

Higher Degree Research Show Cause Instruction

1. Introduction

- 1.1. A Show Cause request is made when a candidate is at risk of not completing their degree. It is an opportunity for the candidate to explain their situation and how they plan to improve their performance and complete in a timely manner.
- 1.2. This instruction provides guidelines on the Show Cause process for Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates. It should be read in conjunction with the [Higher Degree Research Policy](#) and the [Higher Degree Research Progression Procedure](#).

2. Show Cause request process

- 2.1. A candidate may be asked to Show Cause in the following situations:
 - Thesis not submitted after 1.0 year full-time equivalent (FTE) of overtime enrolment.
 - Unsatisfactory progress.
 - Did not attend a review or failed to complete the review form in a timely manner.
 - For doctoral candidates: failure to successfully complete Confirmation within 1.25 years FTE from commencement.
- 2.2. In these cases, the candidate will receive a *Show Cause Request* from the Dean of Graduate Research asking them to Show Cause as to why they should remain enrolled in their degree. Candidates have 20 working days to respond. If they do not respond by the due date, their candidature will be discontinued.

3. Candidate response

When a candidate receives a *Show Cause Request*, they can either submit a written response to the Faculty Higher Degree Committee (HDC) or withdraw from their degree.

Submit a Show Cause response

- 3.1. A candidate's written response to stay enrolled in the degree should include the following:
 - A statement explaining the circumstances that led to the Show Cause, how these circumstances will change and any ongoing issues will be managed so that the candidate can complete their degree in a timely manner. If the candidate has been asked to Show Cause because of Unsatisfactory progress, they need to explain why they were unable to achieve the milestones that were not met.
 - A realistic plan for how they will complete their degree, including a feasible, detailed timeline to completion with achievable and measurable milestones and a realistic thesis submission deadline.
 - Supporting documentation for any of the above.
- 3.2. The candidate can submit their thesis as a suitable response to a Show Cause request if the following can be done within the 20 working day period:
 - The candidate finalises their thesis.
 - The supervisor completes their supervisor's certificate in GRIS confirming that the thesis is ready for examination.

See the *HDR Examination Instruction* for details regarding the requirements for thesis submission.

Withdraw from the degree

- 3.3. If the candidate does not have a clear plan for how they will progress their research and complete their degree, and is not able to respond to the Show Cause request as outlined in section 3.1 above, they are strongly encouraged to withdraw from the degree.
- 3.4. Any candidate who chooses to withdraw may apply for re-admission to the degree in the future (see [section 7](#)).

Failure to achieve Confirmation

- 3.5. Candidates who have been asked to Show Cause because they have failed to complete Confirmation within 1.25 years FTE from commencement are at risk of not being able to complete their degree on time. For this reason, a change of supervision and/or project is not considered a satisfactory response to Show Cause.
- 3.6. When responding to the Show Cause request, the candidate must demonstrate that they have now met all of the Confirmation requirements.
- 3.7. A doctoral candidate may transfer to a Master by Research in response to a Show Cause request if they are able to demonstrate that they can complete their degree within the specified time limit.

4. Faculty HDC review

- 4.1. The Faculty HDC will review the candidate's response and assess whether the concerns raised in the *Show Cause Request* have been addressed, and there is a realistic and feasible plan for completion.
- 4.2. Based on this review, the Faculty HDC will recommend one of the outcomes listed in section 5 and section 6 below.

5. Satisfactory response

- 5.1. The candidate will receive a letter from the Dean of Graduate Research with a list of conditions that they need to meet to stay enrolled including:
 - Thesis submission by the deadline specified in the candidate's response to Show Cause
 - Complete a Research Progress Review in 3 months (FTE) from the date of the letter. At this review, the candidate must meet all milestones due within the review period.
- 5.2. A review will be held the end of the milestone period (normally 3 months if full-time, 6 months if part-time).
- 5.3. If the candidate has met the milestones in the letter from the Dean of Graduate Research and can demonstrate that they are on track to submit their thesis by the new thesis submission deadline, they will stay enrolled. If the milestones have not been met, the candidate will be discontinued from their degree.

6. Unsatisfactory response

- 6.1. If the Faculty HDC recommends that the enrolment be discontinued, the candidate will be invited to meet with the Dean of Graduate Research to discuss this recommendation. This is an opportunity for the candidate to raise any outstanding matters that they feel have not been addressed.
- 6.2. Following this meeting, the Dean of Graduate Research determines whether the candidate will remain enrolled or be discontinued. The Dean of Graduate Research notifies the candidate of the outcome.

7. Applying for re-admission after discontinuation

- 7.1. If a candidate is discontinued after an Unsatisfactory response to a Show Cause request (including

situations where a candidate fails to meet Show Cause conditions), and they apply for re-admission to the degree in the future, they must address the points raised in the original Show Cause request including any conditions set by the Dean of Graduate Research. Their application will also be reviewed by the Faculty HDC. This process is outlined in the [Higher Degree Research Admission Instruction](#).

- 7.2. Candidates who apply for re-admission after failure to achieve Confirmation must detail how they plan to achieve the Confirmation milestones within a reasonable timeframe.

8. Appeals

- 8.1. Candidates may appeal the outcome based on procedural fairness, and this process is outlined in the [Complaints Management and Investigations Policy and Procedure](#).

9. Revision history

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Date of UHDRC endorsement	Effective date	Sections modified
1.0	Dean of Graduate Research	28 July 2026	10 July 2026	3 August 2026	This is a new instruction

Effective: 3 August 2026

Responsible: PVCRT & Dean of Graduate Research

Lead: Director, GRS