

HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH SUPERVISION POLICY 2020

The Academic Board as delegate of the Senate of the University of Sydney, adopts the following policy.

Dated: 6 May 2020, commencing 1 July 2020

Last amended: 17 November 2020, commencing 1 January 2021
24 February 2021 (administrative amendment)

Signature:

Position: Chair, Academic Board

CONTENTS

Contents	1
Part 1 - Preliminary	2
1 Name of policy	2
2 Commencement.....	2
3 Policy is binding	2
4 Statement of intent.....	2
5 Application	2
Part 2 - Definitions	3
6 Definitions and interpretation	3
Part 3 - Supervision Principles and Practice	6
7 Principles of supervision	6
8 Supervisors	7
9 Supervisor development	9
10 The Supervisor Register	9
11 Supervisor suspension and deregistration	11
12 Supervisor Register reporting	15
13 Supervisory teams	15
14 Supervisor workload	18
Part 4 – Responsibilities for supervision	18
15 Responsibilities of supervisors	18
16 Responsibilities of students	26
17 Responsibilities of schools and disciplines	31
18 Responsibilities of faculties.....	32
19 Responsibilities of the University	33
20 Rescissions and replacements	34
Schedule 1: Minimum infrastructure requirements for higher degree by research students	35
Notes	37
Amendment history	38

PART 1 - PRELIMINARY

1 Name of policy

This is the Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy 2020.

2 Commencement

This policy commences on 1 July 2020.

3 Policy is binding

Except to the extent that a contrary intention is expressed, this policy binds the University, staff, students and affiliates.

4 Statement of intent

This policy:

- (a) provides for higher degree by research students to be supported to produce research of the highest national and international quality;
- (b) enables students enrolled in a higher degree by research to be part of an intellectually stimulating academic environment and receive effective supervision during their studies;
- (c) provides for a positive and proactive approach to research supervision;
- (d) provides for foundational guidance, support, recognition, development and leadership opportunities for supervisors;
- (e) supports the conduct of research training in a safe manner which is conducive to student wellbeing; and
- (f) supports the University's values of courage and creativity; respect and integrity; and inclusion and diversity.

5 Application

This policy applies to:

- (a) staff, students and affiliates; and
- (b) any formal research supervision program provided to students in either of the following degrees:
 - (i) doctorate by research (including Doctor of Philosophy); or
 - (ii) masters by research.

PART 2 - DEFINITIONS

6 Definitions and interpretation

(1) In this policy:

academic dishonesty	<p>has the meaning given in the Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015, which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">seeking to obtain, or obtaining, academic advantage for oneself or others (including in the assessment or publication of work) by dishonest or unfair means.</p> <p>Note: See also Research Code of Conduct 2019</p>
affiliate	<p>has the meaning provided in the Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates, which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">clinical title holders; adjunct, conjoint and honorary appointees; consultants and contractors to the University; holders of offices in University entities, members of University Committees; and any other persons appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions on its behalf.</p> <p>Note: For the purpose of this policy, affiliation types include Honorary title holders, Research affiliates, and Supervisors of Higher Degree by Research Students. See Affiliates Policy</p>
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	<p>means the national framework for recognition and endorsement of education qualifications.</p> <p>Note: See http://www.aqf.edu.au/</p>
associate dean	<p>means the associate dean with authority for overseeing higher degrees by research in the relevant faculty.</p>
candidature	<p>means the period commencing when a person is enrolled in an award course, in accordance with University and government requirements as amended from time to time, and ending when the degree is conferred or the candidature otherwise ceases.</p>
dean	<p>means, as appropriate, any of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Executive Dean and Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Medicine and Health; • the Dean of a faculty; or • the Head of School and Dean of a University school.
delegate	<p>means an employee, member of Committee of Senate, or any other person or entity to whom or to which a delegation has been made by Senate.</p> <p>Note: See University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2020.</p>

doctorate by research	<p>has the meaning provided in the University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule 2011 (as amended) which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a degree with the word 'doctor' in the title comprising a minimum of two-thirds research that is approved by the Academic Board.</p> <p>Note: The Academic Board will not approve a doctorate by research unless it complies with the requirements for AQF level 10. See http://www.aqf.edu.au</p>
Educational Innovation	<p>means the Educational Innovation unit within the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) portfolio.</p>
ESOS National Code	<p>means the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.</p>
external supervisor	<p>has the meaning provided in subclause 8(7)</p>
faculty	<p>includes references to a University school. In this policy, it refers to the faculty or University school in which a student is enrolled.</p>
inappropriate academic practice	<p>has the meaning provided in the Academic Honesty Procedures 2016 which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a deviation (whether intentional or negligent) from accepted academic standards, including standards of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referencing and due acknowledgement of the works of others; • ethics guidelines and ethical practice; or • data management. <p style="padding-left: 40px;">It includes academic dishonesty, code breaches and research misconduct.</p>
lead supervisor	<p>has the meaning provided in subclauses 8(6) and 13(4).</p>
masters by research	<p>has the meaning provided in the University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research Rule) 2011 (as amended) which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a degree with the word 'master' in the title comprising a minimum of two thirds research that is approved by the Academic Board.</p> <p>Note: The Academic Board will not approve a masters by research unless it meets the requirements for AQF Level 9. See http://www.aqf.edu.au</p>
personal interest	<p>has the meaning provided in the External Interests Policy 2010, which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a personal relationship (including spouse, de facto partner, romantic or sexual partner, immediate family, close friend, financial dependent or business partner) which a reasonable person might perceive as liable to influence decision making.</p>

plagiarism	<p>means presenting another person's work as one's own work by presenting, copying or reproducing it without appropriate acknowledgement of the source. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty.</p> <p>Note: See also Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015 and Academic Honesty Procedures 2016</p>
postgraduate coordinator	<p>means the academic staff member with overall responsibility for the planning and coordination of higher degree by research students within a faculty, University school or school.</p> <p>Note: In the Faculty of Medicine and Health, this role is performed by the Research Education academic director.</p>
probationary period	<p>has the meaning as described in sections 2.05, 3.05, and 4.04 of the University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule 2011 (as amended)</p>
progress evaluation	<p>means a progress evaluation conducted in accordance with Part 3 of the Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015.</p>
progress plan	<p>means a progress plan developed in accordance with Part 2 of the Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015.</p>
research active	<p>means meeting the minimum standards for research by staff as prescribed by the faculty.</p> <p>Note: See Academic staff (AP&D) minimum standards.</p>
research misconduct	<p>has the meaning given in clause 20 of the Research Code of Conduct 2019</p>
Riskware	<p>means the University's software application for the recording and management of incidents and hazards.</p>
school	<p>has the meaning given in the University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule 2011 (as amended), which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">an academic unit, however so called, responsible for a student's higher degree by research candidature. It may be called a discipline.</p>
student	<p>means a person who is currently admitted to candidature in a higher degree by research award course at the University, as specified in the University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule 2011 (as amended).</p>

supervisor	means, in relation to a higher degree by research student, a person appointed to discharge the responsibilities set out in clauses 13 and 15.
Supervisor Register	means the University-wide register of individuals endorsed as supervisors of higher degree by research students, established under clause 10.

PART 3 - SUPERVISION PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

7 Principles of supervision

(1) General principles

- (a) Higher degree by research students are ultimately responsible for their own work.
 - (b) The primary role of supervisors is to provide academic support and guidance throughout a candidature with the objective of enabling the student to achieve a high standard of researcher development, research activity and output.
 - (c) Supervisors are responsible for offering tailored guidance and constructive feedback.
 - (d) Supervisors and students must discuss their respective roles, and the expectations and requirements of the degree. They must reach a common understanding of:
 - (i) key project aims;
 - (ii) key milestones;
 - (iii) proposed timetable; and
 - (iv) methods of working together.
 - (e) This common understanding must be documented.
 - (f) Students and their supervisors must regularly revisit roles, expectations and requirements of the degree to ensure that the student's project stays on track.
- (2) Unless otherwise decided by the faculty, research supervision is a component of an academic's teaching and learning focussed activity. Faculties should incorporate supervision into workload models, noting that the time commitment should be on the basis of the amount needed to ensure student success.

