

Graduate Research Training Policy (MPF1321)

1. Objective

1.1. The purpose of this policy is to prescribe the principles and academic standards governing graduate research training.

2. Scope

2.1. This policy applies to candidates, their supervisors, faculties, departments and University administrators. It does not apply to higher doctorates.

2.2. Some requirements for graduate research courses are stated by other policies:

- a) the Selection and Admission Policy ([MPF1295](#)) details course entry requirements and accountability for selection decisions
- b) the Enrolment and Timetabling Policy ([MPF1294](#)) sets requirements for enrolment, study load, expected course duration, leave and course withdrawal
- c) the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](#)) states academic performance and progress requirements to maintain candidature
- d) the Courses, Subjects, Awards and Programs Policy ([MPF1327](#)) states course design requirements and defines course duration
- e) the Intellectual Property Policy ([MPF1320](#)) states how research outputs will be managed
- f) the Research Data Management Policy ([MPF1242](#)) states how research data and records generated during candidature will be managed
- g) the Research Ethics and Biorisk Management Policy ([MPF1341](#)) states requirements for the ethical conduct of research including compliance with export control legislation and regulations
- h) the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](#)) states requirements for the responsible conduct of research
- i) the Authorship Policy ([MPF1181](#)) states requirements for recognising significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to a research output.

3. Authority

3.1. This policy is made under the University of Melbourne Act 2009 (Vic) and the Academic Board Regulation and supports compliance with the:

- a) Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)
- b) Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- c) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021.

4. Policy

4.1. The University will foster outstanding graduate research training by providing:

- a) a safe, respectful and inclusive environment to develop knowledge and skills
- b) high quality supervision, ensuring supervisors are capable, trained and registered to the standards set by the University

c) opportunities to undertake professional and career development during candidature.

4.2. Graduate research selection and admission processes will be transparent, fair and based on merit. Selection decisions will consider:

- a) applicants' research potential and contribution to the University's research objectives
- b) the required resources, facilities and supervisory arrangements for the candidate's full course duration.

4.3. Relationships between candidates and supervisors will be professional and respectful, as underpinned by the principles and obligations set out in the [Student Charter](#), Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy ([MPF1359](#)), Student Conduct Policy ([MPF1324](#)) and the Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy ([MPF1328](#)).

4.4. Any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest that arise during candidature will be identified, declared and avoided or managed in accordance with the Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy ([MPF1366](#)). The procedural principles of this policy document conflicts that must be avoided.

4.5. Progression against candidature milestones will be assured through systematic assessment of academic progress and standards of research.

4.6. Examination processes will be fair and transparent, and assessment of the quality of the research will be based on merit.

4.7. Candidates will have access to fair complaints and appeals processes to address concerns or grievances that may arise during candidature.

- a) Complaints and grievances related to graduate research are managed in accordance with the Student Complaints and Grievances Policy ([MPF1066](#)).
- b) Candidates are entitled to appeal an academic progress review decision or the outcome of an examination in accordance with the Student Appeals Policy ([MPF1323](#)).
- c) Complaints or concerns about the integrity of research conduct are investigated in accordance with the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](#)).
- d) Complaints and disclosures about employees are managed in accordance with the Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy ([MPF1328](#)).

5. Procedural principles

Enrolment

5.1. Candidates must ensure their enrolment meets course requirements, is consistent with approved course structures and meets student visa conditions, scholarship and/or sponsorship requirements.

5.2. Candidates enrolled in a joint research degree may be subject to additional or varied conditions regarding the thesis and thesis examination. Additional conditions will be described in the relevant Individual Graduate Researcher Agreement (IGRA) under which the candidate has been enrolled.

5.3. Changes to enrolment must be endorsed and approved in accordance with Table 1 and any requirements stated in the Enrolment and Timetabling Policy ([MPF1294](#)).

Table 1: Approval to change enrolment

Enrolment change type	Endorse	Approve
Department of project	Principal supervisor Head of Department	Dean of current Faculty Dean of proposed Faculty
Supervision	Advisory committee chair Head of Department	Dean of current Faculty
Minor change in project, thesis title or field of research codes		Principal supervisor
Substantive change in project, thesis title or field of research code	Principal supervisor	Head of Department
Study rate		Principal supervisor
Add or remove coursework subject	Principal supervisor	Subject Coordinator
Transfer to another graduate research degree	Principal supervisor Head of Department	Dean of current Faculty
Commencement date		Principal supervisor
Request to Study Away	Principal supervisor Head of Department	Academic Registrar for high-risk destinations as outlined in the Student Travel and Transport Policy (MPF1209)

5.4. Periods of leave must comply with the expected course duration, the maximum submission date for examination, and any scholarship requirements.

- a) Where the candidate is enrolled in a joint research degree, the supervisor from the partner institution must be consulted on all leave requests.

Transfer from another institution

5.5. A candidate who wants to transfer to the University from another institution must:

- a) apply in accordance with the Selection and Admission Policy ([MPF1295](#))
- b) meet the eligibility requirements of the course to which they wish to transfer
- c) meet the requirements of this policy, and
- d) satisfy their supervisors and the dean of their ability to complete the course within expected duration.

5.6. Candidature time undertaken at another Australian institution will be deducted from the course duration.

5.7. A dean may admit a candidate directly into confirmed candidature if they have successfully completed the confirmation requirements for the project in a graduate research course at the same or higher AQF level at another Australian institution or at the University.

5.8. A candidate who holds or has held a [Research Training Program \(RTP\) scholarship](#) has any consumed candidature deducted from their enrolment entitlement for the course, in accordance with the *Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017*.

Internal transfer

5.9. A currently enrolled candidate who wishes to change from one University graduate research degree to another may apply to transfer.

5.10. The date of commencement for candidates who are transferring internally will be backdated to the date of commencement of their current course and any candidature time consumed will be deducted from the course duration.

5.11. Doctoral candidates transferring to a masters degree (research) who have exceeded the masters degree (research) maximum course duration may be granted an extension of the maximum submission date, which must be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) for graduate research. Where approved, the revised maximum submission date for the masters thesis will be the sooner of:

- a) the date of transfer plus one calendar year, or
- b) their doctoral maximum submission date.

Location of study

Residency requirement

5.12. All candidates, including those who transfer from a graduate research course at another institution, must complete a minimum amount of study at the University (the residency requirement) as follows:

- a) 12 months equivalent full time student load (EFTSL) for doctoral degree
- b) 6 months EFTSL for masters degree (research).

