

# FACILITIES AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH CANDIDATES GUIDELINE

<b>Policy Hierarchy link</b>	Admissions Policy Admissions to Higher Degree Research Programs Procedure		
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Dean of Graduate Research		
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Director of the Graduate Research School		
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<b>Associated Documents</b>	Research Code of Conduct Work Health and Safety Policy Student Code Policy Student Complaint Procedure UNSW Equity and Diversity Policy Statement, Anti-Racism Policy Statement and Equal Opportunity in Education Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy Higher Degree Research Supervision Guidelines Travel Policy Variation of Candidature Procedure Annual Progress Review and Confirmation of Research Candidatures Procedure Thesis Examination Procedures		
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## 1. Introduction and Scope

This Guideline sets out the roles and responsibilities of Schools, Faculties and the central University administration regarding provision of facilities and resources to support Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates in their studies.

Due to the location of UNSW Canberra campus and the infrastructure available, some of the facilities and resources recommended in this guideline may not be available. However, UNSW Canberra offers a range of facilities that cannot be provided on the main campus. Candidates should ideally discuss the availability of facilities and resources with their prospective supervisors prior to accepting an offer.

The following basic principles should be taken into account when reading this Guideline:

- All HDR policies and procedures, and all staff involved in the provision of facilities and resources to HDR candidates, should adopt a **student-centred perspective** aimed at enabling HDR candidates to realise their full research potential.
- Facilities and resources for HDR candidates should be conceived **holistically** so as to include not only physical and material resources, but also social, emotional, and intellectual resources.
- All HDR candidates should have **equitable access** to facilities and resources, in a way that takes appropriate account of their individual needs, abilities and expectations, and of applicable University policies.<sup>1</sup>
- As far as possible, HDR candidates should be treated as **full members of the University research community**, who have an important contribution to make to the intellectual life of the University and its research reputation.
- Facilities and resources for HDR candidates should be approached on the basis that the purpose of an HDR degree is to provide candidates with a **thorough grounding in a particular academic discipline or field** rather than a narrow competence in their particular area of research.
- In accordance with the above principles, the University should strive to meet, within its available resources, the **highest international standards** of support for HDR candidates.

## 2. Admission, Induction and Commencement of Candidature

### 2.1 Offers of Candidature

No candidate should be admitted to an HDR program unless the School/Faculty concerned is able to provide appropriate space, resources and supervision to conduct the research. Before approving an admission of candidature, the School/Faculty should be satisfied that the proposed research project is feasible to undertake, having regard to the availability of appropriate supervision and infrastructure.

#### 2.1.1 Supervision

Appropriate supervision as outlined in the HDR Supervision Policy should be provided and the best practices outlined in the HDR Supervision Guidelines followed.

#### 2.1.2 Infrastructure

Appropriate infrastructure and resources should be provided including:

- (i) where possible, a sole-use or shared desk and bookshelf and sole-use lockable cabinet;
- (ii) other facilities and resources provided at School or Faculty level (e.g. a computer, computer rooms, laboratory space and workshops);

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<sup>1</sup> These include: UNSW's Equity and Diversity Policy Statement, the Anti-Racism Policy Statement, and Equal Opportunity in Education.

- (iii) University infrastructure (e.g. specialist library collections or high performance computing); and
- (iv) any financial support that the School or Faculty has identified is integral to the success of the research project (e.g. financial support for conference travel and fieldwork).

## 2.2 Induction

In addition to the general induction program run by the Graduate Research School (GRS) for candidates on the Kensington campus and the College of Fine Arts and by UNSW Canberra, induction programs should be offered at Faculty and, where appropriate, School level. Induction should be conducted as soon as practical after commencement of candidature, the aim of which should in part be to inform candidates of the facilities and resources available to them.

