabulated and the approved programs that are offered under it will be listed in the Appendices - Table A - Approved Programs covered by this Schedule).

(4) In the event of an inconsistency between subordinate policy documents and any Rule(s) or Schedule to the Rule(s), the Rule(s) made by Council prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

(5) In the event of an inconsistency between an Academic Senate policy document and a College policy, procedure or guideline, the policy document of Academic Senate prevails to the extent of the inconsistency.

(6) Extracts from [AQF \(Second Edition\)](#) have been included in this document with permission of the [Australian Qualification Framework](#) Council (27 February 2012).

Section 2 - Transition Arrangements for Implementation of this Schedule

(7) This schedule supports the Academic Senate strategy of offering [AQF](#)-compliant programs as soon as possible. During the transition to the new schedule, the pre-2013 Awards and Programs Schedules will remain in the [Policy Library](#) with an annotation to indicate that their [AQF](#)-compliant status has not been confirmed. Between 2013 - 2015 current program offerings will be reviewed and, following the approval from the Program and Course Approval Committee, transferred to Table A of this Schedule.

(8) The introduction of the new schedules is expected to result in recommendations from College Boards for new programs, major revisions and the transition arrangements and discontinuations of existing programs. These recommendations will be considered for approval by the Program and Course Approval Committee in accordance with the delegations held by that Committee.

(9) Through this transition process the Assistant Dean (Education) will be responsible to the Program and Course Approval Committee for ensuring that continuing higher degree by research candidates will not be disadvantaged by a program revision or discontinuation and:

- a. appropriate teach-out or alternative arrangements have been made for current candidates; and
- b. consideration is given to international applicants in accordance with the [ESOS](#) legislation.

(10) The Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar together with the Assistant Dean (Education) and the relevant Program Convenors will be responsible for ensuring that candidates and staff are notified of any relevant program changes. This notification may include recent graduates who may seek to upgrade their programs for [AQF](#) compliance.

(11) Programs offering admission to candidates in 2015 will need to operate under an [AQF](#) compliant schedule no later than June 2014 to ensure AQF compliance from 2015.

(12) Non-[AQF](#) compliant programs will be automatically discontinued by last meeting of Academic Senate in 2014 unless they have been approved for continuation.

Section 3 - Principles and Program Structures

Model:- Masters Degree (Research)

(13) This table describes an AQF level 9 program leading to the award of Masters Degree (Research) under the Rules Governing Higher Degrees by Research clause 18.

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| Volume of learning | 160 Units typically completed in 2 years of full-time study or equivalent. |
| Purpose | The Masters Degree (Research) will be an ungraded degree awarded for a significant contribution achieved through a program of advanced study and research to any branch of learning of concern to the College in which the candidate is enrolled. |
| Maximum Time | The program shall be completed and submitted for examination in: i) not less than one year of full-time enrolment or equivalent part-time enrolment, from admission to candidature, except with the permission of the Dean of Graduate Research; and ii) not more than two full-time years of enrolment or equivalent part-time enrolment from admission to candidature, except with the permission of the Dean of Graduate Research. |
| Principles and Structure | A candidate will be admitted to a program of advanced study and research approved and completed to the satisfaction of the Head of School. The research will primarily be embodied in a thesis; and other work as approved by the Head of School may be submitted and considered in conjunction with the thesis. |
| Admission and Selection Criteria | To be eligible for admission to candidature an applicant shall have satisfied: i) all of the requirements for admission to the degree of Bachelor with Honours Class 1 or Honours Class II, Division 1 or any other degree approved for this purpose by the Head of School; or ii) all the requirements for admission to a degree of Bachelor in the University or another degree approved for this purpose by the Head of School on the recommendation of the relevant School; or iii) in exceptional cases produce evidence of possessing such other academic or professional qualifications and/or experience as may be approved by the Head of School; or iv) in the disciplines of education, medical physics, nursing, social work, social sciences and surgery have completed a minimum standard of professional experience as required by the Head of School on the recommendation of the School. v) the English language proficiency requirements as described in the English Language Policy . An applicant shall not be admitted to candidature unless adequate supervision and resources are available, as determined by the Head of School after considering the advice from the School. |

