Code of Practice for Higher Degree by Research Candidature

Section 1 - Introduction

Summary

(1) This Code describes the responsibilities of higher degree by research (HDR) candidates, their supervisors, respective Colleges, Schools and the University of Newcastle (the University) relating to HDR candidature. This Code forms the basis of understanding and commitment between all parties. This document is guided by the Higher Education Standards Framework and supports the University's Higher Degree by Research Policy and Higher Degrees by Research Procedure.

Scope

(2) This Code applies to all HDR candidates, their supervisors, including external supervisors, and other staff within Colleges and Schools and elsewhere at the University with responsibilities for HDR candidature.

Purpose

(3) The purpose of this Code is to provide a foundation for an outstanding HDR student experience by outlining the minimum responsibilities of all parties to ensure mutual understanding. This Code should be referenced throughout the lifecycle of a candidate's program.

Section 2 - Candidate Responsibilities

(4) Undertaking an HDR program requires dedication and accountability. In accepting an offer of admission, a candidate agrees to comply with the rules, policies and procedures of the University, including maintaining the standards of professional behaviour with all University staff and fellow candidates as described in the University's Student Conduct Rule and Student Code of Conduct. The student-supervisor relationship is a critical relationship in ensuring successful and timely completion. The relationship is first and foremost a professional, not a personal relationship.

Commencement

(5) Be an active participant in the selection and appointment of the supervisory team.

(6) Complete the HDR Supervisory Expectations Form in consultation with the supervisory team within the first six months of candidature.

Supervision

(7) Promptly advise a member of the supervisory team of any significant factors that may affect progress, and initiate any variations to candidature as required.

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(8) Be aware of the School/University mechanisms that exist for resolving supervisor-candidate difficulties and access assistance when necessary. Candidates may seek a change of supervisor in some circumstances.

(9) Inform the supervisory team of any supervisor changes instigated by the candidate.

Training and induction

(10) Complete any required University induction programs, as well as any additional orientation or training sessions required by the School/University. This includes mandatory training requirements as outlined in the [Higher Degrees by Research Procedure](#).

(11) Be aware of additional research training opportunities offered by the School/University, noting that the research training calendar is accessible through the [HDR HQ SharePoint site](#).

Resources

(12) Utilise the resources, facilities and opportunities available to ensure progress, and where additional resources or facilities are required, discuss these requirements with the supervisory team.

Culture

(13) Actively engage with the research community in the School/University, including at research seminars organised by the Schools and Institutes and through attendance at University research and innovation events.

(14) Contribute to the wider research culture of the University by communicating and disseminating their research at the HDR Student Festival.

(15) Spend the majority of candidature studying on-campus to connect with other researchers and foster collaboration.

Progress and reporting

(16) Maintain continuous enrolment and regular attendance patterns or seek approval for leave of absence if necessary (See: [Re-Enrolment guide for Research Higher Degree Candidates](#)). Candidates are to apply themselves diligently to their research, make every effort to achieve satisfactory academic progress with their research project, and aim to complete the program within the specified timeframe.

(17) Candidates may undertake approved periods of research activities (e.g. industry placement, research internships, professional practice) at other organisations following approval of their [Notification of Internship Form](#) and execution of any formal agreements required between the University, host organisation and candidate.

(18) Determine a regular schedule of meetings with the supervisory team and adhere to this schedule. These arrangements may need to be re-negotiated as candidature progresses. In the case of off-campus enrolments, candidates are required to meet in person with their supervisor(s) at least twice annually (including for confirmation and the HDR Festival) and ensure that appropriate facilities are utilised for the purposes of more regular meetings.

(19) Refer to the [HDR Supervisory Expectations](#) document at least annually and review and update it as appropriate, ensuring that the most recent copy is shared with the School for record keeping.

(20) In consultation with the supervisory team, develop and maintain the research plan and detailed timeline, with milestones, for completion of the research project and thesis write-up.

(21) Document the progress of work and present written or other material to the supervisory team for comment, feedback and discussion in a timely manner to allow for continuity of the research program.

(22) Take the initiative in raising problems, difficulties or delays relating to candidature with the Deputy Head of School (Research Training) and seek to resolve such matters as expeditiously as possible.