### 2.2.1 General Induction

The GRS and UNSW Canberra induction programs should provide candidates with information regarding:

- (i) research integrity and codes of conduct;
- (ii) the University's expectations relating to progress, completion, standards of research and originality of research as defined by the relevant policy and procedures documents;
- (iii) all University facilities and services available throughout candidature;
- (iv) the University's expectations of supervisors and host Schools/Faculties relating to all aspects of the candidature, as defined in relevant policy and procedures documents;
- (v) the University's student code policy and complaint procedures;
- (vi) targeted services available through the GRS; and
- (vii) other targeted services in the University, including:
  - services available through the UNSW student organisation, Arc@UNSW
  - services available at the Learning Centre (Kensington) and Academic Language and Learning Unit (ALL, Canberra);
  - library services;
  - medical services;
  - counselling services;
  - accommodation services;
  - careers and employment advice;
  - childcare facilities;
  - where appropriate, English-language skills courses offered by the Institute of Languages; and
  - the general programs and resources available from UNSW's International Student Services (ISS).

All information presented at the GRS induction should be made available on the GRS website and in the GRS publications and provided by the GRS to all new research candidates.

### 2.2.2 Local Induction

Faculty and/or School induction programs should provide information regarding:

- (i) discipline-specific facilities and support arrangements (e.g. funding from Faculty or Schools for conference attendance, other travel funding, and research seminar programs specifically available to HDR candidates in the Faculty or School);
- (ii) key personnel contact details, such as the Faculty Director of Postgraduate Research and the School Postgraduate Coordinator, key administrative staff (and their functions);
- (iii) Workplace Health and Safety inductions and training;
- (iv) Faculty, School or discipline-specific expectations relevant to the degree and candidate's progression;
- (v) building access, access to office or lab space, tea and washroom facilities, photocopying, consumables, travel, internet access, on-campus mailing addresses;
- (vi) support for fieldwork, testing, technical support, statistical services, equipment access, and laboratory space;
- (vii) School- or Faculty-specific academic processes and requirements that may be mandatory for research students (e.g., seminars, compulsory coursework);
- (viii) how best to effectively utilise the research infrastructure of the School and/or Faculty and become involved in its research culture; and
- (ix) support provided by other Faculties or Schools that may be relevant to any interdisciplinary element of a candidate's research project.

### **2.3 Early Meeting with Supervisor and Postgraduate Coordinator**

A meeting between the HDR candidate and the candidate's supervisors and/or Postgraduate Coordinator, should be held either prior to commencement of candidature or within a few days of commencement to discuss:

- (i) project-specific support available to the candidate from the School, Faculty or University;
- (ii) where a research project involves an interdisciplinary component, information and assistance to access support in another Faculty or School;
- (iii) the supervisor's and HDR candidate's expectations; and
- (iv) any other issues relevant to minimising ambiguity regarding the candidature to ensure that the expectations of the candidate and the supervisor(s) are realistic and understood by both.

## **3. Facilities and resources during candidature**

### **3.1 General**

HDR Candidates are entitled to a comfortable, safe and well-resourced work environment. The minimum conditions that the University deems necessary to satisfy this requirement are specified in this section.

#### **3.1.1 Personal Study Space**

All HDR candidates, on commencement of their research, should be provided with appropriate study space to conduct their research. In particular, all full-time

HDR candidates should, where possible, be provided with shared or open-plan office accommodation that includes the following:

- (i) a sole-use desk and ergonomically suitable chair;
- (ii) lockable cabinet or other storage space;
- (iii) sufficient bookshelf space;
- (iv) a sole-use computer with standard software and internet access;
- (v) printing and photocopying facilities;
- (vi) telephone, fax and postage facilities and a campus mailing address;
- (vii) adequate air-conditioning (where available), lighting, security and privacy; and
- (viii) tearoom and washroom facilities.