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| Specialisation or major | This section is intentionally blank. | |
| Additional Requirements | May be prescribed by a School. | |
| Graduate Learning Outcomes | <p>Graduate learning outcomes underpin the design of all academic programs offered by the University. Graduate learning outcomes will be developed for each program in accordance with Academic Senate policy and as prescribed by AQF including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) fundamental skills, such as literacy and numeracy appropriate to the Level 9 Masters Degree (Research), including English language proficiency; ii) people skills, such as working with others and communication skills; iii) thinking skills, such as learning to learn, decision making and problem solving; and iv) personal skills such as self-direction and acting with integrity. | |
| i | Knowledge | <p>Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will have discipline specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) a body of knowledge that includes the understanding of recent developments in one or more disciplines; and ii) advanced knowledge of research principles and methods applicable to the field of work or learning |
| ii | Skills | <p>Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will have discipline specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) cognitive skills to demonstrate mastery of theoretical knowledge and to reflect critically on theory and its application; ii) cognitive, technical and creative skills to investigate, analyse and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories and to apply established theories to different bodies of knowledge or practice; iii) cognitive, technical and creative skills to generate and evaluate complex ideas and concepts at an abstract level; iv) cognitive and technical skills to design, use and evaluate research and research methods; v) communication and technical skills to present a coherent and sustained argument and to disseminate research results to specialist and non-specialist audiences; and vi) technical and communication skills to design, evaluate, implement, analyse, theorise and disseminate research that makes a contribution to knowledge. |
| iii | Application of Knowledge and Skills | <p>Graduates of a Masters Degree (Research) will demonstrate the discipline specific application of knowledge and skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) with creativity and initiative to new situations and/or for further learning; ii) with high level personal autonomy and accountability iii) to plan and execute a substantial piece of research. |
| Qualification for the Award | The candidate will be recommended for admission to the degree by the Dean of Graduate Research on the advice of the Research Training Sub-Committee. | |
| Grading of the Award | The award will be conferred as an ordinary award. | |
| Qualification Title | Master of Philosophy | |
| Pathways - General | Our pathways for candidates have been developed in accordance with the AQF Qualifications Pathways Policy . Approved entry pathways are described in Admission and Selection Criteria in this table. | |
| Pathways - Credit and advanced standing | <p>Credit is not consistent with the framework of a Higher Degree by Research and therefore cannot be granted. A candidate enrolled in a Doctoral Degree (Research) may be permitted to transfer to the Masters Degree (Research) with approval from the supervisor, School and Dean of Graduate Research. Transferring candidates will be required to satisfy the Masters Degree (Research) confirmation requirement if not previously confirmed at Doctoral Degree level. Except with the permission of the Dean of Graduate Research candidates who transfer from a Doctoral Degree shall be deemed to have commenced candidature from the time of admission to the Doctoral Degree.</p> | |
| Pathways - Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) | <p>For Research degrees RPL is a process that assesses the individual's formal, non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes or standards for entry to a qualification. Research degree candidates are assessed on research experience: i.e. demonstrated research experience that is equivalent to the standard of Honours Class II, Division 1 such as professional work experience in a research environment, published papers in refereed journals, conference papers or equivalent creative material. RPL will not be recognised for credit or advanced standing in a research degree.</p> | |

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| Pathways - combined degree | A candidate for the degree will not be permitted to enrol in any other degree or award whether of this or another tertiary institution, except with the permission of the Dean of Graduate Research. Candidates in a Jointly Awarded Doctoral Degree or Dual Award Doctoral Degree (DADD) program will be concurrently enrolled at the partner institution and the University of Newcastle. |
| Pathways - nested or integrated qualifications | Nested or integrated qualifications are not consistent with the framework of a Masters Degree (Research). |
| Pathways - Exit | There is no exit award from a Masters Degree (Research). |
| Pathways - Graduate | Graduates of this program may seek admission to a Doctoral Degree (Research). |
| Professional Accreditation | This section is intentionally blank. |
| Additional Information | Submission of thesis for examination The candidate shall submit a copy of the thesis in accordance with the provisions of the Rules Governing Higher Degrees by Research and the Thesis Preparation and Submission Guidelines . Examination of thesis The Dean of Graduate Research will appoint two examiners and at least one reserve, none of whom shall normally be a member of the staff of the University. |

Section 4 - Notes

(14) Other Information about Programs - may be added here.

Section 5 - Relaxing Provision

(15) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in any particular case, the President of Academic Senate, on the recommendation of the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor or relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor may relax any provision of this Schedule.

Section 6 - Reporting

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

Status and Details

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| Status | Historic |
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| Responsible Executive | Mark Hoffman Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President |
| Enquiries Contact | John Radvan Senior Manager, Academic Governance & Compliance <hr/> 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.

"Graduate" - (Noun) Has the same meaning as in section 3(2) of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Class" - When referring to a class attended by Students, a class is any teaching and learning activity of a course. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Advanced standing" - A form of credit for any previous learning as defined by the Australian Qualifications Framework.

"Applicant" - Where referring to a student, an applicant is an individual seeking entry to a program or course offered by the University or its partner organisation/s. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"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.

"Credit" - When referring to course credit, credit is the recognition of equivalence in content and learning outcomes between different types of learning and/or qualifications. Credit can reduce the amount of learning required to achieve a qualification. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"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.

"Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)" - Means an assessment of an individual's prior learning to determine where

credit will be granted. RPL includes formal, informal, and non-formal learning.

"Volume of learning" - Identifies the notional duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a particular AQF qualification type. It is expressed in equivalent full-time years.

"Discontinued" - When used in relation to a program, this refers to a program for which no new intakes are to be accepted. For all other uses the generic definition applies.

"Discontinuation" - When used in relation to a program, this refers to a program for which no new intakes are to be accepted. For all other uses the generic definition applies.

"Dual Award Doctoral Degree (DADD)" - Is an arrangement whereby a doctoral degree candidate is jointly supervised by the University and another institution, is enrolled at both institutions, and receives two testamurs, each acknowledging the dual award. Each DADD candidature is governed by an individual Candidate Agreement.

"Exit award" - An academic qualification that is conferred when a student has met the program requirements of a linked program within the same field of study as listed in the relevant Awards and Programs Schedule.

"Learning outcome" - In accordance with the AQF definitions, the expression of a 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.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"School" - An organisational unit forming part of a College or Division, responsible for offering a particular course.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.

"Major" - When referring to a program major, this is a sequence of courses approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee, which students may be required to complete as part of their undergraduate program (except undergraduate Diplomas). Each major will contain at least 80 units with at least 60 unique units. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Specialisation" - When referring to a program, a specialisation is a sequence of courses, approved by the Program and Course Approval Committee, which students may be required to complete as part of their postgraduate coursework program. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.

"College Board" - The principal governance committee of the College.