Note: See also clause 14 and [Academic Staff Workloads Policy](#)

(3) Quality of relationships

- (a) Supervisors and students should establish and maintain clear communication, which means actively identifying and resolving any misunderstandings or divergent expectations as they arise.
- (b) Giving and receiving critical feedback, and learning how to use it effectively, are integral aspects of the research process. Supervisors and students should undertake these activities respectfully and with a common focus on producing quality learning as well as quality work.



- (c) Supervisors should be responsive to students' changing needs at different stages of the degree.

(4) **Diversity**

- (a) Supervisors and students should treat each other fairly and reasonably and should respect the social, cultural and intellectual diversity of the University community.
- (b) Supervisors and students must not engage in, or tolerate, harassment and discrimination.

Note: See also: [Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates; Student Charter 2020; Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy 2015; Staff Sexual Misconduct Policy 2020, Student Sexual Misconduct Policy 2018](#)

- (c) Supervisors and students should recognise that every supervisory relationship is unique and will reflect the particular needs, preferences and work styles of those involved.
- (d) Supervisors and students should recognise that intellectual and practical input from other researchers is necessary and desirable, and is to be encouraged.
- (e) Supervisors and students should exercise professional discretion in their relationship, maintaining confidentiality where appropriate.

(5) **Life-long learning**

- (a) Students are encouraged to take part in opportunities at the University to develop skills and knowledge that complement their research.
- (b) The University recognises its responsibility to foster research communities that welcome and engage research students as active participants.

Note: See also [Learning and Teaching Policy 2019](#)

8 Supervisors

(1) All supervisors must be:

- (a) a current continuing or fixed term member of University staff or a current affiliate of the University;
- (b) research active;
- (c) qualified to undertake research supervision appropriate to the discipline by:
 - (i) holding a qualification at AQF Level 10; or
 - (ii) having equivalent professional or research experience;

Note: This may include a higher doctorate other than a PhD; a research masters plus experience in research and research training supervision; or a significant publishing record in peer-reviewed journals. See [TEQSA Higher Education Standards panel](#) on technical amendments to Provider Course Accreditation Standards.

and

- (d) approved for registration as a supervisor of higher degree by research students.

Note: See Clause 10

- (2) Supervisors may come from the same faculty, school or discipline as the one in which the student is enrolled or from different faculties, schools or disciplines as appropriate to the research project.
 - (a) Students should normally be enrolled in the same faculty as the lead supervisor.
- (3) The relevant postgraduate coordinator must determine appropriate supervisory arrangements for each student based on:
 - (a) each supervisor's:
 - (i) skills;
 - (ii) experience; and
 - (iii) workload;
 - (b) the projected availability of staff; and
 - (c) other requirements appropriate to the candidature, degree and research project.
- (4) Subject to subclause 8(3):
 - (a) the relevant postgraduate coordinator will propose supervisors for a particular candidature; and

Note: See subclause 17(2)(a) and the [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research\) Rule 2011 \(as amended\)](#)
 - (b) the relevant associate dean will appoint the supervisors, taking into account the postgraduate coordinator's proposals.
- (5) Each student must be assigned a supervisory team consisting of two or more supervisors.
 - (a) One member of the supervisory team must:
 - (i) be nominated as lead supervisor; and
 - (ii) have primary accountabilities to the University for leading the candidature.
- (6) **Lead supervisors** should:
 - (a) be continuing or fixed term members of the University's academic staff at Level B or above; or
 - (b) hold an affiliate appointment where their substantive role is at an equivalent status to a Level B academic role;and
 - (c) have supervised at least two higher degree by research students at AQF Level 9 or higher to timely and effective completion.

- (7) **External supervisors:**
- (a) may be appointed to fulfil specific roles in the candidature. Such individuals may include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) a person with appropriate knowledge required for part of a student's candidature;
 - (ii) a person whose links with industry enable a student to have access to specialised equipment and facilities; or
 - (iii) a person in an external institution or university who is an expert on the subject matter.

9 Supervisor development

- (1) All University staff and affiliates with supervisory responsibilities must undertake development activities relating to the supervision of higher degree by research students. This may:
- (a) involve taking part in formal and informal opportunities for exchanging expertise on research supervision, research learning and research processes; and
 - (b) occur at a discipline, school, faculty, or University-wide level.
- (2) Subject to subclause 9(3):
- (a) University staff who have not supervised higher degree by research students previously, must undertake the University's Educational Innovation supervisor training course; and
 - (b) affiliates who are appointed to supervise higher degree by research students, must familiarise themselves with current supervisory practices and expectations by:
 - (i) completing the University's Educational Innovation supervisor training course; and
 - (ii) participating in faculty, school or discipline induction courses or workshops.
- (3) If a potential supervisor has already undertaken an equivalent course or has substantial suitable experience in supervising students to completion, the Director, Graduate Research may exempt them from taking the University's Educational Innovation supervisor training course.
- (a) It is nevertheless strongly recommended that such staff participate in the University's Educational Innovation supervisor training course or other workshops to ensure familiarity with current University supervisory practices and expectations.

Note: See also [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedures 2020](#)

10 The Supervisor Register

- (1) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), in consultation with associate deans, is responsible for establishing and maintaining a register of all individuals eligible to be appointed as supervisors for higher degree by research students.

Note: See also [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedures 2020](#)

- (2) Entry on the Supervisor Register does not confer an entitlement to supervise but is rather recognition by the University that the individual has the necessary skills and attributes to supervise higher degree by research students.
- (3) Postgraduate coordinators will recommend prospective supervisors to the relevant associate dean.
- (4) Associate deans will provide the names of endorsed supervisors to the Director, Graduate Research.
- (5) Subject to subclause 8(1), individuals endorsed for registration as a supervisor must:
 - (a) have participated in ongoing and appropriate development activities including but not limited to:
 - (i) the University's Educational Innovation supervisor training course; or
 - (ii) other relevant workshops and programs;

or
 - (b) have documented proof of experience of successfully supervising students in research degrees at another university.
- (6) The Director, Graduate Research will determine if alternative qualifications are acceptable when an individual endorsed for registration as a supervisor:
 - (a) has participated in courses and workshops other than the University's Educational Innovation supervisor training course; or
 - (b) has come from another institution.
- (7) The Director, Graduate Research will enter on the register all individuals who:
 - (a) have been endorsed as supervisors of higher degree by research students; and
 - (b) whose qualifications they consider to be satisfactory and consistent with the requirements of this policy.
- (8) Registration as a supervisor is valid for a maximum period of five years from the date of registration.
- (9) At the end of each registration period, the Director, Graduate Research will determine whether or not to renew registration of an individual for a further term of five years, taking into account:
 - (a) the advice of the relevant associate dean; and
 - (b) the individual's:
 - (i) current supervision responsibilities;
 - (ii) ongoing professional development as a supervisor;
 - (iii) continued active participation in research; and
 - (c) evidence that the individual's supervision has had a positive impact on the success of research students.
- (10) External supervisors will be registered for the duration of a candidature or five years, whichever is the shortest.
 - (a) External supervisors who are from another institution or university must apply for Higher Degree by Research Supervision affiliation before being endorsed by the associate dean for entry into the Supervisor Register.

Note: See also sub clause 15(10)(g) and the [Affiliates Policy](#)

11 Supervisor suspension and deregistration

- (1) Subject to subclause 11(11) the Director, Graduate Research may remove an individual from the Supervisor Register on one or more of the following bases:
- (a) temporary suspension;
 - (b) routine deregistration;
 - (c) performance related deregistration; or
 - (d) misconduct related deregistration.

