

Higher Degree by Research Candidature Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Procedure outlines the processes associated with candidature changes, leave entitlements, review of candidature, interruption of candidature, and withdrawal and termination of higher degree by research (HDR) candidature. The Procedure should be read in conjunction with the [Higher Degree by Research Candidature Policy](#).

(2) This Procedure applies to all HDR candidates enrolled at The University of Queensland (UQ or the University).

Section 2 - Process and Key Controls

(3) This Procedure details the circumstances in which a candidate may request changes to their candidature and the process to follow in seeking changes. Apart from changes to the thesis title and leave requests, all requests must be fully endorsed by the candidate, advisor, and Director of HDR within an Academic Organisational Unit (AOU) prior to being submitted to the Graduate School.

(4) This Procedure also details the steps taken by the Graduate School, and outlines a candidate's appeal options, if the Dean, Graduate School decides that a candidate is to be withdrawn or terminated from their HDR program, or where the enrolling AOU submits a review of candidature.

Section 3 - Key Requirements

Attendance Load

(5) Domestic candidates may enrol either full-time or part-time with the approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

(6) International candidates studying on a student visa cannot be recorded as part-time due to government legislation. Candidates on non-student visas may be eligible for part-time enrolment depending on the individual visa circumstances.

(7) Candidates in receipt of a UQ Research Scholarship are subject to the [UQ and RTP Research Scholarships Procedure](#).

(8) Full-time and part-time enrolment status is taken as defined in [Higher Degree by Research Admission Procedure](#).

(9) To change attendance load, candidates must submit a request to the Graduate School using the Change of Academic Load request.

Attendance Mode

(10) Domestic candidates may be permitted to change their attendance mode to remote candidature when they are required to conduct their research away from one of UQ's three main campuses (St Lucia, Gatton, or Herston) with the approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

(11) Domestic candidates who do not reside within daily commuting distance of any of UQ's three main campuses (St Lucia, Gatton, or Herston) may request enrolment as a remote candidate with the approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

(12) To change attendance mode, candidates must submit a request to the Graduate School using the Notification of Remote Status request.

(13) International candidates studying on a student visa cannot be recorded as remote within Australia due to government legislation. International candidates on non-student visas may be eligible for remote enrolment onshore depending on the individual visa circumstances.

(14) International candidates undertaking short-term research overseas may be permitted to change their attendance mode to remote with the approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

(15) Candidates in receipt of a UQ Research Scholarship are subject to the [UQ and RTP Research Scholarships Procedure](#).

(16) Remote status must be requested following a successful application for travel (refer to [Student Travel Procedure](#)).

(17) The Dean, Graduate School may set conditions on minimum periods of attendance at the University.

(18) When applying for remote status, HDR candidates must submit a remote study plan, including details on supervision arrangements.

(19) During remote candidature, HDR candidates must:

- a. maintain regular contact with their advisory team, enrolling AOU, and the Graduate School;
- b. have access to all necessary facilities, such as equipment and library resources; and
- c. continue to make satisfactory progress in their project, and keep updated regular Progress Reports which must be shared with their Principal Advisor.

Concurrent Enrolment

(20) Candidates must not pursue any other program or course at the University or elsewhere without the approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

(21) The Dean, Graduate School may rescind the approval to undertake a second program in cases where a candidate is not demonstrating satisfactory progress in their HDR program.

(22) To apply for concurrent enrolment, candidates must submit a request to enrol in concurrent program to the Graduate School prior to commencing the second degree program.

(23) The advisor must be satisfied the additional work of the second program will not impact on the candidate's HDR program.

Change of Project Title and Scope

(24) Candidates are permitted to change their project title following Progress Reviews or at Submission with the approval of the Principal Advisor.

(25) Change of project scope requires the approval of the Principal Advisor, Director of HDR and the Dean, Graduate School, and is subject to the availability of adequate resources and supervision. Change of project scope may also require reassessment of autonomous sanctions. A change of project must be approved by the enrolling AOU as having adequate resources and supervision.

(26) Duration of candidature must be taken into account when considering a change of project to ensure the new project can be completed within the maximum duration of the program. Extensions beyond the maximum program duration will only be permitted in extenuating circumstances with the approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

Change of Advisory Team

(27) Candidates are permitted to change their advisory team throughout candidature with the approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

(28) The Dean, Graduate School may replace any member of a candidate's advisory team after consulting with or considering a recommendation from the Head of AOU or their delegate.

(29) Candidates cannot be enrolled in the HDR program without a Principal Advisor. Where a candidate does not wish to continue with their current Principal Advisor and where no other person is able to act as the Principal Advisor, the enrolling AOU is required to submit a review of candidature to the Graduate School.

(30) To apply for a change of advisory team, candidates must submit a Change of Advisor or Advisory Team request to the Dean, Graduate School, with the endorsement of the current and proposed advisory team and the Director of HDR.

