

Equivalent Qualifications for Higher Degree by Research Program Admission

1.0 Purpose

2.0 Scope

3.0 Schedule

[3.1 Equivalent Attainment to Minimum Qualifying Degree Requirements](#) | [3.2 Significant Research Component](#) | [3.3 Alternate Entry Pathway](#)

4.0 Definitions

5.0 Information

6.0 Related policy documents and supporting documents

1.0 Purpose

This schedule supports the *Higher Degree by Research Admission Procedure* by detailing the qualification requirements or alternate pathways for an applicant to demonstrate an equivalent level of attainment to the minimum qualifying degree standard for admission to Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs.

2.0 Scope

This schedule applies to the University's HDR programs, except the PhD by Prior Publication program, and applicants seeking to be admitted to these programs.

3.0 Schedule

3.1 Equivalent Attainment to Minimum Qualifying Degree Requirements

3.1.1

The University's [Degree Finder](#) website sets admission requirements for each of the University's HDR programs, including the minimum qualification requirement for entry into each program. This schedule details equivalent qualifications and alternate pathways that are accepted as meeting the minimum qualification requirements specified for the program.

3.1.2

Decision-makers for the assessment of applications to HDR programs are specified in the *HDR Academic Decisions Schedule*.

3.1.3

Table 1 below details the equivalent qualifications to a Bachelor Honours Degree (Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level 8) that are accepted as meeting the qualification requirement for admission.

TABLE 1: Equivalent Attainment to a Bachelor Honours Degree (AQF 8)

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENT	EQUIVALENT QUALIFICATION ATTAINMENT
A BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE (AQF LEVEL 8) WITH AN OVERALL GRADE OF FIRST CLASS (CLASS I)	<p data-bbox="494 425 1260 470">Equivalent Minimum Qualifying Degree Requirements</p> <ul data-bbox="494 481 1516 761" style="list-style-type: none"> • A Masters Degree (equivalent to AQF Level 9¹) <ul data-bbox="558 515 1516 649" style="list-style-type: none"> ○ with an overall program GPA equivalent to 6 on the 7-point Griffith University scale, and ○ incorporating a significant research component (refer to section 3.2) with a grade equivalent to 6 on the same scale, or • A qualification recognised by tertiary admission authorities¹ in Australia and deemed by the University to be of a standard comparable to a Bachelor Honours Degree Class I, <p data-bbox="494 772 558 806">OR</p> <p data-bbox="494 817 845 862">Alternate Entry Pathway</p> <ul data-bbox="494 873 1516 1086" style="list-style-type: none"> • A qualification PLUS additional experience deemed by the University to: <ul data-bbox="558 929 1516 1086" style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be of a standard comparable to a Bachelor Honours Degree awarded with Class I; and ○ provide a suitable background for the research the applicant is proposing to undertake. Refer to section 3.3.
A BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE (AQF LEVEL 8) WITH AN OVERALL GRADE OF UPPER SECOND CLASS (CLASS IIA)	<p data-bbox="494 1142 1260 1187">Equivalent Minimum Qualifying Degree Requirements</p> <ul data-bbox="494 1198 1516 1478" style="list-style-type: none"> • A Masters Degree (equivalent to AQF Level 9¹) <ul data-bbox="558 1232 1516 1366" style="list-style-type: none"> ○ with an overall program GPA equivalent to 5.5 on the 7-point Griffith University scale, and ○ incorporating a significant research component (refer to section 3.2) with a grade equivalent to 6 on the same scale, or • A qualification recognised by tertiary admission authorities¹ in Australia and deemed by the University to be of a standard comparable to a Bachelor Honours Degree Class IIA, <p data-bbox="494 1489 558 1523">OR</p> <p data-bbox="494 1534 845 1579">Alternate Entry Pathway</p> <ul data-bbox="494 1590 1516 1803" style="list-style-type: none"> • A qualification PLUS additional experience deemed by the University to: <ul data-bbox="558 1646 1516 1803" style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be of a standard comparable to a Bachelor Honours Degree awarded with Class IIA and ○ provide a suitable background for the research the applicant is proposing to undertake. Refer to section 3.3.

¹ International degrees are assessed against the [Country Education Profiles](#) database, maintained by the Australian Government Department of Education.

Equivalent Minimum Qualifying Degree Requirements

- **A BACHELOR HONOURS DEGREE (AQF LEVEL 8) WITH AN OVERALL GRADE OF LOWER SECOND CLASS (CLASS IIB)**
 - A postgraduate degree (equivalent to AQF Level 8¹)
 - with an overall program GPA equivalent to 5 on the 7-point Griffith University scale; and
 - incorporating a significant research component (refer to section 3.2) with a grade equivalent to 5 on the same scale.; or
 - A qualification recognised by tertiary admission authorities in Australia¹ and deemed by the University to be of a standard comparable to a Bachelor Honours Degree with Class IIB.