Note: See also [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedures 2020](#)

- (2) A temporary suspension may be made summarily, and the Director, Graduate Research:
- (a) is not required to provide a hearing to the individual before making a decision; and
 - (b) may inform themselves in relation to any matter in any manner that they think fit.
- (3) Before an individual is deregistered on any basis the Director, Graduate Research will:
- (a) notify them in writing;
 - (b) provide them with a reasonable opportunity to respond to the proposed deregistration, and provide any relevant documents; and
 - (c) consider any response before a final decision is made.
- (4) The individual may be accompanied to any meeting by a support person, if they wish.
- (5) When a supervisor is temporarily suspended or deregistered, the relevant associate dean, or the postgraduate coordinator must make suitable and timely arrangements for any affected students.
- (6) These students must be informed of all such changes.

Note: See subclause 17(4)(f)

- (a) To protect an individual's privacy, reasons for the decisions regarding temporary suspension or deregistration must not be disclosed.
- (7) **Temporary suspension from the Supervisor Register**
- (a) Subject to this subclause, the Director, Graduate Research may temporarily suspend an individual from the Supervisor Register for:
 - (i) a period of up to 12 months; or
 - (ii) the duration of any misconduct investigation.
 - (b) Temporary suspension must be reasonable, having regard to all the relevant circumstances.



- (c) The Director, Graduate Research may, on request from the relevant associate dean, temporarily suspend an individual if they are satisfied that there is evidence of consistent failure by the individual to:
- (i) comply with supervisory responsibilities prescribed in Clauses 13 and 15;
 - (ii) provide appropriate resources to students;
 - (iii) provide timely and constructive written feedback to students on their research project;
 - (iv) comply with administrative requirements; or
 - (v) comply with deadlines relating to managing progress and thesis examination.
- (d) The Director, Graduate Research may temporarily suspend an individual from the Supervisor Register if they are notified by:
- (i) the relevant associate dean;
 - (ii) the relevant head of school;
 - (iii) the relevant dean;
 - (iv) the postgraduate coordinator; or
 - (v) the Sydney Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA)
- about multiple complaints by, or on behalf of, students, regarding poor supervision.
- (e) The Director, Graduate Research may, on request from the relevant associate dean, temporarily suspend an individual from the Supervisor Register if:
- (i) there are repeated allegations of student research misconduct by students under their direct supervision;
Note: See the [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#)
 - (ii) the individual is the subject of a research integrity investigation, or a disclosure or an allegation of serious professional misconduct, with the suspension being effective until the matter is resolved;
Note: See the [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#); [Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates](#) and [Enterprise Agreement 2018 - 2021](#)
 - (iii) they are satisfied that there is evidence that the individual has maintained supervision activities whilst being in a close personal relationship with another member of the supervisory team;
Note: See also subclause 15(6)(d)
 - (iv) the associate dean is satisfied that there is evidence that the individual has failed to notify the postgraduate coordinator or the associate dean about a current, developing or active personal relationship with their student; or
Note: See also subclause 15(6)(c)
 - (v) the associate dean is satisfied that there is evidence that an individual has failed to declare, or acted despite, a conflict of interests in relation to the appointment and approval of thesis examiners.
Note: See also clause 15(15)(b)



Note: See [External Interests Policy 2010](#); [External Interest Guidelines](#); [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015](#); [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2020](#); [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015](#); [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degree by Research Procedures 2020](#);

- (f) The Director, Graduate Research must provide written notice of the temporary suspension to the individual, within 24 hours of it being implemented:
 - (i) specifying the period of the temporary suspension;
 - (ii) summarising the reasons for the temporary suspension; and
 - (iii) providing a copy of, or an electronic link to, this policy.
- (g) An individual who is the subject of a temporary suspension may seek an internal review of the suspension by application to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).
- (h) If an individual is being temporarily suspended from the Supervisor Register, the Director, Graduate Research must inform the head of school, or the dean of the faculty in which the supervisor is either employed or affiliated.
- (i) At the end of the period of temporary suspension, and on the advice of the associate dean, the Director, Graduate Research may:
 - (i) permit the supervisor to return to full registration; or
 - (ii) impose a further temporary suspension of a period not exceeding 12 months.
- (j) If, at the expiration of the period of temporary suspension, there has been no resolution of the original causes for suspension, and the Director, Graduate Research decides to extend the period of temporary suspension, then:
 - (i) the supervisor must undergo further training, after which they may be reinstated on the Supervisor Register, at the discretion of the Director, Graduate Research; or
 - (ii) the matter will be referred to the dean or Provost to be dealt with under subclause 11(9) as performance related deregistration.

(8) Routine deregistration

- (a) The Director, Graduate Research will routinely deregister individuals when they:
 - (i) are no longer actively employed or affiliated with the University;
 - (ii) no longer meet the supervision eligibility criteria as specified in subclause 8(1); or
 - (iii) have not supervised an enrolled student for a period of four or more consecutive years during the period of registration;
- (b) If an individual's registration is due to expire, the Director, Graduate Research will:
 - (i) inform the individual of the pending expiration;
 - (ii) determine whether the registration can be renewed, taking into account the matters specified in subclause 10(9); and
 - (iii) inform the individual of the determination.

Note: See also subclause 15(10)(g)

(9) Performance related deregistration

- (a) The relevant dean must request removal of an individual from the Supervisor Register if they are identified in their academic performance and development review as failing to perform their responsibilities as a supervisor of higher degree by research students.

Note: See clauses 13 and 15 of this policy. See also [Performance Planning and Development Policy 2012](#) and [Academic Planning and Development Guidelines](#)

- (b) Prior to consideration for reregistration, the relevant dean must recommend suitable development activities for the individual.

(10) Misconduct related deregistration

- (a) Subject to subclause 11(10)(b), if an individual is proven guilty of misconduct, including research misconduct, the Provost may direct their removal from the Supervisor Register after consultation with:

- (i) the decision maker who made the misconduct determination; and
(ii) the relevant dean.

Note: See [Research Code of Conduct 2019; Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021](#).

- (b) The Provost must give the affected individual a reasonable opportunity to respond to the proposed deregistration orally or in writing, and to provide any relevant documents, before directing their removal from the Supervisor Register.

(11) Appeals against deregistration

- (a) An individual may appeal against routine deregistration to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

- (b) An individual may appeal against performance or misconduct related deregistration to:

- (i) the relevant dean or executive dean of a faculty; or
(ii) in the case of a University school, the Provost.

(12) Reregistration

- (a) The relevant associate dean may request the reregistration of supervisors who have previously been deregistered.

- (b) The Director, Graduate Research may approve such requests:

- (i) after taking into consideration the matters specified in subclause 10(9); and
(ii) where the deregistration was based on performance or misconduct, after consultation with the Provost.

12 Supervisor Register reporting

- (1) The Director, Graduate Research will report annually to the University Executive Research Education Committee on issues relating to the Supervisor Register, including but not limited to the:
 - (a) number of currently active supervisors:
 - (i) added to the Supervisor Register in the past twelve months; and
 - (ii) reregistered in the past twelve months;
 - (b) number of currently inactive supervisors;
 - (c) number of supervisors who have been deregistered;
 - (d) average number of students per supervisor;
 - (e) number of supervisors who exceed the supervisory load stated in subclause 14(1) by three or more students; and
 - (f) number of supervisors involved in cross-disciplinary or cross faculty supervisory teams.
- (2) Reports must include:
 - (a) a summary of actions taken; and
 - (b) any recommendations relating to operation of the Supervisor Register.

Note: See also [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedures 2020](#)

13 Supervisory teams

- (1) Each student must be supported and guided by a supervisory team consisting of a minimum of two supervisors.

