



Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Next full review
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<b>Procedure Statement</b>				
<b>Purpose</b>	This procedure outlines the processes for independent review of research progress and confirmation of higher degree research candidatures.			
<b>Scope</b>	This procedure applies to all higher degree research candidates, their supervisors and people in roles responsible for management of higher degree research (HDR). The relevant Conditions for Award Policy should be read in conjunction with this procedure.			
<b>Are Local Documents on this subject permitted?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, however Local Documents must be consistent with this University-wide Document			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Procedure Processes and Actions</b>				

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## 1. Introduction

UNSW is committed to supporting candidates in the timely completion of their studies and undergoing regular Research Progress Reviews is a critical part of this support. Reviews are intended to be a positive and productive process and provide HDR candidates with:

- An affirmation of progress, where satisfactory progress has been achieved;
- Support in developing a research plan and milestones for the period up to the next Review;
- An opportunity to have the research and supervision arrangements reviewed by a panel that is independent of the supervision and the conduct of the research project; and

- A safe environment in which a candidate can raise any issues they feel are impacting on research progress

## 2. Responsibilities

### 2.1. HDR candidates

HDR candidates are responsible for ensuring their Research Progress Review documentation is completed on time and according to instructions provided. Candidates are also responsible for disclosing any information they feel is related to their progress. This includes issues that have arisen that may affect progress such as personal matters and concerns relating to supervision. If a candidate is not comfortable raising these issues in a Review, or if independent support is required for other reasons, candidates are encouraged to access appropriate support services to provide evidence of issues that may have affected progress (see Section 13.2).

### 2.2. Supervisors

Primary supervisors are responsible for providing formal advice on progress of the candidature to the Head of School via the UNSW Review process. They are responsible for completing their sections of the Progress Review Form as instructed and engaging proactively in the Review process. The primary supervisor should also consult other members of the supervisory team about their views on the progress of the candidate and encourage them to attend the Review.

### 2.3. Postgraduate Research Coordinator (PGC)

The PGC is responsible for scheduling and managing all formal research progress Reviews as outlined in the [Roles and Responsibilities of Postgraduate Research Coordinators Guideline](#). This includes providing appropriate discipline-specific guidance to candidates on the Review process and documentation required to support the Review. It also includes responsibility for the milestone setting process to ensure that appropriate milestones are documented on the Progress Review Form.

## 3. Timing of Research Progress Reviews

### 3.1. Frequency of Reviews

All full-time and part-time HDR candidates must have their research progress reviewed by an independent panel at least once per calendar year of enrolment. Re-enrolment in each year of an HDR program up to the maximum time for the degree is conditional upon undergoing a Review within the year.

### 3.2. Part time candidates

While all candidates must be reviewed once per calendar year, progress is evaluated based on full-time equivalent (FTE) time periods for part-time candidates. In cases where part-time candidates have received a marginal or unsatisfactory outcome, the same FTE period as full-time candidates should be given leading up to an Additional Review.

### 3.3. Candidates and program leave

In circumstances where a candidate is on approved program leave, a Review should take place immediately prior to the period of leave. If this is not possible, a Review should be scheduled within three months of return to study but no earlier than one month after the candidate's return.

## 4. Review Panel Composition

All research progress Reviews have the same panel composition requirements. Each candidate will have a Review panel ("the panel") appointed by the PGC, to conduct the research progress Review. The panel must be able to provide an independent and objective Review of the candidate's research progress. The candidate and supervisor should be informed of the panel membership prior to the Review.

Equity, diversity and inclusion principles should be considered when appointing panels.

### 4.1. Membership, qualifications and experience

- The panel should be composed of at least two members.
- Panel members should be qualified at least at the qualification level or equivalent in which the candidate is enrolled.
- Panel representation should include qualifications and experience in a cognate discipline, or relevant disciplines where interdisciplinary research is being conducted.
- The panel must include:

- a **panel chair** who is either the PGC or a senior member of academic staff who is eligible to be a primary supervisor or has an equivalent conjoint appointment, and has experience in supervision of higher degree research candidates to completion, and
- at least one other member who holds an appointment at UNSW academic level B or higher.
- The panel must not include:
  - more than one member who is an early career researcher
  - more than one member external to UNSW.
- The same panel members should be maintained for Reviews of a candidate throughout their candidature wherever possible. Exceptions to this may occur where there is potential for perceived or actual panel bias such as when there has been an appeal of a progress Review outcome.

#### **4.2. Freedom from conflict of interest**

- Panel members should be free from perceived or actual conflicts of interest in relation to the candidature.
- The panel must not include:
  - the supervisor, joint supervisor, secondary supervisor, or any member of a supervisory panel
- If the PGC is a supervisor of the candidate, they must not be involved in management of the Review process.

#### **4.3. Appeals regarding panel composition**

- In circumstances where there is potential for perceived or actual bias, candidates may request a change to the panel composition.
- Any issues regarding the panel composition including reasons for objections to the composition must be raised with the PGC prior to the Review and the appeal must be in writing with sufficient evidence.
- The PGC is responsible for determining whether there is justification for exclusion or inclusion of specific members and whether to continue with the Review or reconstitute a panel in the near future.

### **5. Conduct of a Research Progress Review**

The Graduate Research School (GRS) will inform PGCs of when candidates are due for a Research Progress Review. The PGC will set a Review date and ensure the online Progress Review Form is available to the candidate. Review guidelines that are specific to Faculty/School should be clearly documented and provided to candidates during Faculty/School induction at the commencement of candidature.