5.13. The residency requirement does not apply if:

- a) the candidate is located at an approved outside institution, or
- b) the PVC for graduate research has approved a waiver that meets the conditions in the Selection and Admission Policy ([MPF1295](#)).

Approved outside institutions

5.14. Candidates may be located at an approved outside institution for the duration of their candidature if they:

- a) attend the University in person to take part in activities required by the enrolling department, and
- b) meet all progress requirements for their course.

5.15. The PVC for graduate research may approve outside institutions for the placement of candidates where the following criteria are met:

- a) the academic environment and standard of research at the institution is comparable to that of an internationally recognised university
- b) the staff of the institution can provide supervision in accordance with this policy
- c) the institution is willing to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the University to formalise the placement of candidates at the institution, and
- d) adding the institution to the approved list will not significantly impact the selection of examiners for University graduate research theses.

5.16. The PVC for graduate research maintains and publishes the list of [approved outside institutions](#).

5.17. Candidates may undertake their degree in an industry setting (industry embedded PhD) if University policy requirements are met and the conditions for supervision, provision of infrastructure and resources, sponsorship or scholarships, intellectual property and authorship have been confirmed in an agreement with the University.

Study away from University campuses

5.18. Candidates who wish to undertake research activities while not resident at the University must apply to study away in accordance with this policy and the Student Travel and Transport Policy ([MPF1209](#)).

5.19. Time spent studying away from the University is counted towards course duration as defined in Table 4.

5.20. Candidates who are studying away must meet all candidature related requirements including academic progress reviews and submission deadlines.

5.21. Regular academic supervision must be maintained during study away periods. The dean must ensure there is no lapse in supervision during study away of three or more months.

Candidature progression

5.22. To maintain candidature, candidates must maintain satisfactory academic progress and successfully complete prescribed candidature milestones.

5.23. The University supports candidates to achieve timely completion, through:

- a) formal reviews of academic progress under the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](#)) which candidates must successfully complete at key milestones, as specified in Table 2, and
- b) ongoing monitoring and feedback provided by supervisors and the advisory committee throughout the duration of candidature.

Table 2: Candidature milestones, expressed in EFTSL

Candidature milestone	Doctoral degree	Masters by research
Pre-confirmation	6 months	-
Confirmation	1 year (1 year, 6 months if ≥ 75 credit points of mandatory coursework)	6 months
Progress review	2 years	1 year
Second progress review	3 years	1 year, 6 months
Third progress review	3 years, 6 months	-

5.24. Where a candidate fails to successfully complete a compulsory milestone review, their academic progress may be deemed at risk. Appropriate remedial and support measures must be implemented under the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](#)) to assist the candidate to achieve timely completion.

Confirmation

5.25. Candidates must progress from probationary candidature to confirmed candidature by completing the requirements documented in the <Confirmation Process>.

5.26. Graduate researchers must successfully complete the confirmation requirements for their course by the maximum probationary period outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Maximum probationary candidature period and maximum extension to probationary candidature, expressed in EFTSL

Probationary period	Doctoral degree (research and professional)	Masters degree (research)
Minimum probationary period	6 months	3 months
Maximum probationary period	12 months	6 months
Extension to the maximum probationary period	Up to 3 months (up to 1.25 consumed EFTSL maximum)	Up to 6 weeks (up to 0.625 consumed EFTSL maximum)

5.27. A candidate who has not been confirmed by the end of the maximum probationary period will be placed 'at risk'. The candidate's advisory committee must follow the requirements of the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](#)).

5.28. An extension to probationary candidature may only be approved by the dean if a confirmation meeting is delayed for reasons beyond the candidate's control.

Training and development

5.29. Supervision teams will support candidates to undertake opportunities for skills training and development including through the [Researcher Development Unit](#).

5.30. Candidates must complete all <mandatory training> within the first six months EFTSL of candidature. The PVC for graduate research will periodically review mandatory training requirements and must advise the President of the Board of any changes.

5.31. Candidates may undertake an internship during their enrolment, including while under examination, if:

- a) the internship scope and conditions have been confirmed in an agreement between the University and the external party, and
- b) the candidate:
 - i. is making satisfactory progress
 - ii. has completed mandatory research integrity training
 - iii. has the approval of their principal supervisor
 - iv. has been approved to Study Away if applicable, and
 - v. is able to complete the internship prior to completion of their degree.

Completion seminar

5.32. Candidates must present their research findings at a public completion seminar within the six calendar months prior to thesis submission, in accordance with the <Completion Seminar Process>.

Completion timeframes

Course duration and maximum submission date for examination

5.33. Course duration and submission timeframes for candidature are summarised in Table 4. The calculation of the maximum submission date is based on the maximum course duration and a provision for late submission in exceptional circumstances.

5.34. A candidate who is making satisfactory progress may have their candidature extended up to the maximum course duration.

Table 4: Course duration and key submission timeframes

Candidature stage	Doctoral degree (research and professional)	Masters degree (research)
Minimum period of candidature	2 years (24 months) EFTSL	Course without mandatory coursework – 6 months EFTSL Course with mandatory coursework – 1 year (12 months) EFTSL
Expected course duration	3 years (36 months) EFTSL	1-2 years (12-24 months) EFTSL
Maximum course duration		
Standard maximum course duration	4 years (48 months) EFTSL	2 years (24 months) EFTSL
For candidates who commenced on or before 1 March 2020 and had not reached the standard maximum course duration at that date	4.5 years (54 months) EFTSL	2.5 years (30 months) EFTSL
Submission after maximum course duration		
Lapse period	2 calendar years	1 calendar year
Maximum extension to lapse period	2 calendar years	1 calendar year
Late submission (initial period)	6 calendar months	3 calendar months
Late submission (maximum period)	2 calendar years	1 calendar year

Submission after maximum course duration

5.35. If a candidate does not submit their thesis by the maximum submission date plus 10 business days, their progress is deemed unsatisfactory and their enrolment is terminated without further warning.

5.36. In limited circumstances, a candidate who is unable to submit their thesis by the maximum course duration may apply:

- a) for late submission, if their candidature was confirmed on or after 1 January 2018
- b) to lapse, if their candidature was confirmed as at 31 December 2017.

Late submission

5.37. Applications for late submission are made by the candidate's advisory committee and considered by a late submission panel.