Note: See also [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedures 2020](#)
- (2) Supervisors must work with each other and the student to:
 - (a) develop the student's personal and professional capabilities as a researcher; and
 - (b) improve the student's capability to produce high quality research.
- (3) One supervisor from the team will be nominated as lead supervisor.
- (4) **Lead supervisor**
 - (a) The key functions of this role are to:
 - (i) ensure that appropriate resources and support are available to assist the student's progression;
 - (ii) meet administrative requirements;
 - (iii) ensure that the supervisory team provides timely, honest and effective commentary on student progression to the evaluation processes;
 - (iv) represent the supervisors when responding to queries about the candidature from the school or faculty; and
 - (v) coordinate supervisory responsibilities in the examination process.

Note: See the [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2020](#)

- (5) **All members of the supervisory team** must:
- (a) support and advise the student in research activities, noting that the extent of project leadership will vary with academic discipline;
 - (b) facilitate the student's access to the agreed resources necessary for the student to succeed; and
- Note:** See Schedule 1.
- (c) advise the student regarding effective research and professional outcomes, including access to careers information.
- (6) Additional supervisors may be appointed to fulfil specific roles in the candidature. Such individuals may include, but are not limited to:
- (a) a person with appropriate knowledge required for part of a student's candidature;
 - (b) a person whose links with industry enable a student to have access to specialised equipment and facilities; or
 - (c) a person in an external institution or university who is an expert on the subject matter.
 - (i) Individuals from external institutions will be registered as external supervisors.
- Note:** See subclauses 8(7) and 10(10)
- (7) The composition of a supervisory team will depend on:
- (a) faculty arrangements;
 - (b) the interdisciplinary nature of the research project;
 - (c) other criteria as determined by the faculty, project, and as appropriate to the project, the student and the degree.
- (8) Together the supervisory team must:
- (a) include at least one member of the academic staff with the requisite skills, subject knowledge and experience for supervision of the student's project topic;
 - (b) be able to provide continuous supervision for the likely duration of the student's candidature, allowing for changes in any individual supervisor's availability; and
 - (c) be focussed on student outcomes, recognising the challenges faced by students undertaking interdisciplinary projects.
- (9) Each individual member of a supervisory team must:
- (a) be familiar with the University's policies, procedures and resources, and applicable faculty requirements; and
 - (b) comply with all applicable University rules, policies and procedures, including in particular the [Code of conduct - Staff and Affiliates](#), [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#), and the [External Interests Policy 2010](#)
- Note:** All University policies and procedures are available on the [Policy Register](#)

- (10) The postgraduate coordinator may review and change supervisory arrangements as required throughout the course of the candidature.
- (a) The postgraduate coordinator must inform the student about all such changes.

(11) Supervisory teams and relationships

- (a) Members of a supervisory team must jointly clarify the responsibilities of each person in the team, and coordinate advice and guidance appropriately.
- (i) The lead supervisor is responsible for informing the student of these arrangements.
- (b) Members of a supervisory team must build and maintain relationships with other members of the team for all or part of the candidature depending on the nature of the supervision.
- (c) The lead supervisor must report any perceived conflict of interests and competing relationships within the team to the postgraduate coordinator.
- (i) The postgraduate coordinator will investigate and revise supervisory arrangements accordingly, if required.
- (ii) The postgraduate coordinator must inform the student of any changes.
- (d) All supervisors must:
- (i) build and maintain respectful supervisory relationships with their students;
- (ii) clarify with their students what is expected of each other within this relationship;
- (iii) establish agreed methods of working with students under their supervision; and
- (iv) fulfil obligations established through agreed working practices.
- Note:** See subclause 7(1)(d)
- (e) Supervisory arrangements should be adapted according to the nature of the candidature (full-time or part-time) and accommodate approved absences by the student or any supervisors.
- Note:** See also subclause 15(10)
- (f) Where a change in research direction occurs, appropriate supervisory arrangements should be negotiated by the student, the lead supervisor, and the postgraduate coordinator as required.
- (i) The relevant postgraduate coordinator may nominate new supervisors as a result of these negotiations.
- (ii) Such changes in supervision must be approved by the relevant associate dean.

(12) Supervisory meetings

- (a) Members of the supervisory team should be available, either individually or as a team, to meet with their student at least once per fortnight during the probationary period. This may include face to face or electronic forms of communication.
- (b) Members of the supervisory team and the student are jointly responsible for negotiating ongoing and appropriate contact arrangements after the completion of the probationary period. This may include face to face or electronic forms of communication.
- (c) If it is not possible for supervisors and the student to meet regularly, then the postgraduate coordinator should be consulted by either the student or the lead supervisor regarding appropriate alternative arrangements.

14 Supervisor workload

- (1) A normal supervisory workload is the equivalent of supervising five full time higher degree by research students, or *pro rata* for a supervisor employed on a fractional basis.
- (2) Supervisors may not exceed the normal load without written approval from the relevant associate dean, which will only be provided after consideration of a recommendation from the relevant head of school or postgraduate coordinator.
 - (a) The recommendation must include reasons and address the impact of the arrangements on the quality of the student experience.

Note: see also subclause 7(2) and [Academic Staff Workloads Policy](#)

PART 4 – RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SUPERVISION

15 Responsibilities of supervisors

- (1) In agreeing to supervise a given student, the supervisor accepts the responsibilities set out in this policy, including but not limited to those specified in clause 13 and in this clause.
- (2) Unless otherwise specified, this clause applies equally to all members of a supervisory team.
- (3) Supervisory teams collectively must ensure that all accountabilities are effectively discharged.
- (4) Supervisors must maintain a professional relationship with their students, other supervisors and other University staff.
- (5) Selection of student and or project**
 - (a) The lead supervisor will consider a prospective student's relevant research background, interests and abilities to complete a proposed research project, and decide whether the proposed topic is likely to be achievable.
 - (i) If the lead supervisor is not confident at the application stage that the research proposal is likely to be achievable and consistent with the aims of the degree, they should not support the student's application.



- (b) Supervisors should ensure that they have the ability, resources, capacity and related research interest in the candidature and project to carry out the supervision.
 - (i) If a supervisor has any doubts about their capacity to supervise a student for any reason, they must raise their concerns with the postgraduate coordinator.

(6) Conflict of interests

- (a) Where a supervisor becomes aware of an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interests in relation to a particular project, student, or another supervisor, the supervisor must immediately declare the conflict of interests in accordance with the [External Interests Policy 2010](#).
- (b) Where appropriate, the postgraduate coordinator must vary the supervisory arrangements as a result of a conflict of interests declaration, to manage or avoid conflict.
- (c) Personal interests, including familial, sexual or romantic relationships between a student and their supervisor are never appropriate. Such relationships constitute a conflict of interests which:
 - (i) the supervisor must declare and manage, in accordance with the [External Interests Policy 2010](#); and
 - (ii) can only be managed by a change in supervisor.
- (d) Personal interests, including familial, sexual or romantic relationships between supervisors of the same student are never appropriate. Such relationships constitute a conflict of interests which:
 - (i) both supervisors must declare and manage, in accordance with the [External Interests Policy 2010](#); and
 - (ii) can only be managed by a change in supervisors.

(7) At the commencement of the candidature

- (a) The lead supervisor should:
 - (i) notify the student about orientation and induction events run by the University, faculty, school or discipline;
 - (ii) direct the student to participate in induction programs and workshops as required by the faculty, school or discipline;
 - (iii) direct the student to participate in programs and workshops in accordance with University, faculty, school or discipline, work health and safety requirements;
 - (iv) direct the student to participate in activities relating to academic and research integrity; and

Note: at the date of this policy, information about research integrity training is available [here](#).



- (v) inform the student about support services which exist to help them while they are studying at the University, including University Health Services, Disability Support Services, Counselling and Psychological Services, Mana Yura, the Learning Centre, other student support services and SUPRA.

Note: See [Student Support Services](#) for a list of available services. Students can seek professional advice through the [University Health Service](#), [Disability Support Services](#), [Counselling and Psychological Services](#), [Mana Yura](#), and [SUPRA](#).