(23) Satisfy all confirmation and progression requirements, and submit all confirmation reports, progress reports and other reports as required.

(24) Regularly access the student email account as a means of maintaining communication with the University. Official communication from the University, including from Graduate Research, will be sent to the candidate's University of Newcastle issued email address.

Research ethics, integrity and safety

(25) Adhere to ethical practices in research appropriate to the particular discipline and relevant profession, including those required by:

  a. the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#);
  b. the University's [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#);
  c. any practices specified by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee and Animal Care and Ethics Committee (see [ReSearch Hub](#) for details); and
  d. any ethical guidelines that may be set down by a relevant government or funding body.

(26) Seek advice from supervisors and other relevant experts on any application for ethics approval.

(27) Maintain safe working practices relevant to the field of research and adhere to relevant documents within the University [Health and Safety Management System](#).

(28) Ensure that agreement is reached regarding who will have access to research data (raw and processed data) and at what stage of the research process. All raw and processed data must be recorded in a retrievable, durable and appropriately referenced form, and made available to supervisors at any time during candidature. Ensure that all original data is managed in accordance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and the University's [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#), and retained and disposed of in accordance with the University's [Research Data and Primary Materials Management Procedure](#).

(29) Ensure that agreement is reached with supervisors and other research collaborators concerning authorship of publications and other research outputs, and acknowledgment of relative contributions during and after candidature. Any publications arising from a candidate's thesis research must include the candidate's name. It should not be automatically assumed that the supervisors' names will appear on all such published work, however, it should be acknowledged that supervisors and the University make a major contribution to the candidate's progress. Note: the minimum requirement for authorship should be in accordance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), and the University's [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#) and [Research Authorship Procedure](#).

Completion

(30) Prepare the thesis for examination in the format prescribed in the Higher Degrees by Research Procedure, including making the required thesis declarations.

(31) Prepare the thesis in accordance with the principles of research integrity as stipulated in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) including authorship, plagiarism and research ethics, and ensure that any editorial assistance in the writing of the thesis is appropriately acknowledged.

(32) After examination, make any required amendments to the thesis within the specified timeframe.

(33) As required, ensure any scholarship contributions made to candidature is acknowledged in the thesis.

Section 3 - Supervisor Responsibilities

(34) All HDR candidates must have a minimum of two supervisors. The responsibilities listed are shared between the principal supervisor and the co-supervisor(s). The principal supervisor is normally within the same School as the candidate and is the primary contact person with responsibility for the requirements of candidature, including progress reporting.

(35) Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the role model they demonstrate to candidates encourages a research culture of excellence, integrity, professionalism and mutual respect.

(36) The student-supervisor relationship is a critical relationship in ensuring successful and timely completion. The relationship is first and foremost a professional, not a personal relationship. Supervisors should be aware of their obligations in regard to ensuring appropriate professional boundaries are established and maintained with students.

Commencement

(37) Provide initial guidance to the candidate about the nature of research and the standard of performance expected, including:

a. the choice of research topic;
b. planning of the research program;
c. presentation of a research proposal;
d. appropriate literature and sources; and
e. research methodologies and requisite techniques.

(38) Undertake early assessment of the candidate's work, establish formative feedback loops to provide regular feedback on academic progress, and identify needs for additional support.

(39) The Principal Supervisor will take carriage of completing the Supervisory Expectations document in a meeting with the candidate and all supervisors within the first six months (FTE) of candidature, including submission of the document to the School for review and record-keeping.

Supervision

(40) Notify the Head of School of any perceived or actual conflicts of interest between the members of the supervisory team and/or the candidate in accordance with the University's Conflict of Interest Policy and Conflict of Interest Procedure. In cases of conflict, mitigation strategies must be put in place consistent with the University's requirements for managing and monitoring conflicts of interest as required in the Conflict of Interest Policy. For example, where two supervisors are a couple, an additional supervisor must be appointed. Supervisors are responsible for proactively identifying conflicts of interest in line with the Conflict of Interest Procedure. Conflicts of interest may include, but are not limited to:

a. supervisors being related to one another;
b. supervisors being in a close personal relationship;
c. the candidate being related to one of the supervisors;
d. the candidate being in a close personal relationship with a supervisor;
e. the supervisor has a role and/or private interest in an organisation providing a scholarship or other funding to the candidate; or
f. the principal supervisor being the candidate's work supervisor (e.g. Head of School if the candidate is a staff member). Note: A supervisor who is also a work supervisor for casual appointments does not constitute a

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conflict of interest under this section.

