

**NOTE:** Effective from 1 January 2025

# Higher Degree by Research Enrolment and Variations to Candidature

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## 1.0 Purpose

This Procedure supports the *Higher Degree by Research Policy* by documenting the requirements and processes for managing enrolment in HDR programs and variations to an HDR candidate's enrolment and candidature.

## 2.0 Scope

This Procedure applies to the University's HDR programs program.

## 3.0 Procedure

### 3.1 Enrolment

#### 3.1.1

HDR candidates will:

- Comply with any enrolment conditions specified in their offer of admission, additional to the conditions set out in this procedure;
- Enrol in courses as per their degree requirements, according to their approved academic load, that ensure the time-based requirements of their HDR program are met; and
- Ensure that the University has their correct contact details and regularly check their mail and Griffith email account for University correspondence.

#### 3.1.2

Candidates enrolled in an HDR program that contains a coursework component are required to enrol in or withdraw from courses in accordance with section 3.2 of the University's *Enrolment Procedure* and the *Enrolment Dates Protocol*.

#### 3.1.3

A candidate who fails to enrol in courses for a trimester or withdraws from all courses in a trimester will be deemed to have withdrawn from the HDR program.

### 3.1.4

A candidate may not be enrolled or enrol in other programs, including at another institution, while enrolled in a Griffith HDR program, without the approval of the Dean (Research) or nominee. Requirements for concurrent program and course enrolment are set out on the [Concurrent Enrolment](#) webpage.

## 3.2 Commencement and Orientation

### 3.2.1

In collaboration with their candidates, supervisors will complete the [Expectations in Supervision Questionnaire](#) within the first month of candidature.

### 3.2.2

Within the first six months of commencement in the HDR program, candidates will complete:

- The Griffith Graduate Research School (GGRS) HDR Orientation Program, including training in research integrity and responsible research practices; and
- Academic group, school, department, research centre/institute and local orientation activities, where required, including relevant occupational health and safety induction and finance training.

## 3.3 HDR Candidate Experience Survey

### 3.3.1

The University will survey enrolled HDR candidates annually through the HDR Candidate Experience Survey as a mechanism to provide confidential feedback on the quality of their research training and support and to inform established mechanisms for quality assurance and enhancement.

### 3.3.2

The survey is administered in accordance with the *HDR Candidate Experience Survey Local Protocol*.

## 3.4 Duration of Candidature

### 3.4.1

The minimum and maximum candidature durations of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil) candidature are set out in Table One below.

**TABLE ONE: PhD and MPhil: Candidature duration**

PROGRAM	MINIMUM DURATION	MAXIMUM DURATION
PhD (full-time)	2 years	4 years
PhD (part-time)	3 years	8 years
MPhil (full-time)	1 year	2 years
MPhil (part-time)	2 years	4 years

### 3.4.2

The minimum and maximum candidature durations and credit point completion requirements for all other HDR programs will be according to the program requirements published on the [Program and Courses](#) website and as specified in the University's *Enrolment Procedure*.

### 3.4.3

The minimum and maximum dates for submitting the thesis are calculated from the date of commencement.

### 3.4.4

Candidates may apply to submit the thesis prior to the minimum thesis submission date.

### 3.4.5

Candidates may apply for an extension beyond the maximum candidature duration where the maximum thesis submission date cannot be met due to matters that are beyond their control. An extension of candidature will normally be approved for a period no longer than six months full-time equivalent (FTE). Additional requirements and the process for applying for an extension are detailed on the [Extension to Maximum Submission Date](#) webpage.

### 3.4.6

The decision-maker for applications to vary the period of candidature is as detailed in the *HDR Academic Decisions Schedule*.

## 3.5 Study Load

### 3.5.1

The expected full-time study load for HDR enrolment is a minimum of 40 credit points in each trimester and 20 credit points for part-time HDR study load.

### 3.5.2

A full-time commitment is at least the equivalent of the standard five-day working week (for example 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, 48 weeks per year). The actual pattern of research and study is to be negotiated by the candidate and their supervisory team.

### 3.5.3

Part-time commitment will average at least 50% of the full-time commitment as set out in section 3.5.2, over the course of a year.

### 3.5.4

Any work, paid or otherwise, undertaken by the candidate that is unrelated to their research project must not affect their ability to maintain this commitment and must not interfere with the timely progression and completion of their research project. Employment commitments will not be considered as a permitted reason for an extension of candidature as set out in section 3.4.5.

### 3.5.5

International candidates must comply with the conditions of their student visa with regard to maintaining a full-time study load, as well as paid employment restrictions.

### 3.5.6

The [Attendance](#) webpage sets out requirements for changes to study load. Changes to study load may be requested and approved as outlined in sections 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 below. A request to change study load retrospectively will not be approved.

## 3.6 Variations to Candidature

### 3.6.1

Variations to enrolment and/or conditions of candidature may be requested by:

- Following the process for the applicable variation set out on the [Making Changes to Candidature](#) webpage; then
- Lodging an online request via myGriffith.