#### **5.1. Confidential meetings**

The Review must provide an opportunity for the candidate and, if relevant, the supervisor(s) to meet with the Review panel independently so that they can discuss any issues confidentially.

#### **5.2. Attendance**

Attendance at a Review is typically face to face. If either the candidate or the supervisors are not able to attend the Review, alternate methods such as video-conferencing can be used if all parties agree and it can be supported by the School.

#### **5.3. Documentation of Reviews**

Formal documentation of a Review including completed Review forms, attachments and outcomes will be recorded on the student system. All other documentation relating to the academic aspects of the Research Progress Review should be maintained by the PGC/Head of School. Any plans for remedial action that are not included on the Review form should be clearly communicated in writing by the PGC to the candidate and the supervisors, with a copy provided to GRS to place on the candidate's record.

#### **5.4. Milestones setting**

A critical part of the Research Progress Review process is setting goals for the mid to long term. In order to achieve these goals and to ensure candidates make progress towards completion of the degree, a candidate and supervisor will develop smaller milestones to be achieved by the time of the next Review. An enrolled candidate must always have active milestones against which they are reviewed.

#### **5.4.1. Initial candidature milestones**

Candidates must set milestones in consultation with their supervisor(s) within the first 3 months of candidature. The candidate will be reviewed against these in their first Research Progress Review.

#### **5.4.2 Subsequent candidature milestones**

Candidates and supervisors must keep records of the agreed milestones throughout the candidature. In Research Progress Reviews, candidates should provide:

- an outline of achievements against agreed objectives/criteria and milestones;
- an outline of key objectives/criteria and milestones to be met by the next Review; and
- a timeline and milestones for completion of the thesis. (see Appendix D)

#### **5.4.3. Review Panel**

In all Reviews, regardless of the outcome, the Panel, together with the candidate and the supervisor(s), must set milestones for the next Review and these will be used to assess progress in the program. If appropriate milestones are not set, the PGC will return the Review form to the panel for revision. The Panel should ensure that:

- milestones are agreed, with specific dates by which they should be achieved
- the candidate is given appropriate time to achieve the milestones
- the candidate and the supervisors are actively involved in the process of setting milestones.

### **5.5. Consideration of mitigating circumstances**

All Reviews should consider any mitigating circumstances raised by the candidate or supervisor(s) and ensure that they are proactively and sensitively managed to ensure that the health and wellbeing of the candidate is prioritised.

#### **5.5.1. Management Plan (See Appendix C)**

If the Panel believes that the mitigating circumstances are likely to impact on the candidate's progress moving forward, then a Management Plan should be developed that outlines a clear pathway to completion with a feasible timeline and milestones, and ensures appropriate support is in place. The Management Plan must be done in consultation with the candidate and supervisors, and relevant student support services. A record of the Plan must be uploaded as part of the Review record as outlined in Section 5.3.

The Management Plan may recognise that the candidature cannot be completed in the maximum time allowed for the degree. Subsequent Reviews will need to consider the Management Plan and monitor progress relative to this Plan. In cases where candidates are unable to devote sufficient time to the research to justify either a full-time or part-time enrolment they should apply for program leave. A Management Plan template is provided in Appendix C.

## **6. Research Progress Reviews for candidates who are within the maximum time for their degree**

There are three different types of Research Progress Review for candidates who are within the maximum time for the degree. The maximum time for the degree is 4 years (FTE) for Doctoral programs and 2 years (FTE) for Masters programs (including MPhil). The type of Review held for candidates who are within the maximum time is dependent on the stage of candidature. There are three types of Reviews as follows:

- **Confirmation Review (Doctoral candidates only)**
- **Annual Progress Review**
- **Additional Review**

### **6.1. Confirmation Review (see Appendix A)**

Confirmation Review is required for all Doctoral candidates prior to the end of their first year of candidature (FTE). Confirmation is not required for Masters candidates unless they wish to apply for admission to a doctoral program (for details see [Admission to Higher Degree Research Programs Procedure](#)).

#### **6.1.1. Timing of Confirmation Review**

For doctoral candidates, the Confirmation Review should be scheduled approximately nine months (FTE) from the start date of the term in which they commenced. If Confirmation is not achieved within the first year (i.e. if Marginal or Unsatisfactory at the first Confirmation Review), the



confirmation period may be extended to fifteen months for full-time PhD candidates or thirty months for part-time candidates to allow enough time for a follow up Review to be held.

For any candidate enrolled part time, the first Review will typically be a regular ARPR and the second will be the Confirmation Review. (Note that there is an option to record a Review outcome as “satisfactory prior to confirmation”.)

### 6.1.2. Documentation required for a Confirmation Review

The following documentation must be provided:

- Evidence that a well written and critical Review of the research area (typically a literature Review) has been drafted
- An established and feasible, detailed research proposal
- Evidence that the UNSW Research Integrity module has been completed
- Evidence that Faculty/School specific Confirmation requirements have been met such as mandatory coursework.

### 6.1.3. Review Outcomes

- **Satisfactory**

A Satisfactory outcome indicates that the candidature is formally confirmed. The candidature is permitted to continue, and a new set of milestones must be provided for the next scheduled Review. This recommendation confirms the following:

- the research is appropriate for a doctoral program;
- the candidate has demonstrated their capacity to undertake research at the doctoral level;
- the candidate has successfully completed all mandatory requirements for Confirmation; and
- the candidate is on track for on-time completion.