Change of Enrolling AOU

(31) Candidates may be permitted to change their enrolling AOU with the approval of the Dean, Graduate School. To apply for a change of Enrolling AOU, candidates must submit a Change of Enrolling School or Institute request to the Dean, Graduate School.

(32) Candidates are required to discuss their project with the Director of HDR of the proposed enrolling AOU prior to requesting a change.

(33) Duration of candidature must be taken into account when considering a change of enrolling AOU. Extensions beyond the maximum program duration will only be permitted in extenuating circumstances with the approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

Interruption to Candidature

(34) HDR candidates can apply for interruption to candidature for a minimum period of one research quarter up to a maximum period of four research quarters (12 months). However, HDR candidates applying for parental leave can also apply for a maximum period of 12 months for each instance of parental leave.

(35) Interruptions for the first research quarter and the last research quarter of candidature will only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

(36) Any period of interruption will be reflected in a variation to the end date of candidature.

(37) Interruption to candidature must be taken in research quarter blocks, in line with enrolment. Requests must be made through [my.UQ](#).

(38) Requests to interrupt candidature must be submitted to the Graduate School at least 3 weeks prior to the first day of the research quarter.

(39) Interruptions beyond 4 research quarters (consecutively or collectively) will only be considered if they relate to ill health, parental leave, significant caring commitments or exceptional circumstances. Supporting documents (medical certificate etc) must be provided in these cases. Approval of interruptions beyond 4 research quarters will be at the discretion of the Dean, Graduate School.

Review of Candidature

(40) Enrolling AOU's are required to submit a review of candidature in cases where:

- a. candidates have not demonstrated satisfactory progress in their program; or
- b. an appropriate advisor is no longer available and an alternative advisor cannot be appointed.

(41) A review of candidature may lead to withdrawal or termination from candidature, or a transfer to a different HDR program.

(42) Enrolling AOU's can submit a review of candidature at any point during candidature.

(43) The outcome of a review of candidature is determined by the Dean, Graduate School.

AOU Requirements

(44) To initiate the Review of Candidature process, the Head of AOU is required to contact the Graduate School who will assist the Principal Advisor and Director of HDR to submit the Review of Candidature online request.

(45) Enrolling AOU's are required to inform the candidate that a Review of Candidature is being submitted to the Graduate School.

(46) Reviews that are being submitted due to the candidate not demonstrating satisfactory progress must include:

- a. a clear explanation of the progression issues and the reason for the recommendation; and
- b. evidence to support the allegations of unsatisfactory progress, such as meeting notes, email exchanges, or academic work undertaken in the HDR program; and
- c. evidence to demonstrate how the enrolling AOU has attempted to assist the candidate to improve their progress and address identified deficiencies.

(47) Reviews that are being submitted due to the candidate no longer having a suitable advisor must include:

- a. a clear explanation of the circumstances that led to the candidate not having an advisor; and
- b. evidence to demonstrate how the enrolling AOU has attempted to appoint an alternative advisor or assisted the candidate with locating an alternative advisor.

(48) Following receipt of a review of candidature from an enrolling AOU, the Graduate School will formally contact the candidate regarding the Review and provide them with 10 working days to respond.

(49) The candidate's response should:

- a. address the comments and evidence provided in the enrolling AOU's review of candidature;
- b. show cause why they should not be withdrawn or terminated from candidature or transferred to a different HDR program; and
- c. state a desired outcome.

(50) If the candidate does not respond to the Review of Candidature, the enrolling AOU's submission will be provided to the Dean, Graduate School who will determine the outcome of the Review of Candidature.

(51) If the candidate does respond to the review of candidature, the enrolling AOU's submission and the candidate's response will be provided to the Dean who will determine the outcome of the Review of Candidature.

(52) If the Dean, Graduate School agrees with the enrolling AOU's recommendation, the candidate will be issued with

a notice of intention to withdraw and provided 20 working days to appeal to the Student Academic Administrative Appeals Committee (SAAAC). The candidate's enrolment will be maintained during the SAAAC process. Candidates should refer to [Academic Administrative Appeals by Students Policy](#) prior to submitting an appeal to the SAAAC.

(53) If the Dean, Graduate School does not support proceeding with the enrolling AOU's recommendation, the Dean will discuss alternative options with the candidate, advisor, and/or the enrolling AOU and the candidate will maintain enrolment with candidature conditions stipulated by the Dean.

Withdrawal and Termination

Non-voluntary Withdrawal

(54) The Dean, Graduate School may withdraw a candidate if the candidate:

- a. has not made satisfactory progress in the HDR program after receiving specific guidance and feedback about their progress;
- b. has a pattern of non-compliance with reasonable direction of their advisor, Director of HDR, or the Dean, Graduate School;
- c. has not complied with a condition of enrolment set by the Dean, Graduate School;
- d. has an overdue progress review or submission;
- e. has not complied with University rules and guidelines as outlined in UQ policies and procedures;
- f. has not met financial obligations to the University;
- g. has supplied incomplete or inaccurate information associated with their enrolment, including information provided in the application for admission; or the Principal Advisor cannot continue and no other person is available or willing to be appointed to the role;
- h. is found guilty of misconduct under the [Student Integrity and Misconduct Policy](#).