### 3.6.2

Variations are subject to approval by the decision-maker specified in the *HDR Academic Decisions Schedule*, on provision of supporting evidence and subject to:

- Any scholarship conditions;
- International student visa conditions, as applicable; and
- Specific program requirements where the HDR program includes a coursework component and compliance with the *Enrolment Procedure* is required with regard to enrolling or withdrawing from courses and taking leave of absence.

### 3.6.3

Variations will not be approved retrospectively except in extenuating circumstances.

### 3.6.4 Major change to the thesis topic

Specific requirements and process for making a change to the thesis topic are provided on the [Changing Your Topic or Title](#) webpage.

Where a candidate who requests to make a major change to the thesis topic is from a sanctioned country, a new Sanctions Compliance Risk Assessment Form (SCRAF) must be completed in accordance with the process detailed in the *Managing Assessment of HDR Applicants: Sanctions and Export Controls Compliance Procedure*. Any request for a major change to the thesis topic will not be progressed until the SCRAF has been reviewed and approved.

### 3.6.5 On-campus attendance, study away and remote candidature

Candidates are required to maintain on-campus enrolment, unless approval has been granted for study away or remote candidature. The pattern of research study and work from home arrangements will be negotiated as needed based on the program and research project requirements and the candidate's personal circumstances.

Study away is intended for when a candidate wishes to attend a conference, undertake fieldwork, research or study as part of their HDR program, while located away from the University for a limited period of time, not exceeding 12 months in total. Candidates must obtain approval for any period of study away. Requirements and responsibilities are set out on the [Study Away](#) webpage.

Any period of study away will be in accordance with the *Travel Policy*, including compliance with travel related duty of care requirements. Candidates seeking more than 12 months study away must make a request for remote candidature (see below).

Candidates who do not reside or study within regular commuting distance of a Griffith University campus may request to change their mode of attendance from on-campus to remote (off-campus). An application must satisfy the decision-maker that the candidate:

- Has a high likelihood of successful and timely completion as evidenced by progress thus far and the program of work to be completed;
- Can be adequately supported to progress their research towards timely and successful completion; and

- Is able to attend the University for a minimum period as specified by the decision-maker where required for the research project.

Requirements and process for requesting remote candidature are detailed on the [Remote Candidature](#) webpage.

### 3.6.6 HDR Internship Placement

Candidates may request to undertake an internship placement as part of their HDR program. All HDR internship placements will be administered in accordance with the *Work Integrated Learning Policy and Procedure*.

Refer to the [HDR Internships](#) webpage for the eligibility requirements that a candidate must meet to undertake a placement, as well as the internship agreement forms.

### 3.6.7 HDR program transfer

A candidate may request to transfer between HDR programs as set out in Table Two.

**TABLE TWO: List of permitted HDR program transfers**

CURRENT PROGRAM	PERMITTED TRANSFER PROGRAM
<b>AQF LEVEL 9 TO AQF LEVEL 10 TRANSFER</b>	
Master of Philosophy (MPhil)	Doctor of Philosophy
Masters (Research)(other than MPhil) *	Professional doctorate*
<b>AQF LEVEL 10 TO AQF LEVEL 9 TRANSFER</b>	
Doctor of Philosophy	Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
Professional doctorate*	Research masters (other than MPhil) *

\*Only where specified in the program requirements on the [Program and Courses](#) website.

Other HDR program transfer requests (including program transfers at the same AQF level) will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with consideration of coursework and program eligibility requirements.

Where a candidate transfers between HDR programs, the time spent in the initial HDR program is counted towards the maximum duration of the new HDR program.

A transfer from a masters to a doctoral level HDR program (program upgrade) will not be permitted prior to the successful completion of confirmation. An application:

- May be made to upgrade as part of the confirmation process or as a separate process thereafter;
- Must demonstrate that the candidate can expand the scope of the research project to doctoral level expectations and that the research project will make an original contribution to knowledge; and
- Must demonstrate that the candidate has the capability and preparedness to undertake research at doctoral level (see *Higher Degree by Research Admission Procedure* section 3.1).

Application requirements and the assessment process for applications to transfer between HDR programs are detailed on the [HDR Program Changes](#) webpage.

## **3.7 Leave**

### **3.7.1**

Candidates are entitled to a total of 20 working days of recreation leave and up to ten working days of sick leave per year, included in the maximum candidature duration (refer also to extended sick leave provisions detailed in section 3.7.4).

### **3.7.2**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates may access up to five days leave per calendar year for cultural and ceremonial obligations, included in the maximum candidature duration.

### **3.7.3 Leave of Absence**

Candidates may apply for up to a total of 12 months of leave of absence (LOA) per candidature. LOA in the first six months of candidature is not permitted unless exceptional circumstances apply.

In exceptional circumstances, up to a total of 12 months of special leave of absence (additional to LOA) may be granted.

LOA will not be granted where the provisions for study away (see sections 3.6.5.2 and 3) would apply.

Retrospective LOA (including special LOA) applications will not normally be approved.

### **3.7.4 Extended Sick leave**

Candidates are entitled to a total of 12 weeks of sick leave per candidature (in addition to the sick leave entitlements set out in section 3.7.1).