- **Marginal or Unsatisfactory**

A Marginal or Unsatisfactory outcome at the first Confirmation Review indicates that the requirements for Confirmation were only partially met or not met at all. It may indicate that the candidate is not suited to undertaking a Doctoral degree. For the candidature to continue, the following actions must be taken:

- New milestones set that include plans to meet all Confirmation requirements, and the dates by which these should be completed.
- The Confirmation period is extended by 3 months (FTE) in order to hold a second Confirmation Review against the milestones set.
- The Confirmation period cannot be extended beyond 15 months (FTE) from initial enrolment.

- **Unsatisfactory/Show Cause**

This recommendation is made at the second Confirmation Review and indicates that the requirements for Confirmation as outlined in Section 6.1.3 have not been met. The Faculty HDC will consider whether the candidate should be asked to Show Cause as to why their candidature should not be terminated. (See [Show Cause for Research Candidates Guideline](#))

## 6.2. Annual Research Progress Review (ARPR) (see Appendix A)

Annual Progress Reviews are required in all HDR Candidatures. The requirements for the ARPR are as follows:

### 6.2.1. Key documentation for the ARPR

- **Progress Review Form**

The candidate must complete the form as requested by the Panel/School. Ideally the candidate should complete their section of the form by 14 days prior to the scheduled Review date. This should be discussed with the supervisor/s prior to completion. The supervisor should also complete the form and ensure that other members of the supervisory team are given the opportunity to make comments. The candidate and supervisor should include specific reference to changes in the research plans that may have changed the previously agreed milestones.

- **Issues Impeding Progress**

It is important that any personal, technical, academic or other issues considered to have impeded progress are flagged by the candidate and/or supervisor on the form. If the candidate or the supervisor has concerns about the supervisory relationship, this should be flagged immediately with the PGC prior to completion of the form.

- **Additional Documentation**

Documentation and material presented in oral presentations (see Section 6.2.2) must incorporate sufficient detail to allow the Panel to assess the research and its progress. Any material required as part of the milestones agreed at the previous Research Progress Review must be provided. All documentation must be provided in sufficient time to be fully reviewed by the panel.

- In addition to evidence of meeting any Faculty/School specific requirements, the candidate should provide in writing:
  - An outline of achievements for the past 12 months against agreed objectives/criteria and milestones
  - For Masters/MPhil candidates, evidence that UNSW Research Integrity (RI) has been completed must be presented at their first Annual Review. For doctoral candidates, RI must be completed before the Confirmation Review (see Section 6.1.2)
  - An outline of key objectives/criteria and milestones for the next 12 months
  - A timeline and milestones for completion of the thesis (see Appendix D)
  - If the candidate plans on submitting within the next 12 months, a table of contents for the thesis together with the completion status of each section.

### 6.2.2. Major components of an ARPR

- **Oral Presentation** on the research must be given. This will typically be an open presentation to the School and should include the Panel members. Time must also be devoted to questions from the Panel and, where relevant, the audience. Where a presentation to the School is not possible, the candidate should present their research directly to the panel.
- **A panel review meeting** must be held during which the candidate is given an opportunity to meet with the Review panel alone, in the absence of the supervisors. The expectation is that supervisors will be available for the panel to interview.

### 6.2.3. Review Outcomes

- **Satisfactory**

A Satisfactory outcome indicates that all milestones have been met to a satisfactory standard, and the degree is on track for on-time completion. New milestones must be set for the next scheduled Review.

- **Marginal**

A Marginal outcome indicates that the milestones were only partially met. There may be a risk of an overtime candidature. In order for the candidature to continue, the following actions must be taken:

- An additional Review held within 3 months (FTE).
- New milestones set that outline: the academic achievements expected by the time of the next Review; remedial actions to be taken that address the key factors impeding progress; and the dates by which these should be completed.
- Following a Marginal outcome, there are only two recommendations that can be made at the next Review: Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.

- **Unsatisfactory**

An Unsatisfactory outcome indicates that few or none of the milestones were met. There is a high risk of an overtime candidature and/or the degree not being completed. An assessment of unsatisfactory progress is a serious academic matter that requires careful management to bring the candidature back on track for satisfactory progress and timely completion. In order for the candidature to continue, the following actions must be taken:

- An additional Review held within 3 months (FTE)
- New milestones set that outline: the academic achievements expected by the time of the next Review; remedial actions to be taken that address the key factors impeding progress; and the dates by which these should be completed.
- Following an Unsatisfactory recommendation, there are only two recommendations that can be made at the next Review: Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory/Show Cause.

- **Unsatisfactory/Show Cause**

Following an Unsatisfactory outcome, if the Review Panel finds that the research progress is still not satisfactory, the recommendation will be Unsatisfactory/Show Cause. The Faculty HDC will consider whether the candidate should be asked to Show Cause as to why their candidature should not be terminated. (See [Show Cause for Research Candidates Guideline](#))

### 6.3. Additional Review (see Appendix A)

An additional Review is supplementary to the annual Review cycle for candidates who are not progressing or have specific challenges that need independent management. It is usually scheduled as a result of a marginal or unsatisfactory ARPR, but it is also possible for a PGC, supervisor or candidate to request an interim Review for other reasons. The role and conduct of this Review, including any required milestones must be made clear in writing to the candidate, either via the Review form or via other documentation.

- If an additional Review is required as a result of an ARPR outcome, the PGC initiates the Review.
- For all other additional Reviews, the person requesting the Review (if it is not the PGC) should justify the Review by stating the reasons for the Review in writing to the PGC. If the PGC requires the Review, the supervisor and candidate must be informed in writing.
- An additional review can also be scheduled when candidates are overtime.

#### 6.3.1. Review Outcomes

The Review outcomes follow the ARPR process for on time candidatures as outlined in Section 6.2.3.