If a sole-use desk is not available to every full-time HDR candidate, shared use of a desk or other satisfactory, flexible arrangements should be negotiated between the School/Faculty, the supervisor and the HDR candidate. Part-time HDR candidates should ideally have shared use of a desk and study space. In the event that the School/Faculty is not able to provide appropriate office facilities, candidates should be given access to the Postgraduate Research Student Study Space in the Kensington Campus Library, or an equivalent facility at UNSW's other campuses.

### **3.1.2 Project-specific Support**

In addition to general office facilities, HDR candidates should be given appropriate support to facilitate their specific research project. The details of this should be discussed and agreed to by the School/Faculty, supervisor and candidate at the start of the candidature. Such support may include:

- (i) appropriate additional workspace, laboratory, studio or workshop space in which to conduct their research;
- (ii) equipment such as laboratory instruments, tools, and consumables
- (iii) specialised computing equipment and/or software for their research (such as high performance computing systems or time, or specific software packages not provided by university licence agreements);
- (iv) access to external or shared research facilities; and
- (v) funding for fieldwork, including any associated travel costs.

### **3.2 Consumable Resources and Other Running Costs**

Provision of consumable resources and other running costs, such as photocopying, printing, outside mail, controlled STD or ISD telephone use and fax use, should be commensurate with the requirements of the HDR candidate's research topic. Reasonable limits will vary from School to School and student to student and over the course of the candidature. These issues should be discussed and documented at the start of candidature as outlined in section 3.1.2, and if necessary revised at each Annual Progress Review.

### **3.3 'After Hours' Access to Work Space**

With due regard to security and safety and approval of the relevant authority in the School/Faculty, HDR candidates should have 'after hours' and ideally 24-

hour access to their offices and shared work spaces. Laboratories at any UNSW campus have policies that restrict after hours access unless an appropriate risk assessment has been signed off by the relevant authority and access has been formally approved with a buddy system in place.

### **3.4 Information Technology Resources**

HDR candidates are entitled to the following IT services and technical support:

- (i) University email account and data/file storage;
- (ii) remote access to email and data/file storage;
- (iii) University-licensed software as required for the particular project (data analysis, thesis publishing, information access); and
- (iv) wireless internet access.

When working away from campus, on approved leave to conduct research, HDR candidates should have reasonable access to University Internet services and other resources required to support their research and thesis preparation.

### **3.5 Publication and Conference Presentation**

An important part of research training is to publish results in peer reviewed journals or other outputs as appropriate to the discipline. Communication of research at both national and international is also a key part of research training.

- (i) Schools and supervisors need to support and encourage candidates to actively publish discipline appropriate research outputs in addition to their thesis.
- (ii) In addition to any School, Faculty or project-specific conference-presentation support to which they may be entitled, all currently enrolled HDR candidates are entitled to apply for conference-presentation funding under the UNSW Postgraduate Research Student Support (PRSS) Scheme. The purpose of this Scheme is to assist candidates to attend and present their research at international conferences.
- (iii) The criteria governing the award of funding under the PRSS Scheme should be made available to all HDR candidates.
- (iv) Ideally, PhD candidates should be supported to present a paper at a minimum of two national and one international conference during the course of their candidature, while Masters candidates should be supported to present at a minimum of one national conference during their candidature. Where PRSS funds are insufficient, the relevant School and/or Faculty should, within its available resources and subject to maximum allowable rates for the country in question, top up any shortfall.

### **3.6 School/Faculty Culture and Professional Development Opportunities**

HDR candidates should be encouraged and permitted to engage in and contribute to the professional life and research culture of their School/Faculty wherever possible. In particular HDR candidates should be encouraged by their supervisors to:

- (i) attend any seminars presented by visiting or local academics;
- (ii) engage with other researchers in their School/Faculty by presenting their work in a seminar or similar setting;

- (iii) participate in development opportunities provided to students and researchers.

