Higher Degree by Research Graduate Attributes Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Policy outlines the qualities, knowledge, capabilities and skills that should be developed by candidates graduating from Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs at The University of Queensland (UQ or the University).

(2) This Policy applies to all HDR students in the MPhil and PhD programs.

Section 2 - Principles and Key Requirements

(3) HDR education and training provides candidates with the opportunity to develop attributes through research and a variety of learning experiences that may vary according to the discipline. Graduates of HDR programs demonstrate their attainment of graduate attributes through a variety of activities.

(4) Higher degrees by research are of central importance to leading international research universities. Evolving from research doctorates in Germany and the United States, the emphasis has traditionally been on research and scholarship by a candidate that generates new knowledge. While excellence in research activity and outputs continues to be a core element of the HDR, contemporary expectations emphasise the qualities of the graduate. This broadening of scope reflects the view that HDR graduates should be equipped to pursue a wide range of careers. The attributes described below reflect the changing expectations of the HDR. These attributes can be developed while performing discipline-specific research and also via dedicated research training activities. Through these attributes the University aims to develop graduate researchers who are creative knowledge leaders able to contribute to significantly to their discipline and to the wider community. The process of embedding graduate attributes involves advisory teams, AOUs, the Graduate Research School and all other University units that engage with HDR candidates.

(5) All AOUs should map the potential experiences of their HDR cohort against the graduate attributes as outlined in this Policy. Each AOU will embed learning experiences that suit their discipline, and these learning experiences may be derived from a variety of sources including from within the AOU, university and discipline/profession.

HDR Graduate Attributes

(6) Disciplinary Knowledge and Capability

a. In-depth, advanced knowledge and understanding of one or more disciplinary area.
b. Ability to apply theoretical frameworks and research methods in a field or discipline to develop new concepts, formulate research hypotheses or identify new problems and produce original outputs.
c. Well-developed technical capability that enables collection, synthesis and analysis of data.
d. Ability to communicate results of research in terms of impact and application of new knowledge.
e. Ability to make a substantive and independent contribution to knowledge in the discipline and/or formulate and solve problems.

(7) Transferable Skills

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a. Ability to apply original and creative ideas, and analytical and critical thinking skills to generate new knowledge, investigate problems and develop inventive solutions.
b. Capacity to communicate ideas effectively to a range of audiences inside and outside the field of study or discipline and to the wider community.
c. Ability to work collaboratively and effectively with others, within a range of teams and contexts, respecting individual roles and responsibilities.
d. Ability to lead, manage and execute projects within or across disciplines.
e. Ability to write coherently and convincingly.

(8) Professional Skills

a. Developed or developing professional competencies in areas that may include commercialisation and technology transfer, management of intellectual assets, cultural knowledge and cross-cultural communication, entrepreneurship, policy development, research supervision, grant writing and management, and teaching and learning.
b. Capacity to communicate knowledge for the education of others, which may include teaching and supervision.

(9) Responsible Researcher Conduct

a. Clear understanding and practice of the requirements of the responsible conduct and sharing of research.
b. Ability to analyse and describe data and information objectively.
c. Contribute to open discussion on topics that intersect with disciplinary expertise.

Comparative Attributes of MPhil and PhD Graduates

(10) Compared with MPhil graduates, PhD graduates should demonstrate a higher level of attainment of the same knowledge, skills, qualities and abilities.

Indicators of Successful Attainment of Graduate Attributes

(11) Indicators of attainment of Graduate Attributes will reflect achievement of skills described in clauses 6-9. These may include, but are not limited to:

a. Successful completion of candidature milestones.
b. Successful completion of a thesis.
c. Submission of satisfactory academic progress reports, including a record of timely completion of project tasks and objectives.
d. Attendance at research seminars.
e. Adherence to all ethical and research integrity guidelines.
f. Publication of peer-reviewed research papers, reports or scholarly works.
g. Presentation of research at national and international conferences.
h. Substantive contribution to research and other activities that apply transferable skills.
i. Quality of analytical and critical thinking skills, writing and oral presentation skills as measured in the assessment of the thesis.
j. Successful completion and application of competencies that are linked to professional skill development.

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Section 3 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Dean, Graduate Research School

(12) The Dean, Graduate Research School (or their delegate) is responsible for the governance and procedures for HDR programs at UQ and decides on the admission, enrolment conditions, examination outcome, and recommends conferral of the degree to the Provost.

Head of AOU

(13) The Head of the enrolling AOU (Head of School, Institute Director, or equivalent) who has responsibility for ensuring appropriate resourcing, and endorses cohort level course requirements if required.

Principal Advisors

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

(15) The detailed academic role, accountabilities and eligibility for principal advisors are specified in the Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Policy.

Advisors

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

(17) The detailed academic role, accountabilities and eligibility for advisors are specified in the Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Policy.

Section 4 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

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

Section 5 - Recording and Reporting

(19) All application and program enrolment transactions and activities are recorded within UQ's student system.

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

Section 6 - Appendix

Definitions, Terms and Acronyms

Term	Definition
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
Dean GRS	Dean, Graduate Research School or delegate.

Term	Definition
Enrolling AOU	An Academic Organisational Unit of UQ that directly enrols 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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Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	17th November 2021
Review Date	17th November 2026
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Approval Date	17th November 2021
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Policy Owner	Virginia Slaughter Dean, Graduate Research School
Enquiries Contact	Graduate Research School

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