OR

Alternate Entry Pathway

- A qualification PLUS additional experience deemed by the University to:
 - be of a standard comparable to a Bachelor Honours Degree awarded with Class IIB and
 - provide a suitable background for the research the applicant is proposing to undertake. Refer to section 3.3.

3.1.4

Where the applicant holds qualifications at the same or higher level and in a similar discipline as the proposed research, additional information may be required to determine the benefit of undertaking the proposed HDR program.

3.1.5

An incomplete HDR degree, at the level to which the applicant is applying, will not be accepted as meeting the minimum qualifying degree requirement; additional evidence will be required to support a case for admission. Refer to section 3.3.

3.2 Significant Research Component

3.2.1

The term 'significant research component' referred to in Table 1 is a research component:

- Of normally 40 Credit Points (CP) or at least one full-time equivalent semester/trimester; and
- May include a research methodology course equivalent to 10CP.

3.2.2

The research component:

- Must have resulted in the completion of a major piece of supervised but essentially independent research and writing that has been formally examined; and
- The examined output may be a thesis or a creative output with exegesis.

3.2.3

A research component of less than 40CP may be deemed to meet admission requirements where the output complies with section 3.2.2 and is assessed as being of sufficient size, scope and quality to evidence the applicant's preparedness for admission to the HDR program.

3.2.4

Where the research component of the qualifying degree is ungraded, the reports of the thesis examiners will be assessed for equivalence to the required grades for admission. If examiners' reports are not available, a copy of the thesis may be examined in accordance with the Bachelor Honours Degree thesis examination criteria appropriate to the discipline. Examiners' reports from this process will be accepted for the purpose of determining admission.

3.3 Alternate Entry Pathway

3.3.1

Where an applicant's qualifications do not meet the equivalent qualifying degree requirements for admission detailed in Table 1, the applicant must provide additional evidence from the last ten years to demonstrate their research preparedness to successfully undertake the HDR program.

3.3.2

Evidence must be relevant to the proposed research topic and demonstrate knowledge and cognitive, technical and communication skills comparable to the AQF Level 8 learning outcomes for a Bachelor Honours Degree, at the requisite Honours grade level:

- Review, analyse, consolidate and synthesise knowledge to identify and provide solutions to complex problems with intellectual independence;
- Demonstrate a broad understanding of a body of knowledge and theoretical concepts with advanced understanding in some areas;
- Exercise critical thinking and judgement in developing new understanding;
- Design and use research in a project; and
- Present a clear and coherent exposition of knowledge and ideas to a variety of audiences.

3.3.3

This additional evidence to demonstrate research preparedness may include but is not limited to:

- Relevant research and/or industry experience, detailing:
 - The type of research or industry role and activities undertaken; and
 - The duration and recency of the role (experience must have been sustained over a period of six months or more to be included as evidence).
- Peer reviewed publications and other research outputs.
- Research or technical reports prepared for industry, government or business which adhere to the broad conventions of academic publishing and identify the applicant as a significant contributor.
- Evidence of achievements in research such as research awards, grants and patents.

Refer to the [HDR Applicant Standard Academic Curriculum Vitae Model](#) for guidance on providing the evidence set out in section 3.3.3. Applicants must clarify their individual contributions for any jointly-authored publications or other research outputs included by providing a written authorship statement.

4.0 Definitions

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is the national policy for regulating qualifications in Australia. It prescribes the criteria for each qualification type.

AQF Level is the term used in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) to demonstrate the relative complexity and/or depth of achievements and the autonomy required of graduates of AQF qualifications to demonstrate that achievement e.g. AQF Level 1 has the lowest complexity and AQF Level 10 has the highest complexity.

Exegesis is a scholarly, critical commentary on the original creative work in dialogue with, and informing that original work or collection of works, resulting from research undertaken and produced during candidature. The exegesis also includes explicit reference to the research methodologies employed in the creation of the original creative work.

GPA (Grade Point Average) is a simple numerical index used to summarise a student's academic performance. The GPA used to summarise a student's overall performance within a degree program is called the program GPA.

5.0 Information

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6.0 Related Policy Documents and Support Documents

Legislation	<u>Australian Qualifications Framework 2nd Edition 2013</u>
Policy	<u>Higher Degree by Research Policy</u>
Procedures	<u>Higher Degree by Research Admission Procedure</u> <u>Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Procedure</u>