## 7. Research Progress Reviews for candidates who are not on track for on-time completion

Exceeding the maximum time permitted for the degree is a serious matter, with the candidate being at high risk of not completing the degree. Accordingly, it is critical that the progress of candidates is carefully monitored. Reviews must be conducted at least once every 3 months (FTE) of over-time enrolment. There are two categories of Reviews for candidates who are not on track for on-time completion:

- **Final On-time Progress Review**
- **Over-time Review**

**Note relating to management plans.** Where a management plan has been put in place (see Section 5.5.1), Review milestones and candidature management should be aligned with the plan.

**Note relating to Additional Reviews.** An Additional Review supplementary to the overtime Review cycle may be scheduled for reasons specified by the PGC, supervisor or candidate as outlined in Section 6.3.

### 7.1. Request for overtime enrolment

For candidates who have reached the maximum time for the degree but require further enrolment in order to complete the thesis, a request for Overtime Enrolment must be submitted for consideration by the Faculty Higher Degree Committee (HDC). The candidate must seek feedback from their supervisor when submitting a request for overtime enrolment.

Candidates may request up to two terms of Overtime Enrolment at a time, regardless of full-time or part-time status. It is recognised that in some cases, candidates may require up to 1.0 Year FTE of Overtime Enrolment in order to complete and submit the thesis.

The process of applying for Overtime Enrolment will include the establishment of a remedial timeline for the completion of the thesis. It is important that the candidate, supervisor, and Review Panel agree upon a detailed and realistic timeline for completion, as the timeline will inform the setting of feasible milestones and assessment of the candidate's progress moving forward. See Appendix D for a sample timeline.

The candidate's progress during overtime enrolment will be monitored via regular Progress Reviews as in Section 7.3.

### 7.2. Final on-time Review where on-time completion is not possible (see Appendix B)

Candidates in their final term of on-time candidature may be unable to submit their thesis on time. In such cases, a Review must be held before a request for overtime enrolment can be made.

#### 7.2.1. Additional documentation

The Progress Review Form is used, and the following must also be documented:

- Reasons for the delay in thesis submission
- A thesis outline must be submitted for all requests for overtime enrolment including:



- complete chapter structure of the thesis,
- percentage of each chapter that has been completed,
- status of supervisory Review of each chapter.
- a detailed timeline to completion with a projected thesis submission date which accounts for periods of supervisor feedback. (see Appendix D)

### 7.2.2. Review Outcomes

Given that the candidate is not or may not be on track to submit on-time, there are only two possible Review outcomes:

- **Marginal**

A Marginal outcome indicates that progress against the milestones has not been sufficient to ensure on-time submission of the thesis. There may be some risk that the degree will not be completed. The following actions must be taken:

- An additional Review held within 3 months (FTE).
- New milestones set that outline: the academic achievements expected by the time of the next Review; remedial actions to be taken that address the key factors that are impeding progress; and the dates by which these should be completed.
- Following a Marginal outcome in the final on-time Review, there are only two recommendations that can be made at the first overtime Review: Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory/Show Cause.

- **Unsatisfactory**

An Unsatisfactory outcome is a serious academic matter that indicates that few or none of the milestones have been met. There may be a high risk of the degree not being completed. The following actions must be taken:

- An additional Review held within 3 months (FTE).
- New milestones set that outline: the academic achievements expected by the time of the next Review; remedial actions to be taken that address the key factors that are impeding progress; and the dates by which these should be completed.
- Following an Unsatisfactory/Additional Review outcome in the final on-time Review, there are only two recommendations that can be made at the first overtime Review: Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory/Show Cause.

### 7.3. Overtime Review (see Appendix B)

All candidates who exceed the maximum time for the degree should have received either a Marginal or Unsatisfactory outcome in their final on-time Review (see Section 7.2.2). Candidates who are over-time must be reviewed within 3 months (FTE) of their re-enrolment. At this Review, it is expected that the candidate will have achieved the milestones set by the Panel at the previous Review and is able to confirm that they are on-track to submit their thesis in accordance with the approved timeline.

#### 7.3.1. Review outcomes

- **Satisfactory**

In a candidature that is overtime, a Satisfactory outcome is only possible following a Marginal or Unsatisfactory outcome. A Satisfactory outcome indicates that all milestones have been met to a satisfactory standard and that the thesis is on-track for submission in accordance with the agreed timeline. A new set of milestones must be provided leading to thesis submission by the appropriate deadline.

- **Marginal**

In a candidature that is overtime, a Marginal outcome is only possible following a Satisfactory outcome. A marginal outcome indicates that progress has not been sufficient to allow for submission by the deadline set at the previous Review. A Marginal outcome may also be given in recognition of the fact that the candidature is overtime. The following actions must be taken:

- An additional Review held within 3 months (FTE).
- New milestones set that outline: the academic achievements expected by the time of the next Review; remedial actions to be taken that address the key factors that are impeding progress; and the dates by which these should be completed.
- If further Overtime Enrolment is required, the candidate must submit a new request to be considered by the Faculty HDC. The candidate must provide a revised timeline for the completion of the thesis that will inform the setting of milestones and assessment of progress moving forward.

- Following a Marginal outcome in an overtime candidature, there are only two possible outcomes that can be given at the next Review: Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory/Show Cause.
- **Unsatisfactory**  
In a candidature that is overtime, and where the previous Review outcome was Satisfactory, an Unsatisfactory outcome may be recommended. An Unsatisfactory outcome is a serious academic matter that indicates that few or none of the milestones have been met. There may be a high risk of the degree not being completed. The following actions must be taken:
  - An additional Review held within 3 months (FTE).
  - New milestones set that outline: the academic achievements expected by the time of the next Review; remedial actions to be taken that address the key factors that are impeding progress; and the dates by which these should be completed.
  - If further Overtime Enrolment is required, the candidate must submit a new request to be considered by the Faculty HDC. The candidate must provide a revised timeline for the completion of the thesis that will inform the setting of milestones and assessment of progress moving forward.