5.38. Late submission will be approved only where the candidate provides evidence that they have sufficient understanding of the research topic to make completion likely, have set out an achievable plan for completion within the requested period, and makes a strong case that research has been delayed due to circumstances which are beyond their control and are related to the conduct of the research.

5.39. A quorum for the late submission panel is three members and must include:

- a) the faculty associate dean graduate research or equivalent, who will chair the meeting
- b) an academic staff member of a different faculty to the candidate, nominated by the PVC for graduate research, who has significant research training experience, is a registered supervisor and has a record of timely completions
- c) between one and three academic staff of the faculty with significant research training experience, who are registered supervisors and have a record of timely completions.

5.40. A supervisor or advisory committee chair of a candidate under consideration by the panel may not serve on a late submission panel. If the panel chair is conflicted, the dean must appoint another senior academic from the faculty as chair.

5.41. In exceptional circumstances the chair of the late submission panel may grant further periods of late submission, up to the maximum late submission period in Table 4.

5.42. A candidate who has successfully completed an approved internship of at least 60 EFTSL days will automatically be granted a late submission of an equivalent duration to the internship (noting the maximum time for internship is 120 EFTSL days).

5.43. Candidates will remain enrolled during late submission and provided with access to:

- a) University services such as a student email account and library
- b) an advisory committee and ongoing supervision
- c) University facilities where required.

Lapse

5.44. The advisory committee may recommend the dean approve a period of lapse if they consider the candidate has:

- a) demonstrated sufficient understanding of the research topic to make thesis completion likely
- b) provided a credible plan for completion during the lapsed candidature period, and
- c) personal circumstances that will support completion during the lapse period.

5.45. If an application to lapse is rejected, the candidate is classified as making unsatisfactory progress and the dean will issue a formal warning of unsatisfactory progress in accordance with the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](#)).

5.46. Candidates who are permitted to lapse:

- a) will have access to University services

- b) will not be able to access University facilities, unless otherwise approved by the head of department
- c) may be provided with access to an advisory committee or ongoing supervision with permission from the relevant dean.

5.47. Candidates are not enrolled during lapse except where they have been approved to access University facilities and must return to active candidature to submit their thesis.

5.48. A dean may approve a further period of lapse where compelling personal, medical or compassionate grounds exist.

5.49. A candidate's enrolment will be terminated if they do not submit their thesis within the agreed period of lapse.

Submission

Eligibility to submit

5.50. To be eligible to submit their thesis for examination, candidates must have:

- a) a current enrolment and active candidature
- b) met the minimum period of enrolment
- c) been confirmed
- d) met the relevant residency requirement
- e) successfully completed all compulsory milestone reviews
- f) presented their research findings at a public completion seminar
- g) approval from the principal supervisor and the chair of examiners to submit for examination.

5.51. In exceptional circumstances, the PVC for graduate research may grant permission to submit a thesis before the minimum period of enrolment.

5.52. In the event the principal supervisor or chair of examiners does not approve the thesis to proceed to examination, they must document the case in a report that is sent to the PVC for graduate research and the candidate. In response to the report the candidate may either:

- a) withdraw the submitted thesis and amend it within their candidature time limits
- b) request the examination proceed and provide a written response to the report to the PVC for graduate research, who will make a decision on the basis of the reports provided.

Submission requirements

5.53. The thesis embodies the results of original research, substantiating a specific view. The thesis must:

- a) address a significant research question
- b) be primarily the candidate's own work
- c) have been completed during the period of enrolment for the course, including transferred candidature
- d) not include work which has been submitted previously, in whole or in part for any other academic award
- e) not be substantially similar to a thesis or work previously examined, or assessed and rejected, unless approved by the PVC for graduate research

- f) be written in English, unless otherwise approved by the PVC for graduate research
- g) comply with the maximum word limit and proportion of creative outputs outlined in the [Handbook](#)
- h) be prepared in accordance with the [Preparation of Graduate Research Theses Process](#).

5.54. A thesis may include:

- a) creative outputs
- b) publications, or sections of a publication if:
 - i. the work was undertaken during candidature
 - ii. the candidate made a substantial contribution to the work, in line with the Authorship Policy ([MPF1181](#))
 - iii. the Coordinating Author and principal supervisor has consented to the inclusion of the work
 - iv. the candidate has outlined their actual contribution to the work within the thesis.

5.55. Assistance with thesis preparation must comply with:

- a) the Australian Standards for Editing Practice outlined in the Preparation of Graduate Research Theses Rules, and
- b) the University's requirements for academic integrity.

Selection of examiners

5.56. All examiners must be external to the University and must meet the following requirements:

- a) have international standing in the research topic of the thesis
- b) be qualified to at least the same level as the award they are examining or have equivalent research experience
- c) have supervisory and/or examiner experience at the AQF level at which they examine
- d) be actively associated with a university or an institution of higher learning, or a research institution
- e) be independent of the conduct of the research and have no [conflict of interest](#) with the candidate, the thesis, or anyone involved in the candidature
- f) are not employed by an approved outside institution, either currently or within the last 5 years.

5.57. Examiners must be from different institutions, and at least one examiner must be based overseas except for:

- a) masters degree (research) examinations, where at least one examiner must be based outside Victoria
- b) doctoral examinations with creative outputs that include a live performance or exhibition, where at least one examiner must be from outside Victoria.

5.58. Examiners are nominated by the chair of examiners and the principal supervisor and appointed by the PVC for graduate research.

5.59. The PVC for graduate research may approve a waiver if an examiner's unique experience is considered essential to the examination but they do not meet the eligibility criteria in clause 5.56.

5.60. Where the chair of examiners has a conflict of interest with an examiner, a different chair of examiners must be appointed.

5.61. Candidates may request the exclusion of up to two specific individuals as their examiners.

Research misconduct after thesis submission

5.62. Where an allegation of research misconduct is made after thesis submission, the examination process is suspended and the allegation must be referred and investigated in accordance with the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](#)). The outcome of the investigation will determine whether the examination will resume, with or without revisions to the thesis.

- a) If the candidate is permitted to revise the thesis following the conclusion of the misconduct investigation, the chair of examiners and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research (or delegate) must review the changes made to the thesis.
- b) If they agree that the candidate has adequately addressed the research misconduct concerns and examiners' comments, the examination of the thesis may proceed.
- c) If they do not believe the candidate has adequately addressed the research misconduct concerns or the examiners' comments, they may recommend a Fail result, or that the candidate be given one final opportunity to make major revisions.