(41) Follow appropriate guidelines and advice in making decisions on the employment of candidates.

(42) Be mindful of the particular requirements of each candidate and ensure appropriate and productive use of the candidate's time, especially in the first year of candidature.

(43) Encourage the candidate to show initiative and self-motivation so that the candidate will be able to pursue independent research with confidence, particularly in the final stages of candidature.

(44) Strongly encourage, wherever appropriate, the publication of the results of the candidate's research in accordance with the appropriate University authorship policies.

(45) Assist candidates in developing the necessary skills for peer review, and to understand their obligation to participate in peer reviews.

(46) Ensure that where a change in research direction occurs, appropriate supervisory adjustments are negotiated in consultation with the candidate and the Deputy Head of School (Research Training).

(47) Advise the candidate of any expected absence and the alternative arrangements to be implemented for supervision during that absence, following consultation with the Deputy Head of School (Research Training).

(48) Advise the candidate of any changing circumstances in relation to supervisory availability, including withdrawal of supervision, following consultation with the Deputy Head of School (Research Training).

Training and induction

(49) Undertake supervisor professional development and other development activities pertaining to supervising research as required to maintain status on the Supervisors Register.

(50) Keep up to date with changes to supervisory practice and procedures, including completion of any mandatory requirements as directed by the University.

(51) Oversee and engage in active discussions with the candidate from the start of candidature around the development of discipline specific research skills, general academic skills and career capabilities, including opportunities for industry engagement and internships.

Resources

(52) Maintain an up-to-date research profile in the University's relevant system. For supervisors external to the University, information should be provided to the School/University as requested.

Culture

(53) Encourage the candidate to play a full and active role in the intellectual life of the School/University. This is particularly important in the case of part-time candidates and candidates whose major work is being conducted away from the University campus, for example in a joint project with a commercial or industry partner.

(54) Actively support the candidate to participate in the annual HDR Student Festival in such a way that develops their communication skills and ability to explain and critique theoretical propositions, methodologies and conclusions.

(55) Attend the HDR Student Festival themselves and contribute to a supportive research environment for all candidates.

(56) Arrange meetings for the candidate with other Researchers, industry and community groups in the relevant field,

and attendance at conferences, as appropriate (within the limits of resources available).

(57) Promote positive interactions within the School academic community and across the University, to encourage sharing of resources and expertise and to develop multi-disciplinary connections and opportunities.

Progress and reporting

(58) Establish and maintain a schedule of regular (ordinarily at least fortnightly) contact with the candidate, balanced in terms of the needs of the project and the candidate. Off-campus candidates should use appropriate technology for the purposes of the regular meetings, with face-to-face meetings held at least twice annually.

(59) Provide guidance to candidates in preparing for a timely and successful confirmation.

(60) Contribute to all progress reviews of a candidate, as required. All supervisors, including those external to the University, must be consulted by the principal supervisor and their feedback included in the supervisory comments on the progress report form.

(61) Ensure that the candidate provides regular written work, interim reports or research results as appropriate and to return such work, including draft thesis writing, with appropriate feedback and critique, ordinarily within one month of receipt.

(62) Ensure that the candidate is made aware of inadequate progress by specifying the problems and suggesting ways of addressing them. These discussions should involve the Deputy Head of School (Research Training) or HDR Convenor and may involve the development of a School Progress Support Plan to assist in monitoring milestones.

(63) Ensure that unsatisfactory progress or delays are reported and addressed promptly and appropriately (e.g. by applying a School Progress Support Plan, seeking additional assistance from the Head of School/Deputy Head of School (Research Training) or Graduate Research as needed).

(64) Be satisfied that the research methods and outcomes of the candidate are appropriate and valid, and to report any concerns to the appropriate authority.

(65) Work with the candidate to develop a detailed timeline, including milestones, and provide detailed advice on necessary completion dates of successive stages of work so that the thesis may be submitted within the scheduled time.