- (b) All supervisors are responsible for identifying, with the student, the most appropriate data-gathering and analysing techniques.
- (c) All supervisors are responsible for monitoring the provision of facilities, including funding, which are identified as necessary for the project to succeed.
- (d) All supervisors should:
 - (i) familiarise themselves with the minimum infrastructure requirements for higher degree by research students; and
 - (ii) use them to inform their discussions with the student and the school about the resources that may be available to support each particular candidature.

Note: See Schedule 1

- (e) If supervisors are not confident that the required facilities or funding will be available, they should raise this with the postgraduate coordinator, faculty, school, or discipline.
- (f) Supervisors should be aware of the qualities that the University expects its graduates to have and, in consultation with the student, prepare a plan for future personal development, including communication skills, as the student proceeds through their degree program.

Note: See [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015](#)

- (g) Supervisors should inform students about funding opportunities relating to the research project, including travel and conference funding.
- (h) **Note:** See [Postgraduate Research Support Scheme and the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme Procedures 2019](#) Supervisors should, where necessary, help their student develop a research budget, and advise them on how to acquire information about relevant research funding schemes.

(8) During the candidature: wellbeing and safety

- (a) The lead supervisor must inform the postgraduate coordinator and the associate dean in writing if concerns regarding the candidature arise.
 - (i) The lead supervisor must also inform the student of any such report.



- (b) All supervisors should:
- (i) encourage a student with mental and or physical health concerns, including disability issues, to seek professional assistance; and
 - (ii) be prepared to discuss the various candidature options available, such as sick leave, approved leave of absence or a move to part time study.

Note: See also subclause 15(7)(a)(v)

(c) **International students**

- (i) Supervisors should be aware of the particular challenges that may be faced by international students and be sensitive to the social, academic and intellectual transition issues that international students moving to Australia may experience.
- (ii) Supervisors should familiarise themselves with the services available to an international student, particularly in relation to the provisions of the [ESOS National Code](#), and refer the student to appropriate sources of information as required.

Note: Information relevant to the support of international students is available through [Student Support Services](#) and [SUPRA](#).

- (d) Supervisors must develop and maintain safe working practices at all times. This includes:

- (i) informing the student of the University's work health and safety requirements; and
- (ii) requiring student participation in appropriate work health and safety training.

Note: See [Work Health and Safety Policy 2016](#), [Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016](#) and [Fieldwork Safety Standards](#)

(9) **During the candidature: managing progress**

- (a) The lead supervisor should ensure that the student works within a planned framework which marks out the milestones and goals expected to be completed at various stages.
- (b) The lead supervisor is responsible for reaching agreement with the student about:
 - (i) indicators of progress being made; and
 - (ii) submission of appropriate written work, interim reports or research results.

Note: See [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015](#)

- (c) The lead supervisor should:

- (i) monitor progress within the context of the overall candidature plan;
- (ii) provide feedback on progress to the student;
- (iii) make progress reports to the faculty and any scholarship authority;
- (iv) ensure that sufficient time is left for writing up the thesis; and
- (v) if necessary, ensure that the scope of the project is reduced to meet the time available.



- (d) The lead supervisor should work with the student to ensure that, by the end of the probationary period, the student's personal development, research topic and aims are clearly defined.
- (e) Where the supervisory team involves external supervisors, the student and the lead supervisor must jointly ensure that the direction of the work is entirely under the control of the University and the student.
- (f) Before the end of the probationary period, the lead supervisor must determine whether the student is able to identify, access, organise and communicate knowledge in both written and spoken English to a standard generally acceptable to the discipline. If necessary, the lead supervisor will direct the student to relevant courses available at the University.

Note: See [Learning and Teaching Policy 2019](#) and Part 2A of the [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015](#)

- (g) Supervisors must return written work to the student, with written constructive feedback, in a timely fashion. Unless other time frames are agreed, between the student and the supervisor:
 - (i) written work up to the equivalent of a chapter in length must be returned within one month; and
 - (ii) full drafts of the thesis to be returned within three months.
- (h) Supervisors must advise the student in writing when progress is unsatisfactory, or work does not reach the generally expected standard, and identify improvements which are necessary for continuation of the candidature.

Note: See [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research\) Rule 2011 \(as amended\)](#) and [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015](#) for further requirements relating to progress and progress evaluations.

(10) During the candidature: absence of supervisor

- (a) Supervision must be available for the duration of a candidature. It is not acceptable for a student to have their candidature disrupted by the:
 - (i) absence of a supervisor;
 - (ii) temporary suspension of a supervisor; or
 - (iii) deregistration of a supervisor.
- (b) Any supervisor who is intending an absence of one month or more must inform the postgraduate coordinator promptly so that appropriate alternative supervisory arrangements can be organised.

Note: See also [Special Studies Program Policy 2015](#)

- (c) Temporary alternative supervisory arrangements may use:
 - (i) remote supervision (e.g. email, phone, video link. Skype, Zoom meetings); or
 - (ii) increased direct supervision from another member of the supervisory team.



- (d) If the supervisor appointed to cover a lead supervisor's absence has not previously been involved in the supervision of the student, it is the responsibility of the current lead supervisor to inform the acting lead supervisor about the progress of the candidature.
- (e) Where an absence is foreseeable, a supervisor must notify the postgraduate coordinator, the student and other members of the supervisory team at least one month before the intended departure date so that appropriate supervisory arrangements can be put in place.
- (f) If a supervisor is leaving the University:
 - (i) the postgraduate coordinator must notify the student as soon as is practical;
 - (ii) the departing supervisor must discuss ongoing supervisory arrangements with the student and the postgraduate coordinator;
 - (iii) the postgraduate coordinator may vary the supervision arrangements, including appointing a new lead supervisor, as required; and
 - (iv) the postgraduate coordinator must assist the student in finding a suitable new project, if required.
- (g) If a supervisor is leaving the University for another institution and wishes to continue supervision of their students then:
 - (i) the individual must apply for endorsement as an affiliate;
 - (ii) the associate dean must approve their application; and
 - (iii) the Director, Graduate Research must endorse their entry to the Supervisor Register.

Note: See also subclauses 9(1); 10(7); and 11(8) and the [Affiliates Policy](#)

(11) The research community

- (a) The lead supervisor should encourage the student to participate in the work of the school or discipline, including attendance and presentation at seminars.
- (b) Supervisors should encourage the student to extend their contacts within the academic community, e.g. in the school, discipline, faculty, University and outside the University. This may include academic staff, postgraduate fellows, and other higher degree by research students.
- (c) Supervisors should encourage the student to take the opportunity to discuss their research with other staff and students in the relevant subject area and to communicate their research findings to others in the wider academic community.

(12) Career planning

- (a) All supervisors are responsible for ensuring that students are aware of the career counselling services and resources available through the University [Careers Centre](#).
- (b) Career planning should commence early in the candidature to ensure that students are prepared for employment and other opportunities before completion of the degree.

(13) Administrative requirements

- (a) The lead supervisor must identify applicable degree and other administrative requirements and advise the student as necessary, although the student is responsible for meeting these requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, planned leave or time away, re-enrolment, and progress evaluations.

(14) Compliance requirements

- (a) The lead supervisor must:

- (i) inform students, and direct them to, all applicable laws, University policies and procedures, including those applicable to research integrity;

Note: All current University policies and procedures are available from the [Policy Register](#).

- (ii) advise the student about academic honesty, inappropriate academic practice, and the avoidance of plagiarism;

- (iii) advise the student of the requirement to obtain ethics approval for all studies on animal and human subjects (including the use of questionnaires) prior to undertaking research to which such requirements may apply;

- (iv) inform the student of their rights to intellectual property and encourage, where appropriate, the exploitation of such intellectual property through the University; and

- (v) where appropriate, recommend that the student obtain independent legal advice about their intellectual property.

Note: See [Intellectual Property Policy 2016](#)

- (b) One member of the supervisory team must be nominated as chief investigator on student ethics applications. The nominated individual is responsible for submission of the application, including review of content and accuracy.

