

HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH SUPERVISION PROCEDURES 2020

Issued by: Director, Graduate Research

Dated: 6 May 2020, commencing 1 July 2020

Last amended: 30 July 2020 (administrative amendment)
24 April 2023 (administrative amendments)
27 June 2023
17 April 2024 (administrative amendments)

Signature:

Name: Prof Ross Coleman

Current Policy Owner: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training)

1 Purpose and application

- (1) These procedures are to give effect to the [Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy](#) ("the policy").
- (2) These procedures apply 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.

2 Commencement

These procedures commence on 1 July 2020.

3 Interpretation

- (1) Words and phrases used in these procedures and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings they have in the policy.

Note: See clause 6 of the policy.

- (2) In these procedures:

Research Education Candidature System (RECS) means the software system provided by the University to support higher degree by research students with the management of research education candidature.

4 Supervisor development

- (1) Potential supervisors who have not previously supervised higher degree by research students must:
- (a) enrol in the University's supervisor training course;
 - (b) complete all required modules; and
 - (c) attend all relevant workshops included in the course.
- (2) The names of staff who have completed the University's supervisor training course will be entered on the Supervisor Register upon completion.

Note: See clause 10 of the policy

- (3) Potential supervisors who have undertaken an equivalent course or have substantial experience in supervising higher degree by research students at another institution must provide written evidence to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training).
- (a) Evidence may take the form of
 - (i) a certificate of completion of a supervisor training course;
 - (ii) a list of students who have successfully completed higher degrees by research; or
 - (iii) a list of publications in which students are joint authors.
- (4) The relevant associate dean will forward the names of all staff endorsed as supervisors of higher degree by research students to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) for final approval.

Note: When implemented, this will be an automatic process through RECS.

5 The Supervisor Register

- (1) All current University staff or affiliates who wish to be supervisors of higher degree by research students must be registered on the Supervisor Register.
- (2) Entries in the register will include:
- (a) name of supervisor;
 - (b) University ID number;
 - (c) faculty;
 - (d) discipline;
 - (e) date when supervisor training completed; and
 - (f) date of registration.



(3) Reregistration

- (a) 4.5 years after the date of an individual's registration, RECS will generate a report which provides the names of individuals who are due for reregistration within the next six months.
- (b) The report will be provided to the relevant associate dean and will list names in the following categories:
 - (i) supervisors who are currently supervising higher degree by research students;
 - (ii) supervisors who have not supervised during the current registration period; and
 - (iii) supervisors who have never supervised higher degree by research students.
- (c) The relevant associate dean will forward the names to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) for a determination regarding reregistration.
 - (i) Supervisors who have not supervised during the current registration period, or who have never supervised higher degree by research students must provide the associate dean with evidence to justify their reregistration.

Note: See clause 10(9) of the policy.

- (d) If the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) determines that reregistration is permitted, then the person will be reregistered for a further five years.
- (e) If the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) determines that the person should not be reregistered, they will be routinely deregistered.

Note: See subclause 11(8) of the policy and clause 6 of these procedures.

- (4) Supervisors who are currently registered at the time of the implementation of the Research Education Candidature System will be automatically migrated to the new Register.

- (a) The registration period will date from the time of migration.

6 Supervisor suspension and deregistration

(1) Temporary suspension.

- (a) Unless the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research Training) determines otherwise, a temporary suspension will end:
 - (i) 12 months from the initial date of suspension; or
 - (ii) the date the investigation is determined;
- (b) The reasons for the temporary suspension will be recorded on the individual's staff file.
- (c) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) may lift a temporary suspension before the expiration of the nominated suspension period if they are satisfied that the individual has satisfactorily completed any recommended development actions, provided that there is no misconduct investigation still underway.



- (d) RECS will automatically notify the relevant associate dean two months before the nominated suspension period.
 - (i) The associate dean will forward the names of such individuals to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training).
 - (ii) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) will then determine whether to reregister, further suspend or deregister the individual.

Note: See clause 11 of the policy.
- (e) Temporary suspensions can only be renewed twice, after which they are considered under subclause 6(3) performance related deregistration.
 - (i) the relevant associate dean will inform the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) of the names of individuals whose temporary suspension has escalated to performance related deregistration.
- (2) **Routine deregistration**
 - (a) The reason for routine deregistration will be recorded on the individual's staff file.
- (3) **Performance or conduct related deregistration**
 - (a) The reasons for performance or misconduct related deregistration will be recorded on the individual's staff file.
- (4) **Re-registration**
 - (a) An associate dean who wishes to request re-registration of a previously deregistered supervisor must:
 - (i) inform the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) in writing; and
 - (ii) provide reasons for the request.
- (5) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) will consider such requests and will:
 - (a) advise the associate dean and the supervisor of their decision in writing; and
 - (b) if re-registration is approved, reregister the supervisor for a further period of five years.

7 Reporting requirements

- (1) The administrator of the Supervisor Register must provide the following information to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) in September every year:
 - (a) number of currently active supervisors:
 - (i) added to the Register in the past twelve months; and
 - (ii) reregistered in the past twelve months.
 - (b) number of supervisors who are inactive on the Register, including those who are:
 - (i) currently unavailable for personal reasons e.g. SSP leave; or
 - (ii) suspended.
 - (c) number of supervisors who have been deregistered.

Note: To protect and individual's privacy, reasons for inactivity and or deregistration will not be included in the report.