Following an Unsatisfactory outcome in an overtime candidature, there are only two possible outcomes that can be given at the next Review: Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory/Show Cause.

- **Unsatisfactory/Show Cause**  
An Unsatisfactory/Show Cause recommendation indicates that the milestones from the previous Marginal or Unsatisfactory Review have not been met and that there is no confidence that the thesis will be submitted by the appropriate deadline. The Faculty HDC will consider whether the candidate should be asked to Show Cause as to why their candidature should not be terminated. (see [Show Cause for Research Candidates Guideline](#)).

#### **7.4. Research Progress Reviews for candidates who are required to re-enrol to revise and resubmit their thesis**

In the thesis examination process, some candidates will be asked to revise and resubmit their thesis for re-examination. It is important that progress of their revisions is monitored through a formal Research Progress Review for every two terms of enrolment to ensure that the candidate can complete the revisions in a timely fashion. Candidates and supervisors must meet within the first month of re-enrolment to set milestones. These should be documented and the candidate will be reviewed against these in their next Research Progress Review. Documented milestones must be sent to the Graduate Research School for record keeping.

The conduct of the Review and the Review outcomes should be the same as detailed in Section 6.2, except that an unsatisfactory outcome could result in the candidate not being awarded the degree.

### **8. Appeals and complaints**

#### **8.1. Candidate appeal against a Review outcome**

A candidate can appeal about a review recommendation or any recommended actions where it relates to a lack of procedural fairness or inconsistent application of University policy or procedure. They must have the opportunity to make a written submission to the Faculty Higher Degree Committee ("the Committee"). If required, appropriate avenues for support available are outlined in Section 13.2.

##### **8.1.1. Step 1**

Documentation outlining the subject of the appeal and any supporting evidence must be submitted to the School PGC within 10 working days from the date the school publishes the Review recommendation. If there is a conflict of interest or other issue (e.g. if the PGC is the Panel Chair), the candidate may submit documents via the appropriate Faculty Associate Dean Research Training or via the GRS.

##### **8.1.2. Step 2**

The Committee will consider the appeal by the candidate and advise the candidate whether the appeal has been upheld. The Committee's notification should also outline the appropriate actions resulting from the appeal outcome. Examples of the types of issues that a candidate may wish to raise in an appeal document may include:

- A conflict of interest on the part of the panel;
- A failure on the part of the panel to consider all of the issues raised by the candidate; and/or
- A failure on the part of the panel to measure progress against the agreed milestones.

### 8.1.3.Step 3

If an appeal is not upheld, candidates have the right to submit a complaint to the Dean of Graduate Research according to the [Student Complaint Procedure](#).

## 9. Show Cause as to why candidature should not be terminated

The Show Cause recommendation is a serious outcome and provides the candidate with a final opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to complete the degree. Failure to do so may result in termination of the candidature. The [Show Cause for Research Candidates Guideline](#) should be consulted for more information.

### 9.1. Show Cause as a result of unsatisfactory progress

The Panel makes the recommendation of Unsatisfactory/Show Cause on the basis of unsatisfactory progress of the research and subsequent failure of the candidate to meet the remedial milestones set for the subsequent Review.

### 9.2. Show Cause as part of a lapsed candidature

A lapsed candidature occurs when a candidate fails to re-enrol and is absent without approved leave. Progress may be deemed unsatisfactory due to lapsed candidature and a candidate may be asked to Show Cause as a result of an inadequate response to a lapsed candidature notification. The procedure outlined in the [Variation of Candidature Procedure](#) will be followed in such cases.

### 9.3. Show Cause due to failure to undergo a Research Progress Review

Where a candidate fails to undergo a Research Progress Review scheduled in accordance with UNSW policy and procedure, the candidate may be asked to Show Cause. If a candidate does not complete their section of the form at all or does not provide documentation by the due date so that there is sufficient time to Review the material, they may be considered to have failed to undergo a Research Progress Review.

### 9.4. Show Cause due to failure to submit by the end of 1.0 FTE of Overtime Enrolment

Where a candidate has not been able to submit the thesis by the end of 1.0 Year FTE of Overtime Enrolment, the candidate will be asked to Show Cause. Any request for further enrolment will be considered by the Faculty HDC and Dean of Graduate Research within this Show Cause process.

## 10. Termination of candidature

All candidates will be given the opportunity to speak with the Dean of Graduate Research following a termination of candidature recommendation from the Committee. The objective of this meeting is to discuss the procedure followed and outline all of the factors taken into consideration. If a candidate has any additional matters that they believe have not been adequately considered by the Committee these should be raised during this meeting. The [Show Cause for Research Candidates Guideline](#) should be consulted for more information.

Following a termination of candidature outcome, the candidate has the right to submit a formal complaint as outlined in the [Student Complaint Procedure](#).

## 11. Transfer to Masters

If at any Review the supervisor or the Panel recommend transfer to a Masters degree, the candidate should be informed in writing of the reasons for this recommendation. If the transfer recommendation is accepted by the candidate, program transfer should be requested via the [Variation of Candidature Procedure](#).