An important component of development of academic skills is the opportunity to teach. Schools/Faculties should:

- (iv) aim to offer suitably qualified candidates the opportunity to tutor, demonstrate or engage in other professional development activities; and,

Schools/Faculties should also communicate with HDR candidates clearly and regularly on issues that may affect their candidature such as staff cuts and major building refurbishments that require HDR relocation.

### **3.7 Library Resources**

HDR candidates are entitled to have access to full library services equivalent to that of staff including 6 month loan periods, Australian and overseas interlibrary loans, online access to academic journals and other electronic resources. Schools/Faculties should encourage HDR candidates to make effective, efficient use of these library resources by recommending general induction sessions and tours, as well as specialist courses run by the University Library, the Learning Centre and ALL at UNSW Canberra. The Library should provide personal consultations for candidates on key information resources in their area of research.

### **3.8 Student Representation**

Student representation should be available through student organisations such as Arc@UNSW. The University should engage with the student organisation and its representatives via avenues such as Academic Board and its Committees and informal consultation on development of student related policy and procedures.

### **3.9 Other Forms of Support**

To assist optimal engagement in their research, the University should ideally provide HDR candidates with all of the fundamentals necessary to create a stable and high-functioning environment. Given the location and infrastructure available at UNSW Canberra, some of these forms of support may not be available on campus. Where practical, the University should provide on-campus access to the following services for all HDR candidates:

- (i) counselling;
- (ii) health, careers and employment advice;
- (iii) assistance with respect to equity and disability support;
- (iv) social support through the UNSW student organisation, Arc@UNSW; and
- (v) where appropriate, English-language skills courses offered by the Institute of Languages.

In addition, the University should aim to provide for all HDR candidates students:

- (vi) access to childcare at reasonable cost;
- (vii) access to on-campus accommodation designed specifically for HDR candidates at reasonable cost; and

(viii) the general programs and resources available from UNSW's International Student Services (ISS).

## **4. Ongoing Review of Support Requirements**

### **4.1 Ongoing Role of Supervisor and/or Postgraduate Coordinator**

HDR candidates are entitled to raise any issues regarding the appropriate level of support for their research with their supervisor and Postgraduate Coordinator in the first instance, failing which, with the responsible Director of Postgraduate Research or Associate Dean (Research).

### **4.2 Annual Progress Reviews**

Before every Annual Progress Review meeting, HDR candidates and supervisors should review the candidate's needs, including the forms of support and resources that are required and available to conduct the candidate's project. Any additional resources required, and any complaints about non-compliance with this Guideline, should be listed in the Annual Progress Review form. At the relevant panel, the Chair should raise any identified resourcing needs for discussion and devise an appropriate strategy for meeting them.

### **4.3 Ongoing Monitoring by GRS and Postgraduate Coordinators**

In order to ensure continued provision of facilities and resources at the highest international standard, the GRS should monitor the implementation of this Guideline across Schools and Faculties. To this end, Postgraduate Coordinators should compile a list of any complaints of non-compliance with this Guideline made during Annual Progress Review panels and report on these, indicating what action was taken, to the GRS on a biennial basis. Postgraduate Coordinators should in addition conduct a biennial survey of student satisfaction with facilities and resourcing for HDR candidates to supplement the information collected from the Annual Progress Review panels.

## **5. Acknowledgements**

The 2009 version and parts of the current version of these guidelines drew upon the University of Melbourne's *Infrastructure Support for Postgraduate Research Students: The Responsibilities of Academic Departments*; the University of Queensland's *Infrastructure Guidelines for the Support of Research Higher Degree Students in Enrolling Units*; and the University of Western Australia's *Infrastructure Guidelines for the Support of Research Higher Degree Candidates*.



## Appendix A: History

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.0	Academic Board (AB04/128)	5 October 2004	5 October 2004	
2.0	Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Research)	2 June 2009	2 June 2009	Full Review
3.0	Pro-Vice- Chancellor (Research Training)	29 April 2014	29 April 2014	Full Review by HDRC – addition of Principles

Archived document