Candidates must apply for this leave within a month of a period of illness that has exceeded 10 working days.

### **3.7.5 Parental leave**

Candidates are entitled to a maximum of 12 months parental leave for each child born or legally adopted during candidature, and for whom the candidate is the primary carer.

Candidates who have experienced pregnancy loss may access leave of absence provisions, and in cases where this occurs within 20 weeks of the expected due date, the candidate is entitled to parental leave for a period of up to three months.

Where a candidate is the partner of a primary carer of a newly born or adopted child, they are entitled to partner leave up to a maximum of eight weeks for each child born or legally adopted during candidature.

### **3.7.6**

Applications for leave under the provisions set out in sections 3.7.3 to 3.7.5 must be lodged as outlined in section 3.6.1 with approval subject to the conditions set out in section 3.6.2.

### **3.7.7**

Leave that is granted under the provisions of sections 3.7.3 to 3.7.5 is recognised as a temporary cessation of study and will not count towards the period of candidature for the degree. Access to University facilities and resources will be restricted during the leave period, with the expectation that candidates will cease work on their research over this time. Access to Griffith University student email and myGriffith is retained during leave periods.

Refer to the [Applying for Leave](#) webpage for further information.



## 3.8 Lapsed Candidature

### 3.8.1

Candidates who do not submit the HDR thesis by the final submission date, and do not have an in-progress or approved application for extension, will have their candidature lapsed, with their enrolment in the program withdrawn.

### 3.8.2

Candidates whose candidature has been lapsed for exceeding maximum candidature duration are eligible to apply for re-enrolment for the purpose of examination within three years from the lapse date, or by the maximum period for completing the program in accordance with the *Enrolment Procedure*. Refer to the [Extension to Maximum Submission Date](#) webpage for further information on the conditions and process for submitting a thesis under lapse of candidature regulations.

## 3.9 Withdrawal of Candidature

### 3.9.1

A candidate may withdraw from their HDR candidature by lodging a withdrawal form as per the process outlined in 3.6.1.

### 3.9.2

The provisions set out in section 3.8 of the University's *Enrolment Procedure* will also apply to candidates seeking withdrawal from their HDR program during the coursework component.

### 3.9.3

Refer to the [Withdrawal from Candidature](#) webpage for further information on requirements and implications of withdrawal for domestic and international candidates.

## 4.0 Definitions

**Coursework** is a method of teaching and learning that leads to the acquisition of skills and knowledge that does not include a major research component.

**Coursework component** means those components of an HDR program other than the research component.

**Domestic candidate** refers to an HDR candidate who is an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen; or an Australian permanent resident or holder of an Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa.

**Element** is an academic unit of the University, comprising a School, Department or Research Centre/Institute.

**Field of study** refers to the main focus of work activities and/or a learning program.

**Full-time equivalent** (FTE) refers to the duration of candidature expressed as full-time equivalent where a student undertakes part-time study.

**Higher Degree by Research (HDR)** refers to a Research Masters or Research Doctorate where a:

- Research Masters means a Level 9 qualification as described in the AQF and where a minimum of two-thirds of the program of learning is for research, research training and independent study.
- Research Doctorate means a Level 10 qualification as described in the AQF and where a minimum of two years of the program of learning, and typically two-thirds of the qualification, is research.

**International candidate** refers to an HDR candidate who is **not** an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen or an Australian permanent resident or holder of an Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa.

**Program** is an approved course of study leading to an award of the University (a higher education award). An HDR candidate is admitted to an HDR program, and on successful completion of all program requirements is awarded the degree to which the program relates.

**Program Requirements** refers to the curriculum and other program requirements specified in the New Program Proposal that can be viewed via the Programs and Courses website.

**Research Component** means the research component of the HDR program that culminates in the submission of the thesis.

## 5.0 Information

Title	Higher Degree by Research Enrolment and Candidature to Variations Procedure
Document number	2024/0000084
Purpose	This Procedure supports the <i>Higher Degree by Research Policy</i> by documenting the conditions of enrolment for Higher Degree by Research candidates and by documenting the procedures that candidates must be followed to change an aspect of a Higher Degree by Research program.
Audience	Staff; Students; Public
Category	Academic
Subcategory	Research
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Effective date	1 January 2025
Review date	2029
Policy advisor	Manager, HDR Client Services, Griffith Graduate Research School
Approving authority	Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School

## 6.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
Policy	Higher Degree by Research Policy Travel Policy Work Integrated Learning Policy
Procedure	Enrolment Procedure Fees and Charges Procedure



	Higher Degree by Research Admission Procedure Higher Degree by Research Academic Decisions Schedule Managing Assessment of HDR Applicants: Sanctions and Export Controls Compliance Procedure Work Integrated Learning Procedure
Local protocol	Enrolment Dates Protocol HDR Candidate Experience Survey: Local Protocol
Form	Application to Submit Thesis under Lapse of Candidature Regulations form HDR Study Away Support Application HDR Sanctions Compliance Risk Assessment Form (SCRAF)