## 12. Managing issues relating to supervision

Research candidates may feel reluctant to raise issues relating to their supervision during a formal Review. As outlined in Section 5.1 of this procedure, it is critical that all candidates are given the opportunity to meet with the Panel alone and to raise any issues in the absence of the supervisors.

If the panel is alerted to a potential dispute or breakdown in the relationship between the candidate and the supervisor, both the candidate and the supervisor should be given the opportunity to meet with the panel separately to discuss the relevant issues.

### 12.1. Supervisory team changes

If during a Review a change in supervision arrangements is signalled, the HDR Supervision Policy and Procedure and the [Variation of Candidature Procedure](#) should be followed.

## 12.2. Referral of issues relating to supervision

If the Panel or PGC does not feel comfortable with managing the issues raised, the candidate should be formally referred to an appropriate authority such as the Head of School, the Associate Dean Research Training or equivalent, or the Dean of Graduate Research.

## 13. Making Progress Reviews a positive process

Where progress is assessed as marginal or unsatisfactory, the most important roles of the panel are to:

- Determine the key factors that have impacted on research progress
- Provide advice to the candidate on how they may address these factors and how they might overcome any issues raised in the review, including issues with supervision
- Facilitate development of a plan with the candidate and supervisor designed to assist the candidate in achieving satisfactory progress of the research
- Recommend the candidate be required to Show Cause if previous remedial action following unsatisfactory outcomes has been unsuccessful.

### 13.1. Non-research related issues

Where non-research related issues are considered to have impacted progress, candidates should be advised to seek appropriate support such as that outlined in Section 12.2.

Candidates may be advised to transfer from full-time enrolment to part-time enrolment or to apply for leave if personal issues are protracted. This will allow time for management of the non-research related issues and will minimise the impact on their research candidature.

### 13.2. Resources and Support Services

A range of resources and support services are available for all candidates at UNSW:

- The Faculty or School in which the candidate is enrolled can provide specific details of how policy and procedures are implemented. The PGC, supervisors, Director of Postgraduate Research/Associate Dean Research Training can provide specific advice and guidance.
- The GRS has faculty-specific Candidature Management Officers, who can provide information on policies and procedures as applicable across the University. The Manager, Research Candidature is also available for all candidates to provide confidential advice. The Director of the GRS or the Dean of Graduate Research can assist candidates following a referral by the Manager, Research Candidature.
- The Division of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic offers a variety of services for UNSW students, including Counselling and Psychological Services, Disability Services, Educational Support Advisors and the Learning Centre, who can provide support and skills development.
- The Student Integrity Unit is available for advice relating to the [Student Complaint Procedure](#).
- For independent advice including legal advice and advocacy, candidates should contact the student organisation, Arc@UNSW.
- Consult the [Facilities and Resources to Support Higher Degree Research Candidates Guideline](#) for more information

Accountabilities	
Responsible Officer	Dean of Graduate Research
Contact Officer	Director, Graduate Research School
Supporting Information	
Legislative Compliance	This Procedure supports the University's compliance with the following legislation: <a href="#">Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015</a>
Parent Document (Policy)	<a href="#">Conditions for Award of Doctor of Philosophy Policy</a> <a href="#">Conditions for Award of Master of Philosophy Policy</a>
Supporting Documents	<a href="#">Show Cause for Research Candidates Guideline</a>

<b>Related Documents</b>	<a href="#">Admissions Policy</a> <a href="#">Admission to Higher Degree Research Programs Procedure</a> <a href="#">Student Complaint Procedure</a> <a href="#">Roles and Responsibilities of Postgraduate Research Coordinators Guideline</a> <a href="#">Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy</a> <a href="#">Higher Degree Research Supervision Procedure</a> <a href="#">Variation of Candidature Procedure</a> <a href="#">Facilities and Resources to Support Higher Degree Research Candidates Guideline</a> <a href="#">Register of Delegations</a>			
<b>Superseded Documents</b>	Progress Review and Confirmation of Research Candidatures Procedure, v2.0			
<b>File Number</b>	2012/04304			
<b>Definitions and Acronyms</b>				
<b>Research Progress Review</b>	These are formal, independent Reviews that are conducted according to these University procedures. They include Annual Research Progress Reviews (ARPR), Confirmation Reviews, Overtime Reviews and Additional Reviews. Reviews are not intended to replace regular meetings and evaluations of progress that supervisors normally conduct.			
<b>Confirmation of Candidature</b>	This is the result of a formal Review that is conducted within the first year (FTE) of a doctoral program. Confirmation indicates that the research candidate has demonstrated to an independent panel that they have developed a feasible research program appropriate for doctoral level qualification.			
<b>Show Cause</b>	A candidate may be asked to Show Cause as to why their candidature should not be terminated in cases where there has been sustained unsatisfactory research progress. Show Cause is a process that provides an opportunity for the candidate to raise any issues that may have affected progress. These may include but are not limited to personal, technical and academic issues. Candidates may also be asked to Show Cause in cases of lapsed candidatures.			
<b>PGC</b>	Postgraduate Research Coordinator			
<b>GRS</b>	Graduate Research School			
<b>ARPR</b>	Annual Research Progress Review			
<b>PhD</b>	Doctor of Philosophy			
<b>FTE</b>	Full-Time Equivalent			
<b>HDR</b>	Higher Degree Research			
<b>RI</b>	UNSW Research Integrity online training module			
<b>MPhil</b>	Master of Philosophy			
<b>Faculty HDC</b>	Faculty Higher Degree Committee			
<b>Revision History</b>				
<b>Version</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Approval date</b>	<b>Effective date</b>	<b>Sections modified</b>
Version 1.0 of this Procedure superseded a GRS Local Document approved on 25 August 2009.				
1.0	Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	23 October 2012	23 October 2012	Revision, reformat using Governance templates.