Research ethics, integrity and safety

(66) Ensure that the candidate is adequately trained in safe working practices relevant to the particular field of research, and adheres to relevant documents within the University Health and Safety Management System.

(67) Ensure that the candidate is aware of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and the University's Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and, in particular, of the need to follow ethical practices appropriate to the particular discipline and profession.

(68) Advise the candidate of appropriate ethical practices and where required, scrutinise and endorse an application that meets the requirements of the University and any other appropriate ethics committee, ensuring that approval is obtained before the research commences, and that the research is conducted in accordance with the terms of approval from the ethics committee(s).

(69) Ensure adherence to the University Intellectual Property Policy and its associated documents.

(70) Ensure that the candidate records original data in a retrievable, durable and appropriately referenced form and stored safely for a period appropriate to the discipline, in accordance with the University's Research Data and Primary

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[Materials Management Procedure](#) and, where appropriate, include the lodging of datasets with national data archives.

(71) Ensure that agreement is reached with the candidate concerning authorship of publications and other research outputs in alignment with the [Research Authorship Procedure](#) and acknowledgment of relative contributions during and after candidature. Any publications arising from a candidate's thesis research must include the candidate's name. It should not be automatically assumed that the supervisors' names will appear on all such published work, however, it should be acknowledged that supervisors and the University make a major contribution to the candidate's progress.

(72) Note: the minimum requirement for authorship should be in accordance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), and the University's [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#) and [Research Authorship Procedure](#).

Completion

(73) Advise the Head of School or Deputy Head of School (Research Training) of the names of possible appropriately qualified examiners. The candidate may advise the supervisor and the Head of School or Deputy Head of School of names of persons who may be appropriate or otherwise. Examiner nominations should be received by Graduate Research no less than eight weeks prior to submission of the thesis for examination. The names of any examiners are not to be disclosed to the candidate during the examination process, unless candidates are completing an in-person examination as part of their creative component examination.

(74) Ensure the thesis adheres to the principles of research integrity as stipulated in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) including authorship, plagiarism and research ethics, and that any editorial assistance in the writing of the thesis is appropriately acknowledged.

Section 4 - School/College Responsibilities

(75) The School will provide candidates and supervisors with the appropriate support, facilities and academic culture to thrive in their research.

(76) Each School will appoint a senior academic member of staff as the Deputy Head of School (Research Training) to oversee the HDR portfolio. The appointee will have high standing within their research field and an outstanding track record in PhD supervision.

Commencement

(77) Operate selection and admission procedures which, at a minimum, ensures that:

a. the applicant has the requisite academic background for admission;
b. the applicant appears to have the capacity required to undertake the program successfully and in a reasonable time;
c. the research project proposed is appropriate in level and scope for the degree;
d. the project is feasible in terms of facilities, including expert supervision, equipment, resources, source materials and funding for the expected duration of the research required for the HDR candidature;
e. due recognition is given to the research interests and ability of the applicant and that consultation occurs in determining the project; and
f. information is available to prospective candidates about the research interests and academic experience of all staff who supervise higher degree research programs within the School, and where appropriate, a list of available research areas likely to support a research candidate.

Supervision

(78) Ensure that appropriate supervision is available to the candidate at all times and that:

a. no perceived or actual conflict of interest exists, in accordance with the University's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and [Conflict of Interest Procedure](#);

b. where a perceived or actual conflict of interest exists, a mitigation strategy is put in place consistent with the University's requirements for managing and monitoring conflicts of interest as required in the Conflict of Interest Policy;

c. each candidate has a minimum of two supervisors: a principal supervisor and a co-supervisor with relevant research expertise. Additional supervisors can be included if needed to ensure adequate overall supervision for the candidate, subject to approval from the Dean of Graduate Research;

d. the principal supervisor has appropriate expertise and interest in the area of research, is active in research and publishing in, or otherwise making original contributions to, a relevant field or discipline, and has sufficient experience and capacity in supervision to offer the candidate adequate supervision;

e. the minimum contribution from any supervisor should be 20 per cent with the principal supervisor having the highest (or equal highest) percentage contribution. A special case must be made to the Dean of Graduate Research for a lower level contribution (for instance in the cases of industry supervisors or specialist technical supervisors, or where a cohort model is being used);