Note: Ethics approval must be obtained before any work is commenced, regardless to its relationship to a final thesis. See subclause 8(2)(f) of the [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#).

- (c) Supervisors must:

- (i) inform the student of applicable requirements for the retention of data;

Note: See [Research Data Management Policy 2014](#); [Research Data Management Procedures 2015](#) and any applicable faculty local provisions.

- (ii) provide guidance and mentorship on responsible research conduct; and

- (iii) monitor the student's conduct where appropriate.

Note: See [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#)

- (d) Supervisors must reach written agreement with the student about authorship of publications and acknowledgement of contributions during and after the candidature.
 - (i) Any written agreement, including email correspondence, must be kept as a record of the terms and conditions of the agreement.
- (e) It is recommended that, wherever necessary, the agreement be re-evaluated just prior to publication in case there have been any significant shifts to workload allocations and intellectual input since the agreement was initially made.

Note: See [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#).

- (f) There should be open and mutual recognition of the student's and the supervisor's contributions on all published works arising from the project.
- (g) Supervisors must familiarise themselves with sanctions that impose restrictions on activities relating to particular countries, goods and services, or persons and entities, and which may impact the research activities of their students. Where necessary and possible, students should be made aware of any potential impact on their candidature

Note: Information about current sanctions is available [here](#)

Note: See also subclause 16(14) (g)

(15) Thesis content, writing and submission

- (a) The lead supervisor is responsible for:
 - (i) informing the student that a copy of their thesis must be lodged with the University Librarian;
 - (ii) guiding the preparation of the thesis to ensure that it fulfils the necessary documentary requirements, including advising about requirements to content, style, presentation and production;

Note: See [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research Rule\) 2011 \(as amended\)](#) and [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015](#)

- (iii) certifying that a thesis is in a form suitable for examination at the time of submission; and

Note: See [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015](#) and [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2020](#)

- (iv) managing an early consideration of whether an embargo on the thesis should be sought.

Note: See clause 8 of the [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research\) Rule 2011 \(as amended\)](#)

- (b) When required by the applicable course resolutions, the lead supervisor will:
 - (i) consider the suitability and availability of potential examiners; and
 - (ii) make recommendations to the postgraduate coordinator regarding potential examiners,in good time before the thesis is submitted.
- (c) As far as possible, supervisors should satisfy themselves that the work submitted is the student's own and that data are valid.

16 Responsibilities of students

- (1) By enrolling in a higher degree by research degree, the student accepts the responsibilities set out in this policy.
- (2) Students must maintain a professional relationship at all times with supervisors and other University staff.
- (3) **Conflict of interest**
 - (a) Where a student becomes aware of an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interests in relation to a particular project, another student, a supervisor or other academic, the student must:
 - (i) immediately notify the lead supervisor; and
 - (ii) disclose and manage the conflict of interests;
as required by the [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#).
 - (b) Personal interests, including familial, sexual or romantic relationships between a student and their supervisor(s) are never appropriate:
 - (i) such a relationship constitutes a conflict of interests on the part of the supervisor; and
 - (ii) can only be managed by a change of supervisor.
Note: See also subclause 15(6)(c)
 - (c) Students must:
 - (i) provide a written declaration of the actual, potential or perceived conflict of interests to the lead supervisor as soon as possible after they become aware of it, in the form provided for that purpose; and
 - (ii) develop an appropriate conflict management plan with their lead supervisor where a conflict is identified.
 - (d) Declarations which declare conflicts of interests and copies of conflict management plans will be included in a register of conflicts of interest established and maintained by the General Counsel.
- (4) **Selection of supervisor and project**
 - (a) Where possible, aspiring research students should contact potential supervisors before submitting an application for candidature.
Note: As at the date of this policy, information about research opportunities and potential supervisors is available through [Research Supervisor Connect](#).
- (5) **At the commencement of the candidature** students:
 - (a) must play an informed part in the process of the selection and appointment of supervisors;
Note: See [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research\) Rule 2011 \(as amended\)](#)
 - (b) must ensure that they are correctly enrolled according to faculty and University requirements prior to commencing their degree program and throughout their candidature;
 - (c) must comply with the requirements of any scholarship, external funding, sponsorship or other monetary provisions;



- (d) should familiarise themselves with the minimum infrastructure requirements for higher degree by research students and use them to , inform their discussions about the resources that may be available to support their candidature;

Note: See Schedule 1

- (e) should take part in University or faculty, school or discipline orientation programs;
- (f) must take part in induction programs and workshops as directed by their supervisor, faculty, school or discipline. This may include attendance at workshops on safety and health procedures;

Note: See [Work Health and Safety Policy 2016](#)

- (g) should familiarise themselves with the qualities and skills, particularly communication skills, that the University expects its graduates to have; and
- (h) may be expected to develop a research budget in consultation with their supervisors, and to seek information about, and apply for relevant research funding schemes.

Note: See [Postgraduate Research Support Scheme and the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme Procedures 2019](#)

- (i) must familiarise themselves with the [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#) and provide an initial written declaration of actual, potential or perceived conflict of interests to the lead supervisor.

Note: See also subclause 16(3)

(6) **During the candidature: wellbeing and safety**

- (a) Students should advise supervisors or the postgraduate coordinator of any physical or mental health concerns, including disability issues, that may be affecting their studies.
- (b) Students should make themselves aware of, and use, the range of support services which exist to help them while they are studying at the University, including University Health Services, Disability Support Services, Counselling and Psychological Services, Mana Yura, the Learning Centre, other student support services, and SUPRA.

Note: See [Student Support services](#) for a list of available services. Students can seek professional advice through the [University Health Service](#), [Disability Support Services](#), [Counselling and Psychological services](#), [Mana Yura](#) and [SUPRA](#).

- (c) International students should make themselves aware of services specifically focussed on their requirements.

Note: See Support for international students

- (d) Students must at all times adopt safe working practices relevant to the field of research, and comply with the University's work health and safety requirements.

- (i) Students must attend any workshops on health and safety procedures required by the faculty, school or discipline in which they are undertaking research.

Note: See [Work Health and Safety Policy 2016](#), [Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016](#) and [Fieldwork Safety Standards](#)



- (e) Students working in areas not controlled by the University must inform themselves of the WHS requirements and systems of the place where they are conducting their activities and or research.
 - (i) Safety incidents which occur in areas not controlled by the University are still considered safety incidents and must be recorded in [Riskware](#).
- (7) **During the candidature: supervisory teams and relationships**
 - (a) Students should make every effort to build and maintain satisfactory supervisory relationships. This includes:
 - (i) establishing with their supervisors agreed methods of working;
 - (ii) agreeing on what is expected from their supervisors; and
 - (iii) fulfilling their side of any agreement.
 - (b) Students should notify the postgraduate coordinator if supervision is ineffective or not respectful
Note: See also subclauses 15(6) and 16(2)
 - (c) Students may raise any concerns regarding research or study in places not controlled by the University with their supervisors.
- (8) **During the candidature: meetings with supervisory team**
 - (a) Students should meet regularly with their supervisors.
 - (i) In the probationary period of their candidature this should be at least fortnightly. This may include face to face or electronic means of communication.
 - (ii) As the candidature progresses different contact arrangements may be negotiated as appropriate between the supervisory team and the student. This may include face to face or electronic means of communication
- (9) **During the candidature: managing progress**
 - (a) Students should, with the assistance of their supervisors:
 - (i) prepare a plan for future skills acquisition as they proceed through their degree program. This will include developing a progress plan at the beginning of, and during, their candidature, to identify specific areas in which development is required; and
 - (ii) undertake any coursework or other activities required by the University.
Note: See [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015](#)
 - (b) Students should plan and execute their project within the time limits defined, taking into account the nature of the program (full-time or part-time) and the milestones and goals agreed with supervisors.
 - (c) Students are expected to attend as agreed for consultation and provide evidence of progress made.