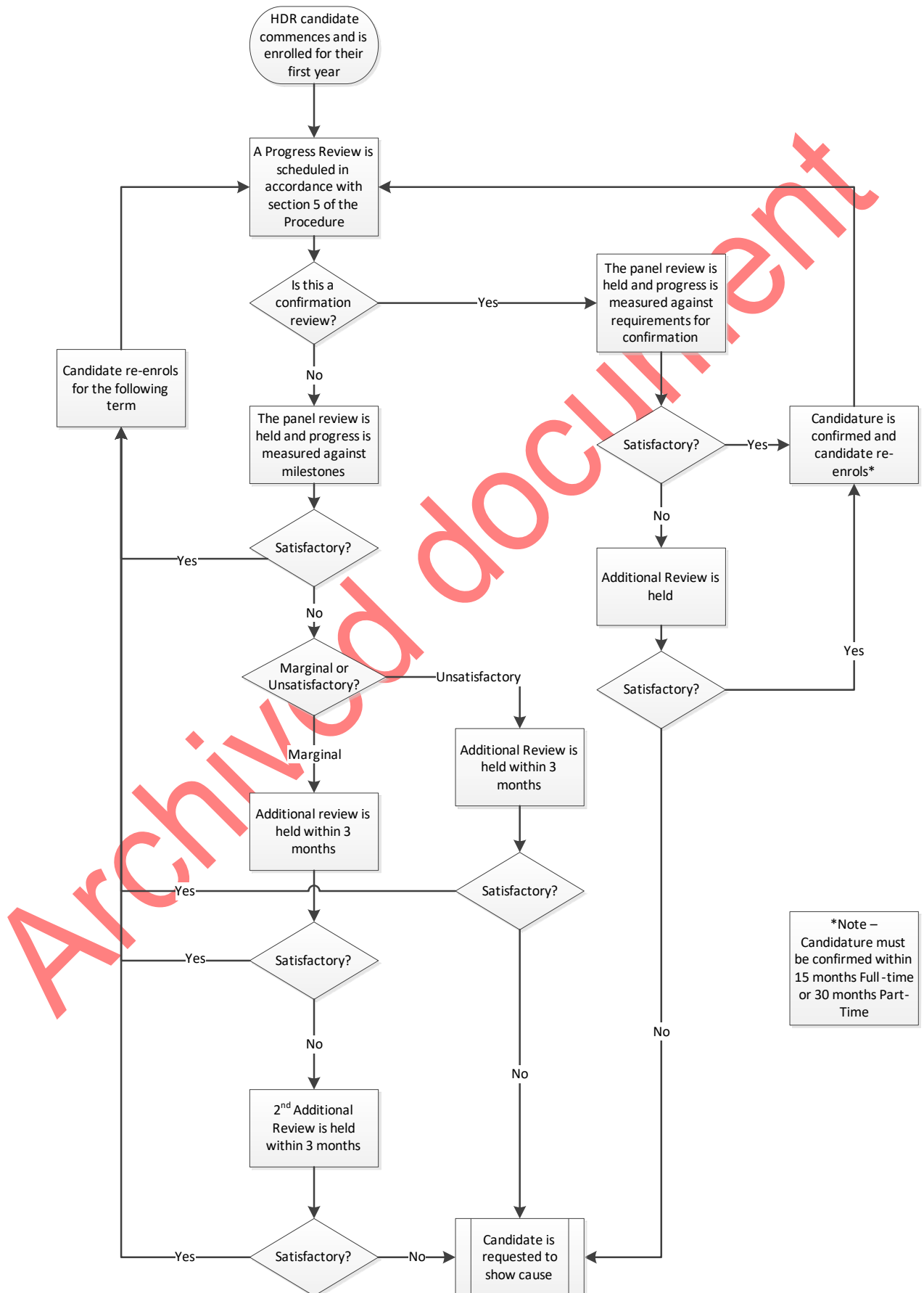


2.0	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research	9 October 2017	9 October 2017	Full review
2.1	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research	13 December 2018	13 December 2018	Minor amendment