f. if the principal supervisor has not previously supervised a HDR candidate through to successful completion, there must be an experienced co-supervisor who has supervised to completion and who has at least a 35 per cent supervisory load;

g. the principal supervisor is a University member of staff or is otherwise formally contracted and accountable to the provider for supervisory duties for the length of candidature, unless approved by the Dean of Graduate Research;

h. the principal supervisor is not themselves a HDR candidate, unless approved by the Dean of Graduate Research;

i. the principal supervisor holds a doctoral degree, unless approved by the Dean of Graduate Research;

j. the supervisory role and contribution of each supervisor is specified at admission, however, can be amended throughout candidature whilst remaining consistent with the requirement specified above. Any changes to supervisory teams, including load changes, must be notified to Graduate Research;

k. the workload of supervisors allows sufficient time for the adequate supervision of the candidate, and the allocation of supervisors has taken into consideration any Honours students being supervised, as well as teaching load and other obligations. Supervisor load should not exceed 5 EFTSL, with an appropriate balance of candidates supervised at any one time, as advised by the Dean of Graduate Research; and

l. if the principal supervisor is to be temporarily absent in excess of a period of four weeks, alternative supervisory arrangements are made by the School and the candidate and Graduate Research are notified.

Training and induction

(79) Provide orientation programs for candidates and their supervisors, to clarify procedures, give advice and discuss the expectations of candidates and staff on matters including, but not limited to:

a. the timing and process for confirmation;

b. access to facilities and resources;

c. opportunities to engage in the School and University research community; and

d. access to research and conference funding.

(80) Schools may issue additional documentation to HDR candidates at School induction/orientation sessions.

(81) Ensure that training workshops in ethical issues and procedures, research integrity, health and safety procedures, environmental protection and any technical matters relevant to the discipline are delivered.

Resources

(82) Ensure that candidates are only admitted where there are suitable physical facilities and research resources appropriate to the field of study.

(83) Ensure the agreed resources needed to complete a high-quality research project are provided to HDR candidates (acknowledging access to physical space and resources are on a shared basis).

(84) At a minimum, each on-campus candidate should have access to the following:

    a. a desk, chair and workspace;

    b. a lockable filing cabinet or cupboard;

    c. sufficient access to a photocopier and printer so that progress on the research project is not impaired;

    d. sufficient access to computer facilities and software programs, and training to use such programs, so that progress on the research project and thesis preparation is not impaired; and

    e. where appropriate, sufficient laboratory facilities (including consumables) and bench space so that progress on the research project is not impinged upon.

(85) For external HDR candidates, the level of resources to be provided is agreed between the candidate and the School and documented at the time of enrolment or upon approval of off-campus enrolment.

(86) Ensure that candidates have opportunity to provide feedback to the Head of School or Deputy Head of School (Research Training) regarding any issues around the provision of resources.

(87) Work with Graduate Research to ensure clear information is provided to candidates on the facilities and resources available within the University (e.g. library, computing and technical facilities, software and computer training, statistical advice, or English language tuition).

Culture

(88) Ensure mechanisms are in place to promote regular consultation, interaction and development of productive intellectual relationships between HDR candidates and other Researchers, both within the University and globally, including, but not limited to:

    a. the election of a HDR candidate as a representative to an appropriate representative body of the School or College;

    b. seminars on research procedures relevant to postgraduate-level research;

    c. a regular program of seminars delivered by research candidates in the School's research areas;

    d. opportunities for all confirmed HDR candidates to present their research as part of the University's annual HDR Student Festival;

    e. supervisors being available to provide support, mentorship and feedback to HDR candidates at the annual HDR Student Festival;

    f. seminars and research training to provide information and skills development; and

    g. guidance on matters relating to authorship of publications, ownership of intellectual property, exploitation of inventions, and retention of data.

(89) Ensure that, where by prior arrangement a candidate is conducting the majority of their research away from the University, steps are taken to ensure the candidate is given the opportunity to have as active a role as circumstances

permit in the intellectual life of the School and University.