(10) **During the candidature: library resources**

- (a) Research students should make effective and efficient use of library resources. This may require participating in general induction sessions or tours as well as specialist tours run by the University library.
- (b) Faculty liaison librarians may also provide personal consultations for research students.

Note: See [University Library Research Support: Services and Training](#)

(11) **The research community**

- (a) Students should participate in the opportunities offered by the school, university or discipline to be part of that intellectual community. This includes taking part in activities of the faculty, school or discipline such as presentation of research at University seminars and conferences.

(12) **Career planning**

- (a) Students should make themselves aware of, and use, the services provided by the [Careers Centre](#), including career fairs and workshops, career advice and employment opportunities.

(13) **Administrative requirements**

- (a) Students must ensure that all administrative requirements of the faculty and the University, such as re-enrolment and progress evaluations, are met.
- (b) Students must notify and negotiate any planned leave, time away or change in enrolment status with their supervisors, and follow appropriate faculty or University approval processes.

(14) **Compliance requirements**

- (a) Students must familiarise themselves with any resolutions governing the degree course in which they are enrolled, and the requirements of the [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research\) Rule 2011 \(as amended\)](#).
- (b) Students must inform themselves of, and abide by, all applicable laws, University policies and procedures including those applicable to research integrity.

Note: All current University policies and procedures are available from the [Policy Register](#).
- (c) Students must avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including inappropriate academic practice, and plagiarism.
- (d) Students must familiarise themselves with the requirements of the [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#).
 - (i) If students are concerned about possible research misconduct, they should seek advice from their supervisors.
 - (ii) If a student does not feel comfortable doing this, or if the supervisor is involved in the issue of concern, then the student should approach the postgraduate coordinator, the relevant associate dean, or a [Research Integrity Advisor](#) from any faculty, school or discipline.



- (e) Students must consult their supervisors about applications for ethics approval where their project involves the study of animal or human subjects (including the use of questionnaires).
 - (i) Ethics approval must be obtained before any work is commenced, regardless to its relationship to a final thesis. See subclause 8(20)(f) of the [Research Code of Conduct](#).
- (f) Students should familiarise themselves with the [Intellectual Property Policy 2016](#) and explore with their supervisor and the University the possible exploitation of any invention or other intellectual property arising from their research.
- (g) Students should be aware of any sanctions that may impose restrictions on activities relating to particular countries, goods and services or persons or entities and which may impact on their research, and discuss these with their lead supervisor.

Note: Information about current sanctions is available [here](#)

Note: See also subclause 15(14)9g)

(15) Grievances

- (a) Students must inform themselves of, and implement as required, the University's grievance resolution policies and procedures, including:
 - (i) [Research Code of Conduct 2019](#);
 - (ii) [Student Charter 2020](#);
 - (iii) [Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy 2015](#);
 - (iv) [Student Sexual Misconduct Policy 2018](#);
 - (v) [Reporting Wrongdoing Policy 2012](#);
 - (vi) [Resolution of Complaints Policy 2015](#).
- (b) Students are encouraged to take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties and seeking solutions to them as soon as possible. Problems may be raised:
 - (i) during the progress evaluation process; or
 - (ii) at any other time during the candidature.
- (c) Students are encouraged to inform supervisors or postgraduate coordinators as soon as possible about any difficulties they are experiencing.
- (d) Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the mechanisms available for helping with supervisor-student difficulties and to take advantage of them if necessary.
 - (i) In the first instance, matters should be raised with the postgraduate coordinator.
 - (ii) If the matter involves the postgraduate coordinator, then the matter should be raised with the associate dean, then the Director, Graduate Research.
- (e) Students may seek independent advice or representation, including from the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA).

- (16) **Upon completion of their degree**, research students should:
- (a) leave University workspaces fit for use by others, removing all stored materials, possessions or files; and
 - (b) promptly return any equipment or materials loaned by the University.

17 Responsibilities of schools and disciplines

- (1) School or discipline responsibilities for higher degree by research students will be discharged by the postgraduate coordinators.
- (2) **Before the candidature**, schools or disciplines are responsible for:
 - (a) determining appropriate supervisory arrangements for each student based on skills, experience, workload, projected availability and other requirements appropriate to the student, degree and research project; and
 - (b) when necessary, requiring all supervisors to participate in University supervision and development events.
- (3) **At the commencement of the candidature**, schools or disciplines are responsible for:
 - (a) determining, in consultation with the lead supervisor, the facilities likely to be required for any particular candidature, and ascertaining their availability;
 - (b) monitoring the provision of agreed, necessary resources for the student's project to proceed;
 - (c) ensuring that disciplines and research units provide advice to supervisors and students about the availability of facilities, including access to physical space and other resources, and the financial support that is likely to be available to them, including when off campus; and
 - (d) reporting to the associate dean if the required facilities are not available.
- (4) **During the candidature**, schools or disciplines are responsible for:
 - (a) explaining their respective roles to all members of a supervisory team;
 - (b) varying supervisory arrangements as required;
 - (c) ensuring that supervisors have the time available to effectively support a student to successfully complete, acknowledging agreed roles as defined in clause 13 and 15;
 - (d) making recommendations to the associate dean for approval of proposed increases in the supervisory workload of supervisors;

Note: See clause 14

- (e) determining appropriate alternative supervision arrangements if a supervisor is:
 - (i) absent for one month or more, and is unable to adequately supervise their students remotely; or
 - (ii) temporarily suspended from the Supervisor Register; or
 - (iii) deregistered as a supervisor.

Note: See clause 11



- (f) notifying all affected students as soon as practical if a supervisor is leaving the University and discussing ongoing supervisory arrangements with both the student and the departing supervisor;
- (g) determining coursework or alternative development activities required by individual students, after consultation with the relevant lead supervisors, and consideration of the applicable progress plan;
- (h) ensuring that review procedures, including progress evaluations, are carried out in accordance with University policies and procedures;

Note: See [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015](#) and [Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2020](#)

- (i) requiring necessary approvals for conditions of candidatures to be obtained from the faculty, and scholarship reporting requirements are met;
- (j) creating collegial environments that enhance the research student experience;
- (k) facilitating interactions within and among departments and disciplines that lead to beneficial intellectual relationships amongst students and staff;
- (l) enabling students to participate in appropriate school, discipline or faculty social or academic activities;
- (m) informing students about opportunities for meeting other researchers in the field and attending internal and external seminars, meetings and conferences;
- (n) providing students with the names of individuals to whom they can turn to for advice;
- (o) informing students and supervisors of the University's policies and procedures about ethics, intellectual property, academic dishonesty, inappropriate academic practice, plagiarism, research integrity, and grievance procedures; and

Note: All current University policies and procedures are available from the [Policy Register](#).

- (p) ensuring the proper and expeditious conduct of the examination process, including the timely selection of appropriate examiners in accordance with University policies and procedures.

Note: See [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015](#)

18 Responsibilities of faculties

- (1) Faculty responsibilities for higher degree by research students will be discharged by the relevant associate dean.
- (2) Faculties are responsible for:
 - (a) requiring that applicants for admission to candidature meet the minimum requirements for admission to the relevant degree and the proposed course of study;
 - (b) requiring all supervisors in their faculty to be registered in the Supervisor Register;

- (c) incorporating supervision into workload models, noting that the time commitments should be on the basis of the amount needed to ensure student success;

Note: See also clause 14

- (d) clearly defining the duties and responsibilities of postgraduate coordinators, and:
 - (i) providing adequate resources to assist in the performance of those duties; and
 - (ii) properly recognising the workload these duties entail;
- (e) explaining students' rights and obligations;
- (f) providing necessary resources in accordance with Schedule 1, and discussing the availability of necessary resources, appropriate to the candidature, with students and their supervisors as required;

Note: See Schedule 1.

- (g) Publishing eligibility criteria and the total amount allocated in each round of the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme on student facing websites.