(55) If the Dean, Graduate School, with advice from the AOU as required, decides that a candidate is to be withdrawn due to any reason listed above, the candidate will be issued with a notice of intention to withdraw and provided 10 working days to appeal the notice to the Graduate School.

(56) If no appeal to the Graduate School has been received within 10 working days, a withdrawal of candidature will be processed and the candidate will be withdrawn from their program with no further appeal options available through the University.

(57) In cases where the candidate appeals and the appeal is upheld, the Dean, Graduate School may set conditions on enrolment.

(58) In cases where the candidate appeals and the appeal is dismissed by the Dean, Graduate School, the candidate will be issued a second notice of intention to withdraw and provided 20 working days to appeal to the Student Academic Administrative Appeals Committee (SAAAC). The candidate's enrolment will be maintained during the SAAAC process. Candidates should refer to the [Academic Administrative Appeals by Students Policy](#) prior to submitting an appeal to the SAAAC.

(59) A candidate who has been withdrawn from the program by the Dean, Graduate School, may apply for readmission at a future date. If the readmission relates to the same program for which the candidate was withdrawn, the Dean may shorten the minimum time to complete the program in accordance with the [Higher Degree by Research Admission Procedure](#).

(60) If a candidate is withdrawn following a review of candidature, or as a result of guilty finding of misconduct, the candidate can only reapply to enrol after a minimum period of 12 months.

(61) A PhD candidate may be permitted to transfer to the MPhil program instead of being withdrawn from candidature with approval of the Dean, Graduate School.

(62) Candidates who reapply following a withdrawal after review of candidature may be required to address terms and conditions set by the Dean, Graduate School.

Voluntary Withdrawal from Candidature

(63) Candidates may withdraw voluntarily from the program at any time. Voluntary withdrawal should be discussed with the advisory team and/or the Director of HDR to ensure all possible alternatives have been considered.

(64) Candidates may withdraw from their program by informing the Graduate School in writing or by submitting a Withdrawal from Candidature request.

(65) Voluntary withdrawals do not need to be endorsed by the advisor or Director of HDR, but candidates are expected to discuss their desire to withdraw from the program with their advisor and/or Director of HDR prior to submitting a request to the Graduate School.

(66) The withdrawal will take effect from the date of receipt of the notification. Retrospective and future dated requests will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Scholarships and Fee Liability

(67) Scholarship placements will cease effective the date of withdrawal or termination in accordance with [UQ and RTP Research Scholarships Procedure](#).

(68) In cases where the withdrawal causes an overpayment of scholarship, the candidate may be required to make repayments.

(69) Candidates who withdraw voluntarily, are withdrawn without academic penalty, or are terminated with academic penalty after census date for the research quarter in which the withdrawal is processed remain fee liable. Candidates seeking to have fee liability removed should refer to [Removal of Courses Due to Special Circumstances Procedure](#).

Information for International Students

(70) International students should be aware that withdrawing from the program may affect their student visa. International students may wish to seek advice from the UQ Visa Officer and the Department of Home Affairs before requesting to withdraw from their program.

Section 4 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Director of HDR

(71) The Director of HDR is responsible for monitoring and endorsing candidate requests at the AOU level, and providing academic advice and support to HDR candidates.

Principal Advisors

(72) Principal Advisors are approved UQ staff members that take primary academic responsibility for the candidate during their candidature, and endorse and monitor candidate requests.

(73) The detailed academic role, accountabilities and eligibility for Principal Advisors are specified in the [Eligibility and](#)

Section 5 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

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

Section 6 - Recording and Reporting

(75) All candidate records including changes to candidature and University decisions are filed in the candidate's electronic record.

Section 7 - Appendix

Definitions

Term	Definition
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework.
Census Date	Research quarter census date.
Dean	Dean of the UQ Graduate School or delegate.
Director of HDR	Director of Higher Degree Research.
AOU	An Academic Organisational Unit that directly enrolls HDR candidates.
FTE	Full-time equivalent enrolment.
HDR	Higher Degree by Research.
MPhil	Master of Philosophy.
ORCID	Open Researcher and Contributor ID.
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy.
Professional Doctorate (Research) (PDRes)	A professional doctorate administered by the UQ Graduate School where at least two thirds of the program is research.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	16th June 2022
Review Date	16th June 2027
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
Approval Date	16th June 2022
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Policy Owner	Virginia Slaughter Dean, Graduate School
Enquiries Contact	Graduate School