Examination

5.63. The purpose of graduate research examination is to assess a candidate's capacity to design and conduct a body of original research.

5.64. The award of a graduate research degree will be based on an assessment of the thesis (which may include creative outputs), undertaken in accordance with the mode of examination prescribed in Table 5.

Table 5: Assessment for the award of a graduate research degree

Award	Mode of examination
Doctoral degree (research) – commenced on or after 1 January 2025	Both a thesis and an oral deliberation (viva) on the program of research.
Doctoral degree (research) – commenced before 1 January 2025	A thesis on the program of research, unless the candidate chooses to be examined by viva.
Doctoral degree (professional)	A thesis on the program of research.
Masters degree (research)	

5.65. Assessment that includes creative outputs will be examined as an integrated whole in accordance with the examination criteria in [Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for doctoral degrees](#) and [Schedule 2: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for masters degrees \(research\)](#).

5.66. Only the chair of examiners and viva chair may communicate with examiners while the thesis is under examination, regardless of mode.

5.67. In cases where a confidentiality agreement is required, the thesis must not be sent to an examiner until they have signed a confidentiality agreement.

5.68. The PVC for graduate research may establish processes for examination by thesis and by viva that state detailed examination requirements at the University of Melbourne.

Examination of doctoral degree by thesis

5.69. Examiners will refer to the <Examination of Doctoral Degrees by Thesis Process> and independently assess whether the thesis meets the examination criteria in [Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classification for doctoral degrees](#) and recommend an outcome through provision of a written report.

5.70. An examiner may request that a candidate:

- a) make changes to or clarify any part of the thesis
- b) provide written answers to questions about the thesis or work
- c) re-present or re-document creative outputs if they do not meet the examination criteria.

5.71. In exceptional circumstances, an examiner may request that a candidate undertakes an oral examination. The PVC for graduate research is authorised to approve this request.

Examination of doctoral degrees by viva

5.72. The viva voce (viva) is an oral examination conducted as part of the assessment of the thesis (which may include creative outputs). The viva is the final summative examination event for a candidate. The viva is conducted in accordance with the <Examination of Doctoral Degrees by Viva Process>.

5.73. Examiners will independently assess the thesis against the criteria in [Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for doctoral degrees](#) and make a preliminary report in writing. The preliminary report must not contain a provisional result.

5.74. The chair of examiners, viva chair and the examiners are provided with copies of the examiners' preliminary reports prior to the viva. The reports are not shared with the candidate. In exceptional circumstances, the PVC for graduate research may authorise the redaction of sections of the report.

5.75. There will be a single viva attended by the viva chair, two examiners and the candidate.

- a) The candidate's supervisors must not attend the viva examination.
- b) If an examiner is unable to attend the viva at short notice (and rescheduling is impractical), the attending examiner can present questions from the absent examiner by proxy.

5.76. The viva chair's role is to ensure the professional conduct of the viva, and assist the examiners to reach agreement and complete the final report. The chair does not participate in the assessment or recommendation for classification of thesis.

5.77. The viva chair is responsible for taking all reasonable measures to safeguard the integrity of the viva process and to prevent candidates from gaining an unfair advantage through unauthorised, unscholarly, or unfair means.

5.78. In exceptional circumstances the PVC for graduate research may waive the requirement to hold a viva or modify the procedure.

5.79. To enable equitable participation during the viva, the viva chair in consultation with the chair of examiners may make reasonable alternative arrangements for the conduct of the viva in accordance with an approved academic adjustment plan.

Examination of masters degrees (research) by thesis

5.80. Examiners will refer to the <Examination of Masters Degrees Process> and independently assess whether the thesis meets the examination criteria in [Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for doctoral degrees](#). Examiners will provide a numeric mark through provision of a written report.

5.81. Examiners cannot request revisions to the masters degree (research) thesis.

Replacement of examiner

5.82. The chair of examiners may replace an examiner and/or annul their report where:

- a) the examiner fails to return a completed examination report by the due date
- b) there has been unauthorised contact between the examiner and the candidate or their supervisors during the examination
- c) an unmanageable conflict of interest is identified during or after the examination
- d) the chair of examiners determines that the examination has otherwise not been properly conducted.

5.83. Where a replacement examiner has been appointed, any report received from the examiner who has been replaced is not considered.

Outcomes of examination

5.84. The outcome of a doctoral degree examination will be one of the following:

- a) Pass (P)
- b) Pass with minor revisions (PR)
- c) Major revision (MR)
- d) Fail (F)

5.85. The outcome of a masters degree (research) examination will be a numeric grading in accordance with Table 1 in [Schedule 2: Examination criteria and grading scale for masters degrees \(research\)](#).

Doctoral degree examination by thesis

5.86. <Following receipt of all examiners' reports and recommendations, the examination results will be reconciled in accordance with Table 2 in [Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for doctoral degrees](#).

5.87. Where only one examiner recommends Fail, the chair of examiners will invite the examiners to confer with each other to achieve a joint recommendation.

- a) Where an outcome of Major Revision is agreed, the examiners will nominate one examiner to assess the revised thesis.
- b) Where examiners cannot reach consensus, the PVC for graduate research may appoint an adjudicator.

5.88. An examination result cannot be confirmed until two valid examiners' reports have been received. The chair of examiners will review and endorse each examiner's recommendation.

5.89. In exceptional circumstances, the PVC for graduate research may authorise:

- a) the redaction of sections of the report, or
- b) the result on one examiner report.

Doctoral degree examination by viva

5.90. Following the viva, examiners are expected to reach agreement on the result through deliberation. If the examiners are unable to achieve consensus, the examiners' recommendations will be reconciled in accordance with Table 2 in [Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for doctoral degrees](#).

5.91. Where only one examiner recommends Fail, the viva chair will invite the examiners to confer with each other to achieve a joint recommendation.

- a) Where an outcome of Major Revision is agreed, the examiners will nominate one examiner to assess the revised thesis.
- b) Where examiners cannot reach consensus, the PVC for graduate research may appoint an adjudicator.

5.92. At the conclusion of the viva, the candidate is verbally advised of the examination result and given an indication of the revisions required.

5.93. The examiners must co-author and submit a combined final report that provides the final result and details of any revisions required.

5.94. Both examiners' preliminary reports and the combined final report are released to the candidate and principal supervisor following approval by the chair of examiners.