Note: See [Postgraduate Research Support Scheme Procedures 2019](#)

- (h) establishing and explaining appropriate evaluation mechanisms, including the progress evaluation, within schools and disciplines;
- (i) monitoring students during their candidature through reports from schools or disciplines, and intervening where necessary;
- (j) providing students with the names of individuals to whom they can turn to for advice;
- (k) requiring that recommended examiners be appropriately qualified;
- (l) conducting the examination process consistently with the standards required for the relevant degree; and
- (m) requiring students to lodge their awarded thesis in the University Library.

19 Responsibilities of the University

- (1) The University will provide higher degree by research students with an acceptable level of access to physical space and other facilities, including library facilities, and will require schools and disciplines to inform applicants of the available facilities.
 - (a) This includes when a student's thesis is under examination.
- (2) The University, through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) is responsible for the Supervisor Register.
- (3) The University is responsible for providing:
 - (a) support services in areas such as learning assistance;
 - (b) training and development activities for supervisors of higher degree by research students;
 - (c) effective reporting and evaluation mechanisms throughout the candidature;

- (d) procedures which allow students to seek assistance in resolving difficulties;
- (e) appropriate appeal mechanisms; and
- (f) research students with:
 - (i) a convenient source of reference about the requirements for higher degrees by research at the University; and
 - (ii) opportunities for professional development as university teachers.

20 Rescissions and replacements

This policy replaces *Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2013* which is rescinded as from the effective date of this policy.

SCHEDULE 1: MINIMUM INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS FOR HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH STUDENTS

- (1) The University is committed to improving the availability of office space for all higher degree by research students.
- (2) Postgraduate research space will be included as a consideration in building planning and through the development of best practices for research space.
Note: See [Space Management Policy 2012](#)
- (3) Faculties are expected to provide higher degree by research students with:
 - (a) access to appropriate office space that:
 - (i) is safe;
 - (ii) complies with workplace health and safety requirements; and
 - (iii) meets the recommendations of the Tertiary Educational Facilities Management Association (TEFMA) guidelines on the provision of space for postgraduate research students;
 - (b) where possible, a desk located in a shared room close to the student's disciplinary area:
Note: The age of many buildings at the University means that not all are able to contain office space that meets disability requirements. Students with mobility or accessibility concerns should contact Disability Services to discuss specific needs.
 - (c) office facilities, including:
 - (i) a desk and chair;
 - (ii) lockable storage;
 - (iii) technology access, including access to power and computing resources with network access;
 - (iv) amenities including a tea room, or equivalent, and toilets;
 - (d) subject to availability, appropriate work space and laboratory or studio space and equipment and consumables, fieldwork and other resources, with which to conduct research.
 - (i) These requirements will vary according to individual projects, and may change across the course of a project.
 - (ii) They must be agreed between the research student and supervisor at the beginning of the candidature and reviewed at least annually.
 - (e) technical support and research and communication tools such as software, access to the internet, University networks and email.
 - (f) a reasonable quantity of photocopying and printing;
 - (g) reasonable use of postage and telephones for research purpose, and a University mailing address;
 - (h) access to funding for travel and conferences through the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme.

Note: See [Postgraduate Research Support Procedures 2019](#)

- (4) Research students should have 'after hours' access to offices, laboratories, studios or shared work spaces where security and safety considerations permit. Ideally this access should be available 24 hours.
- (5) While under examination, research students must have access to:
 - (a) the library, including online library services.

Note: Postgraduate students under examination no longer need to apply for a temporary library card and can continue to use their student card to use the Library. Postgraduate students under examination will continue to have full access to Library spaces and resources.
 - (b) information technology systems as required, including a University email address and Unikey access.
 - (c) the services provided by Student Support Services, Careers Centre, Learning Centre and Educational Innovation.
- (6) Faculties may allow research students under examination access to other facilities as deemed necessary by the relevant head of school or associate dean.

NOTES

Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy 2020

Date adopted:	6 May 2020
Date commenced:	1 July 2020
Date amended:	17 November 2020, commencing 1 January 2021 24 February 2021 (administrative amendments)
Administrator:	Director, Graduate Research
Review date:	1 July 2025
Related documents:	

Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 (Cth)

National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2017 (Cth)

Australian Council of Graduate Research Good Practice Guidelines

University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule 2011 (as amended)

Intellectual Property Policy 2016

Learning and Teaching Policy 2019

Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedures 2020

Higher Degree by Research Guidelines for Quality Supervision 2020

Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015

Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2020

Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015

Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2020

Academic Staff Workloads Policy

Affiliates Policy

Staff Sexual Misconduct Policy 2020

Student Sexual Misconduct Policy 2018

Work Health and Safety Policy 2016

Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016

Performance Planning and Development Policy 2012

Student Charter 2020

Research Code of Conduct 2019

Code of Conduct - Staff and Affiliates

External Interests Policy 2010

Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021

Academic Planning and Development Guidelines

Fieldwork safety standards

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
8(1)(a); 8(6)(a)	'continuing or fixed term' inserted between 'current' and 'member'	15 September 2020
6	Definitions for 'progress plan' and 'Riskware' added; definitions for 'progress evaluation' and 'student' amended	1 January 2021
7(4)(b) note	<i>Staff Sexual Misconduct Policy 2020</i> added	1 January 2021
11(7)(e) note	<i>Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2015</i> amended to read <i>Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2020</i> ; <i>Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016</i> deleted	1 January 2021
13(5)(b) note; 18(2)(f)	<i>Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016</i> replaced with 'Schedule 1'	1 January 2021
15(7)(a)(iv) note	new note added	1 January 2021
15(7)(a)v; 16(5)(b)	"the Learning Centre" inserted between "Mana Yura" and 'other support services'	1 January 2021

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
15(7)(d)(i)	'Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016' replaced with 'minimum resources for higher degree by research students'	1 January 2021
15(7)(d)(ii)	'it' replaced by 'them'	1 January 2021
15(7)(d) note	New note added	1 January 2021
15(7)(f) note; 16(5)(h) note	Postgraduate Research Support Scheme Procedures 2019 added	1 January 2021
15(8)(d) note; 16(6)(d) note	'Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016' and Fieldwork Safety Standards' added	1 January 2021
15(14)(g)	Subclause amended	1 January 2021
16(3)	New subclause added; consequent renumbering	1 January 2021
16(4)	New subclause added; consequent renumbering	1 January 2021
16(5)(d)	'Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016' replaced with 'minimum resources for higher degree by research students'	1 January 2021
16(5)(d) note	New note added	1 January 2021
16(5)(f)	'Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016' deleted	1 January 2021
16(6)(c)	New subclause added	1 January 2021
16(7)(c)	New subclause added	1 January 2021
16(10)	New subclause added; consequential renumbering	1 January 2021
16(16)	New subclause added	1 January 2021
17(3)(c)	'including when off campus' added to end of subclause	1 January 2021
17(4)(h) note	Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2015 amended to read Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2020;	1 January 2021
18(2)(f) note	New note added	1 January 2021
18(2)(g)	New subclause added; consequent renumbering	1 January 2021
19(1)(a)	New subclause added	1 January 2021
19(3)(f)	New subclause added	1 January 2021
Schedule 1	New Schedule added	1 January 2021

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
Notes	Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016 deleted; Staff Sexual Misconduct Policy 2020; Work Health and Safety Procedures 2016; Fieldwork Safety Standards added Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2015 amended to read Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures 2020;	1 January 2021
7(3)(a); 7(3)(c); 7(4)(a); 7(4)(c); 7(4)(d); 7(4)(e); 15(50)(b); 15(7)(a); 15(7)(e)-(g); 15(8)(b); 15(8)(c)(i); 15(9)(c); 15(11)(b)-(c); 16(4)(d)-(e); 16(5)(a); 16(6)(b); 16(7)(a); 16(8)(a)	'must' replaced with 'should'	1 January 2021
7(2)	"Unless otherwise decided by the faculty" inserted at beginning of subclasse	24 February 2021
14 note	'subclause 7(2) inserted between 'see also' and 'Academic Staff Workloads Policy'	24 February 2021