Progress and reporting

(90) Appoint a senior academic staff member to monitor the general progress and welfare of HDR candidates, ensuring that the Dean of Graduate Research is consulted on the appointment.

(91) Clearly communicate School expectations on the timing and mode of presentation of reports by which a candidate's progress is assessed.

(92) Ensure that confirmation committees are established to assess the performance of the candidate within twelve months of the commencement of candidature (on a full-time basis, or part-time equivalent). To ensure that confirmation is completed within this timeframe, the first confirmation should be scheduled at around nine months (or part-time equivalent) to allow time to integrate formative feedback if a second confirmation attempt is required.

(93) Ensure that clear milestones are set and reviewed for the duration of candidature, by consultation between the candidate and the supervisory team, to ensure completion of the thesis within the prescribed time requirements.

(94) Ensure supervisory teams report on the progress of their candidates as required.

(95) Ensure the candidate's research project is not unduly influenced or redirected by political, commercial or industrial factors.

(96) The Associate Dean (Research) is responsible for oversight of HDR program quality assurance activities within their College and is appointed a member of the Research Training Sub-Committee.

Research ethics, integrity and safety

(97) Ensure candidates receive adequate supervision of research protocols, and that all research conducted complies with ethical, health and safety, environmental protection, research integrity and other required protocols. Where appropriate, responsibility for providing supervision of a candidate's research protocols can be assigned to someone not on the supervisory team, subject to their express written agreement.

Completion

(98) Ensure that each thesis examination is conducted by at least two experts of international standing in the discipline. In accordance with the Higher Degree by Research Policy, examiners must be external to the University, independent of the conduct of the research, and without any real or perceived conflict of interest in reaching their decision.

Section 5 - Institutional Responsibilities

(99) The University will ensure that policies relating to HDR candidature are developed, implemented, monitored and regularly reviewed.

Commencement

(100) Ensure adequate and accurate University wide information is provided to candidates and their supervisors prior to enrolment.

(101) Ensure that the policies and procedures for the allocation of scholarships are widely available and include clearly defined eligibility and selection criteria, as well as information regarding scholarship conditions.

Supervision

(102) Promote an institution-wide culture of supervisory excellence, including through the maintenance of a Supervisors Register.

(103) Provide information to supervisors and candidates regarding the necessity to comply with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and the University's [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#) and are aware, where applicable, of the working procedures of the ethics committees.

Training and induction

(104) Provide all candidates with an induction and orientation program, including provision of an online resource that provides access to a central point-of-contact for information about:

  a. policies and procedures for HDR students;
  b. intellectual property;
  c. research ethics and conduct;
  d. library support;
  e. information technology services; and
  f. independent advice and support services.

(105) Offer candidates access to a University research training resource which includes access to training in academic and transferable skills.

(106) Provide a formal induction and orientation program for all new supervisors.

(107) Provide a comprehensive program of development workshops to all supervisors and potential supervisors.

(108) Ensure the intellectual property rights of all parties are clearly stated.

Resources

(109) Ensure all commencing HDR candidates receive a laptop computer.

(110) Ensure the University's administrative processes assist candidates to complete their degrees as expeditiously as possible within the regulations.

(111) Ensure the level of resources provided to candidates is monitored as part of the confirmation process and through regular progress reports for all candidates.

Culture

(112) Promote positive academic cultures within the Schools and University to the benefit of all candidates, which ensure candidates are recognised as involved members of the School and University.

(113) Ensure candidate representation on the Research Training Sub-Committee.

Progress and reporting

(114) Ensure there are progress reporting requirements that enable the views of both staff and candidates to be adequately represented.

(115) Systemically review the periodic progress reports and student experience surveys in order to make improvements to the processes and outcomes for candidates.

(116) Academic Senate and its committees are responsible for monitoring compliance with the [Higher Education Support Act](#) and academic governance.

Research ethics, integrity and safety

(117) Ensure that all proposed research is designed, monitored and reviewed in accordance with relevant national and University codes, policies and guidelines, including, but not limited to:

  a. the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#);
  b. the University's [Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#);
  c. any practices specified by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee and Animal Care and Ethics Committee (see [ReSearch Hub](#) for details); and
  d. any ethical guidelines that may be set down by a relevant government or funding body.