Revisions to the doctoral degree thesis

5.95. Where revision is required as an outcome of doctoral examination (by thesis or viva), the candidate has one opportunity to ensure the thesis meets the requirements for the award of the degree. Requirements for revision to the doctoral degree thesis are provided in Table 3 in [Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for doctoral degrees](#).

5.96. The candidate must:

- a) revise the thesis according to each examiner's requirements
- b) provide an enumerated index summarising any changes or revisions made with the revised thesis.

5.97. Candidates who do not submit their revised thesis within the time specified in Table 3 in [Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for doctoral degrees](#) are awarded a Fail. In exceptional circumstances, the PVC for graduate research may grant an extension to submit the revised thesis.

5.98. If a thesis requires revision, examiners may only make a recommendation of either Pass or Fail following examination of the revised thesis. The examination outcome following thesis revision is final.

Recommendation of a masters degree (research) following unsuccessful doctoral degree (research) thesis submission

5.99. If the result of a doctoral degree (research) thesis is Fail, the candidate may elect to resubmit the thesis for a masters degree (research) qualification, subject to approval by the chair of examiners and the PVC for graduate research.

Masters degree (research) examination

5.100. The outcome of a masters degree (research) examination is determined in accordance with Table 2 in [Schedule 2: Examination criteria and grading scale for masters degrees \(research\)](#).

5.101. Examiners will be provided with their co-examiner's report and asked to reconsider their marks where there is a difference of opinion as outlined in Table 2 of [Schedule 2: Examination criteria and grading scale for masters degrees \(research\)](#).

5.102. If after reconsideration the examiners' recommendations cannot be reconciled, consensus will be sought via moderation with the chair of examiners. Where consensus is not achieved, an external adjudicator will be appointed.

Adjudication

5.103. Where examiners cannot reach consensus, the PVC for graduate research may appoint an adjudicator to advise on the outcome of the examination. The adjudicator must meet all criteria for an examiner, as described in clause 5.55.

5.104. The adjudicator will be provided with a copy of the thesis as submitted for examination and all examiners' reports with the examiners' names removed where possible.

5.105. The adjudicator will assess the causes and nature of the disagreement between the examiners' reports, evaluate the justifications provided in the examiners' reports, and examine relevant sections of the thesis. The adjudicator will provide to the PVC for graduate research a recommended outcome (for a doctoral degree), or a mark (for a masters degree), along with a short written report justifying the recommendation.

5.106. The PVC for graduate research will determine the examination outcome after considering the examiners' reports and the adjudicator's report.

5.107. If the PVC for graduate research allows the candidate to make revisions to the thesis, both examiners will be asked to make a final recommendation of Pass or Fail based on the revised thesis. If the examiners' final recommendations differ, the PVC for graduate research will determine an outcome based on the examiners' reports, the adjudicator's report, and the final recommendations of the examiners.

Posthumous submission

5.108. Posthumous examination for doctoral degrees will be conducted according to the examination of doctoral degree by thesis (without viva) process.

5.109. Posthumous examination for masters degree (research) will be conducted as per master's degree examination process.

Completion

5.110. To be conferred with their degree, graduate researchers must:

- a) achieve a pass grade in their examination
- b) complete any other requirements outlined in the Handbook
- c) have received approval for the final thesis from the chair of examiners
- d) deposit their final thesis in the University repository after completion of any revisions deemed necessary by the University, and
- e) provide a citation in accordance with the <Citation Process>.

5.111. Once the final electronic copy of the thesis has been received, the chair of examiners approves completion of the degree.

5.112. No part of the thesis may be modified once the degree has been awarded.

5.113. The PVC for graduate research, in consultation with the relevant dean, may approve to embargo a thesis or work for a period of time.

5.114. If serious errors are discovered after the award of the degree, the graduate researcher or person discovering the error should advise the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity (OREI).

- a) Where the error may be due to alleged research misconduct, OREI will investigate the matter in accordance with the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](#)).
- b) Where the error is not a result of research misconduct, the PVC for graduate research in consultation with the relevant dean, must determine whether a full retraction, partial redaction or corrigendum is required and advise the University Library accordingly.

Supervision arrangements

5.115. All candidates are supported from commencement of their candidature to submission of their thesis by an advisory committee and a supervision team.

5.116. Supervisors will guide and support graduate researchers through all stages of candidature. All supervisors:

- a) will comply with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018](#)
- b) are expected to uphold University policies and processes for professional practice and conduct
- c) are responsible for fulfilling their obligations in accordance with the <[Roles and responsibilities of supervisors](#)>.

5.117. A supervisory agreement must be completed within 3 months of commencement and reviewed regularly throughout candidature.

5.118. A supervisor must not be in a close personal relationship with the graduate researcher or the advisory committee chair.

5.119. The advisory committee will:

- a) support the supervision team
- b) monitor the progress of the graduate researcher's research project in accordance with the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](#)).

5.120. The roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee, committee members, and chair are documented in [Schedule 4: Advisory committees](#).

Allocation of supervisors

5.121. The relevant dean approves the registration of graduate research supervisors and the allocation of supervisors to candidates.

5.122. The University will provide each candidate with a team of suitably qualified and registered supervisors (supervision team) to support the effective completion of the candidate's course.

5.123. Each candidate will be allocated a minimum of two academic supervisors, with one being a principal supervisor.

Supervisor registration

5.124. Eligibility criteria for supervisory and advisory roles is defined in [Schedule 3: Eligibility for supervisory and advisory roles](#).

5.125. A supervisor must not supervise more than 10 candidates enrolled at the University, excluding any visiting candidates. The dean may approve an exception but must consider:

- a) evidence the supervisor has sufficient time and capability to adequately support additional candidates
- b) the supervisor's track record of timely completions, and
- c) the endorsement of the relevant head of department.

Supervision teams

5.126. The minimum requirements for a supervision team are:

- a) a principal supervisor and a co-supervisor, or
- b) a principal supervisor and an external-academic supervisor.

5.127. The principal supervisor must take primary responsibility for the graduate research candidate's research focus and progress, while co-supervisors make more limited and specific contributions to the supervision.

5.128. A principal supervisor should intend to supervise the candidate for the normal duration of the course.

5.129. Supervisors must be assigned minimum supervisory loads as shown in [Schedule 3: Eligibility for supervisory and advisory roles](#) and the principal supervisor must have the highest supervisory load for a candidate.

Change of supervisor

5.130. Requests to change supervisory arrangements can be initiated by the candidate, the supervisor/s, or the advisory committee chair. The advisory committee chair will make recommendations to the dean, based on consultation with the supervisors and candidate.