Archived document

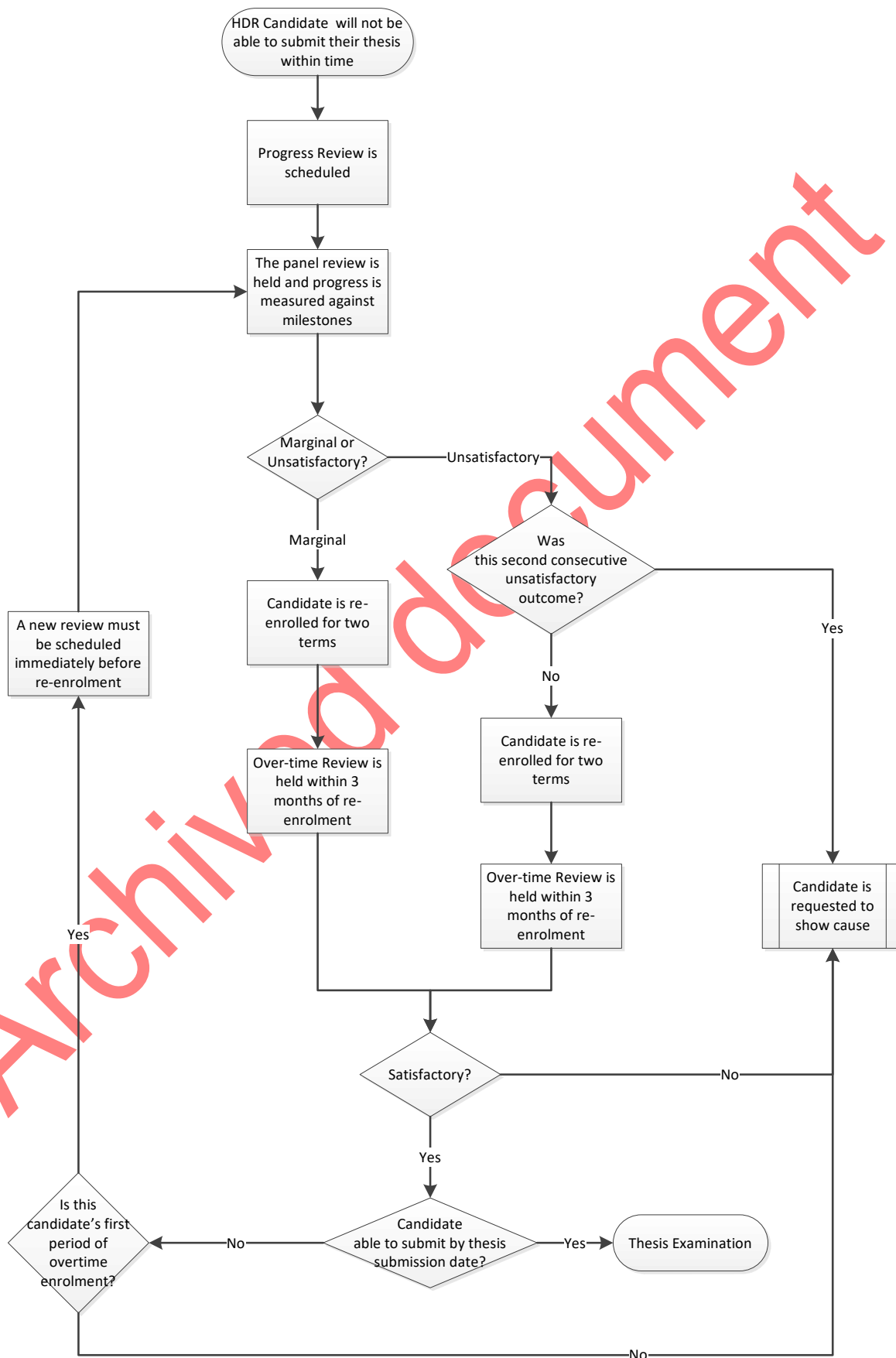
## APPENDIX A: Process for Research Progress Reviews for candidates who are within the maximum time permitted for the degree

The process illustrated is an example for full-time Doctoral candidates within time. For any candidate enrolled part-time, the first Review will be an ARPR and the second Review will be a Confirmation Review. For Master level candidates, Confirmation is not required unless requesting a transfer to a doctoral program.



## APPENDIX B: Process for Research Progress Reviews for candidates not on track for on-time completion

The process illustrated is an example for full-time PhD candidates not on track for on-time completion.



## APPENDIX C: Example of a Management Plan



Graduate Research School

# Higher Degree Research Management Plan

**Date:**  **Name and zID of Candidate:**

**Faculty:**  **School:**

***This plan was made in consultation with the above candidate and the following:***

***Panel Chair/Panel Members:***

***Postgraduate Coordinator:***

***Supervisor(s):***

***Other (e.g. Student Support Service Staff, Senior Academics, etc):***

***Description of mitigating circumstance(s): (include as attachment if required)***

Click or tap here to enter text.

***Briefly outline the impact of the mitigating circumstance(s) on the candidate's progress, including impact to the thesis submission date: (include as attachment if required)***

Archived document



Click or tap here to enter text.

years

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Original deadline for thesis submission (4 years FTE for PhD; 2 FTE for Masters)**

**<date>:**

**Projected new date for thesis submission (on basis of management place below) <new date, expected EFTSL at**

Click or tap here to enter text.

**completion>:**

## Management Plan

Please note, academic milestones should still be included in the official Research Progress Review. It is important to summarise key aspects for review in reference to managing the mitigating circumstances that have, or may be likely to delay submission, including any support services that have or will be put in place. Please attach any other relevant documentation, such as a detailed timeline to completion.

**Please note that subsequent reviews will need to consider this management plan and monitor progress relative to it.**

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Additional information (if relevant):

Click or tap here to enter text.

**Candidate Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Supervisor Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**PGC Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Date:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Signature:** Click or tap here to enter text.

## APPENDIX D: Sample of a thesis timeline

Chapter	Written? (Y/N)	Published? (where applicable) (Y/N)	Experimental work/analysis Required? (Y/N)	Experimental/analysis timeline (% completed, due date for remaining work)	Writing timeline (% completed, due date for remaining work)	Date to be sent to supervisor	Date to be returned	Revision timeline
Chapter 1	Y	N	N	N/A	70% completed. Remainder to be finished by 1 July	7 June	21 June	2 weeks
Chapter 2	Y	N	Y	80% completed. Remainder to be completed by 1 April	60% completed. Remainder to be finished by 1 June	7 May	21 May	2 weeks
Chapter 3	Y	N	N	100%	90% completed. Remainder to be finished by 1 April	12 March	26 March	2 weeks
Chapter 4	Y	N	N	100%	90% completed. Remainder to be finished by 1 May	7 April	21 April	2 weeks
Chapter 5	N	N	N	N/A	0% completed. Remainder to be finished by 14 July	21 June	5 July	2 weeks
<b>PLANNED SUBMISSION DATE: 30 July 2019</b>								