(118) Provide health and safety training to all candidates.

Completion

(119) Ensure there are clear guidelines for examiners on the University's expectations for the award of the degree.

(120) Maintain clear procedures for the nomination and appointment of examiners, conflicts of interest, examination processes, and appeal.

(121) Provide open access to all final theses, unless an approved embargo has been applied.

(122) Provide examiner details only if the examiner(s) specifically approves the release of their identity, unless candidates are completing an oral examination as part of their examination process.

Section 6 - Collective Obligations

Conflicts of Interest

(123) Further to the responsibilities outlined in this document, all staff and students must act ethically, with integrity, and in line with the requirements of the University's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

Respectful Supervisory Relationships

(124) The University supports the [Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships](#), developed jointly by Universities Australia, the National Tertiary Education Union, the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations and the Australian Council of Graduate Research.

(125) The expectations, roles and responsibilities of students and their supervisors must be clear to all parties. This code sets out the responsibilities upon students and supervisors in maintaining a professional relationship, while the University's [Staff Code of Conduct](#) and [Student Code of Conduct](#) outline the principles of honesty, fairness, trust, accountability and respect that all staff and students of the University are to abide by.

Grievances and Complaints

(126) In the first instance, all issues and grievances relating to HDR candidature will be managed in a timely manner to assist in informal resolution at the lowest level possible.

(127) If more significant difficulties arise, representations should be made to the appropriate Head of School and/or Dean of Graduate Research. Candidates and supervisors are expected to seek negotiated solutions to any problems

prior to initiating a formal complaint (See Complaints Process).

(128) The Higher Degree by Research Policy sets out the grounds on which candidates may appeal against evaluation of their candidature.

(129) The University must manage circumstances in accordance with the Student Conduct Rule where a candidate demonstrates:

a. Concerning behaviour;
b. Academic misconduct;
c. Research misconduct; or
d. Non-academic misconduct.

Section 7 - Further References

(130) Student Code of Conduct.

(131) Higher Degree by Research Policy.

(132) Higher Degrees by Research Procedure.

(133) Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

(134) Australian Graduate Research Good Practice Principles.

(135) Guidelines for Resourcing Higher Degree by Research Candidates.

(136) Student Conduct Rule.

(137) Conflict of Interest Policy.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	10th September 2024
Review Date	10th October 2026
Approval Authority	President Academic Senate
Approval Date	10th September 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Kylie Shaw Dean of Graduate Research
Enquiries Contact	Lisa Williams Senior Manager Operations Graduate Research

Glossary Terms and Definitions

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

"Academic misconduct" - Means conduct by a student that is defined as academic misconduct in the Student Conduct Rule.

"Academic staff" - A person employed as an academic staff member or appointed as an academic honorary appointee (including adjunct, clinical, visiting, honorary and conjoint appointments), but does not include persons who are employed solely as teachers or professional staff.

"Campus" - means any place or premises owned or controlled by the University, but may also specifically refer to a designated operating location such as the Callaghan Campus.

"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.

"Concerning behaviour" - Inappropriate, concerning or threatening behaviour exhibited by a student.

"Non-academic misconduct" - Means conduct by a student that is defined as non-academic misconduct in the Student Conduct Rule.

"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.

"Intellectual property" - Intellectual property (IP), as defined by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, refers to creations of the mind: inventions; literary and artistic works; and symbols, names and images used in commerce. Intellectual property is divided into two categories: Industrial property includes patents for inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications; and Copyright covers literary works (such as novels, poems and plays), films, music, artistic works (e.g. drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures) and architectural design. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, producers of phonograms in their recordings, and broadcasters in their radio and television programs.

"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.

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

"Research misconduct" - Means conduct by a student that is defined as research misconduct in the Student Conduct Rule.

"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.

"Thesis" - A dissertation involving research by a candidate for the award of a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) qualification.

"Intellectual property rights" - All present and future rights to intellectual property including any inventions and improvements, trademarks (whether registered or common law trade marks), designs, copyright, any corresponding property rights under the Laws of any jurisdiction and any rights in respect of an invention, discovery, trade secret, secret process, know-how, concept, idea, information, process, data, or formula.

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