5.131. Any change in supervisory arrangements must comply with supervisor eligibility requirements. The new supervisory committee must have the required expertise to support the candidate to completion.

5.132. If a principal supervisor is unable to supervise a candidate to course completion, the dean must appoint a new principal supervisor.

5.133. If the principal supervisor is unavailable for two or more consecutive months during the candidature period, the dean must appoint an interim principal supervisor.

5.134. The dean may assign new or additional supervisor/s if the supervision team lacks the required expertise or where supervisory arrangements are unsatisfactory.

Reviews of eligibility

5.135. The dean will review supervisor registration annually.

5.136. Supervisor registration is revoked if an individual no longer meets the eligibility criteria in [Schedule 3: Eligibility for supervisory and advisory roles](#), and the individual is not permitted to continue supervising current candidates.

5.137. The dean must ensure continuity of supervisory arrangements for candidates whose supervisors' registration has been revoked or varied.

5.138. A previously de-registered supervisor may apply to be re-registered, subject to endorsement by the head of department and approval by the relevant dean.

Review of supervision performance

5.139. For University staff members, matters related to supervisor registration, load and performance are managed within the Performance Development Framework. Any decision to vary or revoke supervisor registration on a performance basis is managed through:

- a) the University's unsatisfactory work performance process as outlined in the Enterprise Agreement, or
- b) for Senior Managers and Executives, their contractual terms of employment, and the *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*.

5.140. Supervisor registration may be revoked in response to a finding of misconduct or serious misconduct, in line with the processes outlined in the [Enterprise Agreement](#).

5.141. The dean is responsible for reviewing the performance of honorary fellows and clinical honorary fellows performing a supervisory role.

5.142. Staff grievances about a decision to vary or revoke supervision registration may be made under the terms of the University's [Enterprise Agreement](#) or for Senior Managers and Executives under the dispute resolution provisions of their contract of employment.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Candidates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• While admitted, comply with:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ University policies and processes including the Student Charter and Graduate Researcher Supervisory Agreement○ the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research○ any other applicable regulatory requirements

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uphold the University's standards for honest, responsible and ethical research conduct
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, disclose and manage any conflicts of interest with candidates, other members of the supervision team, or examiners, as per the Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy (MPF1366) Avoid any conflict of interests specified in this policy Guide candidate conduct in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research Set expectations and established ways of working in collaboration with their candidates Comply with applicable University policies and processes, including responsibilities described in Roles and responsibilities of supervisors Monitor the general progress and welfare of candidates Support candidates to identify appropriate skills training and professional development opportunities
Advisory committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and monitor the candidate's progress during their course, including to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advise on the scope of the proposed project identify resources and training required by the candidate evaluate the disciplinary coverage and suitability of supervisors
Viva chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent the University and uphold the University's policies at the viva Ensure the appropriate conduct of the examination
Chair of examiners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">
Associate dean graduate research (or equivalent)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the dean to manage and maintain the quality provision of graduate research in their faculty
Dean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable for managing and maintaining the provision of high-quality research training in their faculty Administer the examination of performances and exhibitions, where relevant
Academic Registrar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administer the examination of all masters degrees (research) and doctoral degrees (research) subject to the direction of the PVC for graduate research
Pro Vice-Chancellor for graduate research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake the responsibilities of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) as delegated by this policy In consultation with faculties, develop and approve processes to support this policy for publication on the Graduate Research Hub Oversee some operational processes and make decisions on waivers and exceptional requests for individual candidates (including those related to examinations) within the remit of the policy
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable for the management of graduate research Appoints the Pro Vice-Chancellor for graduate research (however so named) to undertake their responsibilities in relation to this policy.
Academic Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee and monitor the quality of research training and graduate research courses. The Board is supported by the Higher Degree by Research Committee,

	established to advise the Board on all matters relating to higher degrees by research candidature.
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7. Processes

7.1. The following documents are established in accordance with this policy:

- a) Confirmation Process
- b) Completion Seminar Process
- c) Preparation of Graduate Research Theses Process
- d) Examination of Doctoral Degrees by Thesis Process
- e) Examination of Doctoral Degrees by Viva Process
- f) Examination of Masters Degrees Process
- g) Citation Process
- h) [Research Training Program \(RTP\) Scholarships Policy](#)

8. Definitions

candidate means any person admitted to and enrolled in a planned course of research leading to a graduate research award at the University of Melbourne. A candidate is a student of the University.

candidature means the period of study towards the graduate research course being the period from the date of commencement until the end of enrolment based on successful completion of all coursework and mandatory training completed satisfactorily leading to lodgement for thesis examination (after which time the candidate holds the status of 'Under Examination') or until the candidature is terminated or the candidate withdraws, but excludes periods spent on leave of absence or lapsed.

chair of examiners is the head of department of the candidate or a person nominated by the head of department to oversee the examination of a graduate research thesis.

co-supervisor means an appropriately qualified person designated to assist in the academic supervision of a candidate's research and candidature.

creative output means performance, musical composition, exhibition, writing (poetry, fiction, script or other written literary forms), design, film, video, e-portfolio or website, multimedia or other new media technologies and modes of presentation.

department means the academic department or school in which the candidate is enrolled.

EFTSL means equivalent full-time student load.

graduate research course includes masters degree (research), doctoral degree (research) and doctoral degree (professional).

joint research degree means a degree course designed, developed and delivered collaboratively by the University and another institution, resulting in a single award.

lapse is a period of time beyond the maximum course duration to allow candidates to complete their thesis.

late submission is a period beyond the maximum course duration granted by a late Submission Panel acting as the dean, to a candidate under specific conditions.

major revision means the thesis may be passed, subject to the corrections being made to the examiner's satisfaction.

minor revision means the thesis may be passed, subject to the corrections being made to the Chair of Examiner's satisfaction.

principal supervisor means an appropriately qualified person who takes primary responsibility for the academic supervision of a candidate's research and candidature.

Research Training Program (RTP) means the block grant provided to higher education providers (universities) by the Australian Government to support both domestic and overseas students undertaking research doctorate and research masters degrees.

residency requirement means the minimum amount of study that must be completed at the University of Melbourne unless studying at an approved outside institution or unless the requirement has been waived.

special circumstances means circumstances are beyond the candidate's control and are unusual, uncommon or abnormal.

supervisor means an appropriately qualified person who is responsible for the academic supervision of a candidate.

thesis means either a dissertation embodying the results of original research and especially substantiating a specific view; or comprising creative output and dissertation which together embody the results of original research and especially substantiating a specific view.

viva means an oral examination that is final summative examination event for a candidate.

viva chair is appointed by the chair of examiners to oversee the viva.