- (d) number of students per supervisor (average);
 - (e) the number of supervisors who exceed the supervisory load stated in subclause 14(1) of the policy by three or more students; and
 - (f) number of supervisors who are involved in cross-discipline or cross-faculty supervisory teams.
- (2) The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) will compile a report based on the above information and present it to the University Executive Research Education Subcommittee in November each year.

8 Supervisory teams

- (1) For each student's candidature, RECS will:
- (a) record the names of the supervisors;
 - (b) identify the lead supervisor;
 - (c) record any additional supervisors that are appointed to the team; and
 - (d) record the affiliation of any external supervisors.
- (2) Students must have at least two approved supervisors before they are enrolled.
- (3) The postgraduate coordinator must consult the student before varying their supervisory arrangements.
- (4) When supervisory arrangements are varied due to a change in research direction, the postgraduate coordinator must consult the supervisory team and the student before making any changes.
- (a) If changes are initiated by the lead supervisor, the student must be consulted before any changes are made to supervisory arrangements.
- (5) A postgraduate coordinator who approves a variation to supervisory arrangements must record the change in a timely manner:
- (a) in RECS; and
 - (b) on the student file.
- (6) The lead supervisor must record the schedule of supervisory meetings agreed with the student in RECS.
- (7) When supervisors come from more than one faculty, RECS will record proportional contribution against the name of each supervisor.

9 Supervisor meeting

- (1) Scheduled supervisor meetings are initiated through RECS:
- (a) the meeting date is recorded in RECS;
 - (b) students and supervisors attend the meeting;
 - (c) students and supervisors make notes following the meeting which:
 - (i) record decisions made regarding progress milestones and goals; and
 - (ii) record any other matters arising from discussions.
- (2) Meeting notes are recorded on RECS.

- (3) Ad hoc meetings are a valuable part of candidature and the supervisor and student are encouraged to document matters arising from such meetings.

10 Supervisor responsibilities

(1) Conflicts of interests

- (a) The supervisor must declare conflicts of interests using the [Declaration of External Interests](#) form.

Note: See [External Interests Policy](#)

(2) Absence of a supervisor

- (a) Supervisors must inform the postgraduate coordinator of any actual or proposed supervisor absences.
- (b) The postgraduate coordinator will consult with the student and the supervisory team before:
 - (i) nominating a replacement supervisor; or
 - (ii) increasing direct supervision from another member of the supervisory team.
- (c) The postgraduate coordinator must record in the Supervisor Register any alternative supervisory arrangements that are made for affected students.

(3) Managing progress

- (a) Student progress must be managed consistently with the [Progress Planning and Review of Higher Degree by Research Students Procedures](#).

(4) Thesis content, writing and submission

- (a) The submission and examination of theses must be undertaken consistently with the [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures](#)

11 Faculty responsibilities: local provisions

- (1) It is acknowledged that higher degree by research supervision obligations may vary according to the nature of the candidature, and the school or discipline in which the research project is being undertaken.
- (2) These procedures should be read in conjunction with any applicable local provisions.
- (3) Faculties should develop faculty-specific local provisions which address the following:
 - (a) appointment of affiliates as members of a supervisory team;
 - (b) facilities, funding and infrastructure available to individual students:
 - (i) at commencement of candidature;
 - (ii) during the candidature; and
 - (iii) during the writing, submission and examination phase;
 - (c) allocation of supervisory workloads;
 - (d) allocation of supervisory team responsibilities; and

- (e) arrangements for notifying the student when a supervisor is absent from the University.

Note: See clauses 17 and 18 of the Policy.

- (4) Faculties may further specify requirements relating to higher degree by research supervision in local provisions.

Note: See [University of Sydney \(Policies Development and Review\) Rule](#) (clause 9).

12 Transitional provisions

- (1) Subclauses 8(1), 8(5)-(7) and 9(1)-(2) come into effect on 1 January 2021 or at such time as the relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor determines.

NOTES

Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedures 2020

Date adopted: 6 May 2020

Date registered: 30 June 2020

Date commenced: 1 July 2020

Date amended: 30 July 2020 (administrative amendment)
24 April 2023 (administrative amendments)
27 June 2023
17 April 2024 (administrative amendments)

Current Policy Owner: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training)

Review date: 1 July 2025

Related documents:

University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule

Higher Degree by Research Supervision Policy

Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures

External Interests Policy

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
6(1)(d)(i); 6(1)(d)(ii)	Replace Director Graduate Studies with Director Graduate Research	30 July 2020

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
4(3); 4(4); 5(3)(c); 5(3)(d); 5(3)(e); 6(1)(a); 6(1)(c); 6(1)(d)(i); 6(1)(d)(ii); 6(1)(e)(i); 6(4)(a)(i); 6(5); 7(1); 7(2)	replace Director, Graduate Research with Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training) Consequential amendments due to organisational design change.	24 April 2023
4(1)(a);(4)(2)	Delete 'Educational Innovation' between 'University's' and 'supervisor training course'	24 April 2023
7(2)	'University Executive Research Education Committee' replaced with 'University Executive Research Education Subcommittee'	24 April 2023
10(3)(a); 10(4)(a)	updating internal policy references	24 April 2023
page 1; Notes	Amended Determining Authority from Director, Graduate Research to Current Policy Approver: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training). Amended Administrator from Director, Graduate Research to Current Policy Owner: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training)	24 April 2023
12(1)	replaced 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) with 'relevant Deputy Vice-Chancellor'	24 April 2023
11(3)(f)	subclause relating to coursework requirements deleted	27 June 2023
Throughout	Administrative amendments to remove the year in policy references.	17 April 2024