

Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Policy outlines the roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities of higher degree by research (HDR) advisors at The University of Queensland (UQ or the University). This Policy applies to all advisors of UQ HDR candidates.

Section 2 - Principles and Key Requirements

(2) The appointment of appropriate advisors for HDR candidates is crucial for the successful completion of their program and underpins their research education and training. This Policy sets out the criteria and conditions for the appointment of HDR advisors.

Advisory Arrangements

(3) An HDR candidate advisory team, consisting of at least two advisors, one of whom is the Principal Advisor, must be appointed upon admission.

(4) All Principal Advisors must be registered on the UQ Principal Advisor Registry (further detail on the UQ Principal Advisor Registry can be found in the [Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Procedure](#)).

(5) Principal Advisors take primary academic responsibility for the HDR candidate.

(6) Advisors are appointed and continue in their role with the endorsement of the Head of the Academic Organisational Unit and approval of the Dean, Graduate Research School.

Conflicts of Interest

(7) All staff members are required to avoid potential, perceived and actual conflicts of interest. Where potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest do arise, HDR advisors are required to declare and manage those conflicts appropriately in accordance with the University's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and [Staff Code of Conduct Policy](#).

Advisor Eligibility

Principal Advisor

(8) A person will be eligible to be appointed as a Principal Advisor when the following criteria are met:

- a. they are continuing or fixed-term academic staff at UQ or hold an honorary position, including an Academic Title Holder;
- b. they are able to undertake the roles and responsibilities as described in section 3 of the [Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Procedure](#);
- c. they hold a PhD, Doctoral degree of AQF level 10 or have research experience that is deemed appropriate;
- d. they are research active and have sufficient time and resources to be an effective advisor for a candidate;

- e. they agree, in all matters relating to the candidature, to:
 - i. be responsible to the enrolling AOU (through the Director of HDR) and to UQ (through the Dean, Graduate Research School), and
 - ii. comply with all relevant UQ rules, policies and procedures.

Associate Advisors

(9) Associate Advisors provide additional expertise related to the candidate's research and be available to provide advice throughout their candidature.

(10) A person is eligible to be appointed as an Associate Advisor when the following criteria are met:

- a. has relevant expertise and experience appropriate to the candidate's research topic;
- b. agrees, in all matters relating to the candidature, to:
 - i. be responsible to the enrolling AOU (through the Director of HDR) and to UQ (through the Dean, Graduate Research School),
 - ii. comply with all relevant UQ rules, policies and procedures; and
- c. is not a currently enrolled HDR candidate.

(11) Any departure from the above criteria will only be permitted with the approval of the Dean, Graduate Research School.

(12) An Associate Advisor is usually required to have completed a degree of a level equivalent to the one the candidate is undertaking but they can be appointed if they have:

- a. a record of demonstrated research ability and performance; and
- b. expertise that can enhance the quality of the advisory team's support for the HDR candidate, for example through connections to Industry.

Advisory Loads

(13) The total HDR advisory load for a staff member should be considered in conjunction with workload responsibilities, their ability to provide sufficient resources to support candidates and their record in supporting HDR candidate progression and development. An advisor is normally permitted to have a Principal Advisory load of not more than 8 HDR candidates in total, which should be discussed in the academic annual performance and development process. For an advisor to supervise more than 8 HDR candidates, a recommendation must be made by the Head of AOU for the Dean's approval.

(14) It is the responsibility of the Director of HDR to consider an advisor's overall HDR advisory load and, if necessary, consult the Head of AOU regarding academic workload before recommending the appointment of that person as an advisor of a candidate.

(15) The distribution of advisory workload between members of the advisory team must be agreed upon between the team and the candidate, endorsed by the Director of HDR and approved by the Dean.

(16) The AOU must report any change to advisory load or appointment details of the advisor within one month of the change taking place.

Section 3 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Dean, Graduate Research School

(17) The Dean, Graduate Research School (or their delegate) is responsible for the governance of the HDR programs at UQ, including appropriate enrolment conditions for HDR candidates.

Head of the Academic Organisational Unit

(18) The Head of the enrolling AOU (Head of School, Institute Director, or equivalent), responsible for ensuring appropriate HDR resourcing, AOU research culture and environment and quality of HDR advisor performance.

Director of Higher Degree Research

(19) The Director of HDR makes HDR program decisions on behalf of the Head of AOU, including decisions on the nomination of Principal and Associate Advisors.

Principal Advisors

(20) Principal Advisors are approved UQ staff members who take primary academic responsibility for the candidate during their candidature.

(21) The detailed academic role, accountabilities and eligibility for Principal Advisors are specified in the [Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Procedure](#).

Associate Advisors

(22) Advisors are suitably qualified persons who provide expertise related to the candidate's research and are available to provide advice throughout candidature.

(23) The detailed academic role, accountabilities and eligibility for advisors are specified in the [Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Procedure](#).

Section 4 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(24) Review of, and compliance with, this Policy is overseen by the Dean, Graduate Research School, and the University's Higher Degree by Research Sub-Committee.

Section 5 - Recording and Reporting

(25) All HDR application and program enrolment transactions and activities are recorded within UQ systems, including advisory team members and advisory registry status.

(26) All student records including final outcome, applications and University decisions are filed in the student's personal record in UQ's digital record system.

Section 6 - Definitions, Terms, and Acronyms

Term	Definition
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework.
Dean	Dean, Graduate Research School or delegate.
Enrolling AOU	An Academic Organisational Unit of UQ that directly enrolls HDR candidates.
FTE	Full-time equivalent.
HDR	Higher Degree by Research.
MPhil	Master of Philosophy.
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy.
Professional Doctorate (research) (PDRes)	A professional doctorate administered by the UQ Graduate Research School where at least two thirds of the program is research.

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