POLICY APPROVER

Academic Board

POLICY STEWARD

Academic Secretary

REVIEW

This policy is due to be reviewed by March 2027.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	[Position title of approver]			[Describe changes made.]

9. Schedule 1: Examination criteria, recommendations and classifications for doctoral degrees

Table 1: Doctoral thesis examination outcomes

Outcome	Detailed descriptions
Pass (P)	No changes required, or only minor edits required, such as typographical errors, formatting issues or other corrections that have no bearing on the quality of the overall argument. The chair of examiners verifies the required changes have been addressed.
Pass with minor revision (PR)	Minor revisions to content are required. Examiners must provide an enumerated list and explanation of each required revision. Revisions will be reviewed and verified by the chair of examiners who may consult the Examiner to verify the changes. The revised thesis is the final version.
Major revision (MR)	Serious shortcomings in the content of the thesis are present but can be resolved with major revision. Examiners must provide an enumerated list and explanation of the required changes. The revised thesis is returned to the Examiner to consider, and the Examiner assesses the thesis accordingly. A thesis submitted for reassessment may only be awarded a result of P, PR, or Fail.
Fail	The thesis has serious irredeemable flaws and is not of a standard to be awarded the degree.

9.1. To be awarded a pass, a doctoral degree thesis must:

- a) show evidence of command of knowledge in relevant fields
- b) demonstrate a thorough grasp of the appropriate methodological techniques and an awareness of their limitations
- c) make a contribution to knowledge that rests on originality of approach and/or interpretation of the findings and, in some cases, the discovery of new facts
- d) demonstrate the candidate's ability to communicate research findings effectively in the professional arena and in an international context, and
- e) demonstrate an understanding of, and commitment to, research ethics and integrity.

9.2. For creative outputs included with the thesis:

- a) demonstration of a professional level of familiarity with and understanding of contemporary work in the field
- b) demonstration of a sufficiently comprehensive investigation of the artistic form and creative content;
- c) the methods and techniques applied in the execution of the work are appropriate to the subject matter and are original and/or aesthetically effective
- d) it is presented in a sufficiently professional manner
- e) demonstration of a sufficiently high standard of literary, visual, digital, musical or performance literacy and quality
- f) the research questions have been identified and tested through the creative output

- g) documentation of the work, (including catalogue/program material where appropriate) is sufficiently thorough and is of a standard that ensures the work provides a reference for subsequent researchers
- h) the creative output and the dissertation together constitute a substantive original contribution to knowledge in the subject area, and
- i) the interface between the creative output and the dissertation is appropriate and substantiated.

Table 2: Reconciliation of examiners' recommendations for a doctoral degree examination by thesis

		Examiner 2 recommendation			
		Pass (P)	Pass with revision (PR)	Major revision (MR)	Fail (F)
Examiner 1 recommendation	Pass (P)	Pass	Pass with Revision	Major Revision	Moderated examiner discussion
	Pass with revision (PR)	Pass with Revision	Pass with Revision	Major Revision	Moderated examiner discussion
	Major revision (MR)	Major Revision	Major Revision	Major Revision	Moderated examiner discussion
	Fail (F)	Moderated examiner discussion	Moderated examiner discussion	Moderated examiner discussion	Fail

Table 3: Revisions to the doctoral degree thesis

Requirements	Overall Result			
	Pass (P)	Pass with minor Revision (PR)	Major revision (MR) (Viva)	Major Revision (MR) (Thesis)
Changes to the thesis	Only changes specified or implied by the examiners, or through the incorporation of an updated version of a publication.	Only changes specified or implied by the examiners, or through the incorporation of an updated version of a publication.	Revisions as needed to meet the requirements for the award of the degree	Revisions as needed to meet the requirements for the award of the degree.
Time allowed to complete revisions	6 weeks	2 months	12 months	12 months
Final extension to deadline	Nil	Nil	6 months	6 months
Changes assessed by	Chair of Examiners, who may consult with the examiner or other content expert.	Chair of Examiners, who may consult with the examiner or other content expert.	Nominated examiner	Chair of Examiners first then sent for reassessment by any examiner who recommended MR

If changes are satisfactory	No further changes may be made	No further changes may be made	Examiner may request additional, final minor revisions (assessed by chair of examiners)	Examiner may request additional, final minor revisions (assessed by chair of examiners)
If changes are not satisfactory	Chair of examiners, in consultation with the PVC for graduate research, can enter a Fail result.	Chair of examiners, in consultation with the PVC for graduate research, can enter a Fail result.	Chair of examiners, in consultation with the PVC for graduate research, can enter a Fail result.	As per the result of the reassessment.

10. Schedule 2: Examination criteria and grading scale for masters degrees (research)

10.1. To be awarded a pass, a masters degree (research) thesis must:

- a) demonstrate advanced learning in research skills and mastery of appropriate techniques, such as the use of archival or primary evidence, analysis of data, judgement of conflicting evidence
- b) demonstrate specialist knowledge in the area of their research
- c) demonstrate an understanding of, and commitment to, research ethics and integrity, and
- d) be given an average numerical mark of 65% or greater as defined in Table 1.

Table 1: Grading scale for masters degrees (research)

Numeric mark	Grade	Description
90–100%	Outstanding (H1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the candidate has demonstrated a very high level of competence with respect to the criteria for examination • there is clear evidence of considerable original work of high quality, including analysis or other evaluation • the implementation and experimentation phases of the discovery have been substantially completed • the thesis is worthy of publication with only a small amount of revision and/or editing required.
85–89%	Excellent (H1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the candidate has demonstrated a high level of competence with respect to the criteria for examination • there is clear evidence of considerable original work of high quality, including analysis or other evaluation • the implementation and experimentation phases of the discovery have been substantially completed • the thesis is worthy of publication with a small amount of further research and/or analysis
80–84%	Very good (H1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the candidate has demonstrated more than adequate level of competence with respect to the criteria for examination • the thesis provides evidence of the candidate’s ability to synthesise and organise existing information in a useful and critical manner and is well written and free of error <p><i>OR</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is evidence of original work, including analysis or other evaluation • the implementation and experimentation phases of the discovery have been substantially completed • the thesis is worthy of publication with a small amount of further research and/or analysis
75–79%	Good (H2A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the candidate has demonstrated a minimum level of competence with respect to the criteria for examination

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the thesis provides evidence of the candidate’s ability to synthesise and organise existing information in a useful and critical manner and is well-written and largely free of error <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is evidence of original work, including analysis or other evaluation and some amount of research with further research and/or analysis the thesis <i>might</i> be worthy of publication.
70–74%	Satisfactory (H2B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the candidate has demonstrated a minimum level of competence with respect to the criteria for examination the thesis is judged to be more than adequate in at least one of the examination criteria <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is evidence of original work, including some analysis or other evaluation of the proposal, even if not fully implemented or tested.
65–69%	Adequate (H3)	The candidate has demonstrated a minimum level of competence with respect to the criteria for examination
0-64%	Fail	The thesis is deficient with respect to one or more of the criteria for examination.

Table 2: Reconciliation of examiners’ recommendations for a masters by research examination by thesis

Examiner 1	Examiner 2	Outcome
80-100%	80-100%	The average of the examiner’s marks
65-79%	65-100% and within 10 marks of examiner 1	The average of the examiner’s marks
65-79%	65-100% and numeric mark differs to examiner 1 by 10 or more	Examiners are provided with co-examiners report and asked to reconsider their report
0-64%	65-100%	Examiners are provided with co-examiners report and asked to reconsider their report
0-64%	0-64%	The average of the examiner’s marks

11. Schedule 3: Eligibility for supervisory and advisory roles

Table 1: Academic staff employed at the University of Melbourne in a continuing or fixed term salaried position

	Principal supervisor	Co-supervisor	Advisory committee chair	Advisory committee member
Level C and above	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Level B	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Level A	No	Yes	No	Yes

11.1. The dean may approve the registration for co-supervision of academic staff members in a continuing or fixed-term role at Level A by exception.

Table 2: Non-salaried appointments at the University of Melbourne and external supervisor eligibility

	Principal supervisor	Co-supervisor	Advisory committee chair	Advisory committee member	External supervisor
Emeritus and Emeritus honorary professors (active in research)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Emeritus and Emeritus honorary professors (not active in research)	No	No	No	Yes	No
Honorary Fellows	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Clinical Honorary Fellows (Level B and above)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Clinical tutor	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Professional and casual staff	No	No	No	Yes	No
Academic visitor	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
ex-UoM academic staff or ex-honorary fellow (for completion of current candidates only)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
External expert in field of research	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

11.2. Staff from research institutes, affiliated or recognised bodies must be granted a clinical honorary fellowship at Level B or above or honorary fellowship to be eligible to be registered to supervise.

11.3. Casual staff who have a primary academic appointment at another university, or who are an industry professional may be appointed as an external supervisor.

11.4. A supervisor who ceases their employment or honorary appointment may apply to the dean to continue as an external supervisor for candidates, unless they have been terminated by the University for misconduct.

11.5. Honorary appointees and University visitors are defined in the Honorary Appointments and University Visitors Procedure ([MPF1156](#)).

11.6. A person providing technical advice for a limited period should be assigned as an advisory committee member only.

Table 3: Supervisory load, training and registration requirements

Role	Training and registration requirement	Max number candidates	Load per candidate (min-max)
Principal supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the requirements to be a co-supervisor • Hold a Doctoral Degree, or have equivalent research experience, and has either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) supervised at least one candidate to successful completion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ at a minimum supervisory load of 20% for the duration of the candidature ○ at the same level or higher to which they will supervise, or b) approval from the dean on the basis that they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ have identified a suitable mentor who is an experienced principal supervisor, and ○ will develop and comply with a mentoring plan. 	10	40-80%
Co-supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participating in original research • Complete all required graduate research training • Update their graduate research training every five years 	10	20-49%
External academic supervisor	Per home institution policy	10	20-49% 20-50% for joint research degree supervisors (see Supervising joint PhD candidates)
External industry supervisor	n/a		20-39%

12. Schedule 4: Advisory committees

12.1. Each advisory committee is appointed by the head of department in which the candidate is enrolled. The committee is made up of an advisory committee chair and the candidate's supervisors, and may include additional members as per [Schedule 3: Eligibility for supervisory and advisory roles](#). The committee members are expected to remain in their positions from enrolment to completion of the thesis.

12.2. The dean must:

- a) appoint the advisory committee chair
- b) establish the committee within 3 months of the candidate's enrolment.

12.3. A request to change advisory committee members or chair may be initiated by the candidate, the supervisors, or committee chair. The request will be assessed by the dean.

12.4. Advisory committee chairs must:

- a) meet the eligibility criteria for a principal supervisor
- b) continue to meet the criteria for a principal supervisor at the University
- c) be reasonably able to commit to the role of advisory committee chair from the time of enrolment to the expected time of completion
- d) be an experienced supervisor, with at least three graduate research supervision completions
- e) be at least a Level C academic staff member of the candidate's faculty, unless approved by the relevant dean
- f) not be the candidate's supervisor or otherwise associated with the research project
- g) not be in a close personal relationship with the candidate or their supervisors, and
- h) identify, disclose and manage any other conflict of interest in accordance with the Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy ([MPF1366](#)).

12.5. The advisory committee chair does not fulfil the role of supervisor and is not required to have content knowledge in the candidate's specific field of research.

12.6. Advisory committee members must:

- a) be able to provide support and guidance to the candidate and their supervisors
- b) not be a candidate at the University or any other institution
- c) identify, disclose and manage any other conflict of interest in accordance with the Managing Conflicts of Interest policy ([MPF1366](#)).

12.7. The advisory committee chair must:

- a) ensure the committee fulfils its responsibilities
- b) advise and support the candidate and their supervisors
- c) counsel the candidate on confidential matters
- d) facilitate mediation between the candidate and their supervisors where required
- e) where resolution cannot be achieved, direct the candidate to access the complaints and appeals processes.

12.8. The advisory committee must:

- a) seek to ensure the research project is appropriate to the course, can be completed within expected course duration, is appropriately resourced and complies with all relevant legislation, policies and processes
- b) recommend whether the candidate be admitted to confirmed candidature
- c) monitor the candidate's academic progress
- d) recommend an extension to candidature up to the maximum course duration if required
- e) attend and report on the candidate's completion seminar
- f) mentor the candidate on research project matters
- g) mentor the candidate to develop the graduate attributes as described in the Handbook.