

SUPERVISION OF HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH STUDENTS POLICY 2013

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

Dated: 22 February 2013

Last amended: 5 June 2017 (administrative amendment only)

Signature:

Position: Chair, Academic Board

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1 Name of policy

This is the Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2013.

2 Commencement

This policy commences on 22 February 2013

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) ensures that higher degree by research students are supported to produce research of the highest national and international quality;
- (b) enables students involved 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; and
- (d) requires provision of foundational guidance, support, recognition, development and leadership opportunities for supervisors; and
- (e) supports the conduct of research training in a safe manner which is conducive to student wellbeing.

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; or
 - (ii) Master's by research.

6 Definitions and interpretation

(1) In this policy:

academic dishonesty means seeking to obtain or obtaining academic advantage (including in the assessment or publication of work) by dishonest or unfair means or knowingly assisting another to do so.

Note: See also [Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015](#)

affiliate has the meaning provided in the [Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates](#), which at the date of this policy is:

clinical title holders; adjunct, conjoint and honorary appointees; consultants and contractors to the University; holders of offices in University entities, members of Boards of University Foundations, members of University Committees; and any other persons appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions on its behalf.

AQF means the Australian Qualifications Framework (<http://www.aqf.edu.au/>)

associate dean means the associate dean with authority for overseeing higher degrees by research in the relevant faculty.

auxiliary supervisor	has the meaning provided in clause 8 of this policy.
candidature	means the period commencing when a person accepts the University's offer of admission to 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.
co-ordinating supervisor	means the research supervisor in a supervisory team who has designated academic delegations and responsibility for administrative requirements.
co-supervision	means the situation where two or more research supervisors are appointed to supervise a student.
dean	means the dean of the relevant faculty.
delegate	means a person authorised by the Senate to act on behalf of the University in specified situations, as provided in the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016 or the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Academic Functions) Rule 2016
department	means the academic unit responsible for a student's higher degree by research candidature. It may be called department, discipline or school within the University.
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>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 Australian Qualifications Framework at AQF level 10.</p>
Educational Innovation	means the Educational Innovation unit within the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) portfolio.
ESOS National Code	means the standards governing the protection of overseas students and the delivery of courses to such students, established under the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth) .
faculty	means a faculty or University school, and refers to the student's faculty or University school of enrolment.
Graduate Studies Committee	means the Graduate Studies Committee of the Academic Board.

head of department or head	<p>means the head of the relevant department</p> <p>Note: Functions performed by the head of department may be performed by the head of school, dean or associate dean, in accordance with paragraph 1.02(5) of [the University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule 2011], particularly in faculties that are not organized into departments or disciplines.</p>
HDR Administrative Centre	<p>means the Higher Degree by Research Administrative Centre within the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) portfolio.</p>
international student advisers	<p>means staff within the International Student Office who provide support to international students on issues related to student visa, scholarship and general academic progression.</p>
master's by research	<p>has the meaning provided in the <i>University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research Rule) 2011 (as amended)</i> which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p>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 Master's by research unless it complies with the Australian Qualifications Framework at AQF Level 9.</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</p>
postgraduate coordinator	<p>means the postgraduate coordinator for the relevant department.</p>
probationary period	<p>has the meaning as described in clauses 2.05, 3.05, and 4.04 of the University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule 2011</p>
progress review	<p>means a progress review conducted in accordance with Part 3 of the Progress Planning and Review for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2015.</p>
research supervisor	<p>has the meaning provided in clause 8 of this policy.</p>
student	<p>means a person who is currently admitted to candidature in an award course at the University.</p>
supervisor	<p>means, in relation to a higher degree by research student, a person appointed to discharge the responsibilities set out in clause 14 of this policy. For the purpose of this policy, the generic term supervisor(s) will be used to include research supervisors, co-ordinating supervisors, and auxiliary supervisors.</p>

Supervisor Register	means the University-wide register of individuals approved as supervisors for higher degree by research students, established under clause 13 of this policy.
supervisory team	means a group team of supervisors appointed to supervise a student in accordance with the provisions of clause 13 of this policy.

7 Principles of supervision

(1) Roles and responsibilities

- (a) Higher degree by research students are ultimately responsible for their own work.
- (b) Supervisors are responsible for offering tailored guidance and constructive feedback.
- (c) 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,

and must revisit these regularly to ensure that the project stays on track.

(2) Quality of relationships

- (a) Supervisors and students must establish and maintain clear communication, which means actively clarifying 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 with a spirit of goodwill and 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.

(3) Diversity

- (a) Supervisors and students must treat each other fairly and reasonably and should respect the social 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;](#)
[Code of Conduct for Students](#)
[Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy 2015.](#)

- (c) Supervisors and students must recognise that every supervisory relationship is unique and will reflect the particular needs, preferences and work styles of those involved.

- (d) Supervisors and students must recognise that intellectual and practical input from other supervisors is necessary and desirable, and is to be encouraged.
 - (e) Supervisors and students must exercise professional discretion in their relationship, maintaining confidentiality where appropriate.
- (4) **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 2015](#)

8 Supervisors

- (1) All supervisors must be current staff or affiliates of the University and will be categorised as either:
 - (a) research supervisors; or
 - (b) auxiliary supervisors.
- (2) Supervisors may come from the same faculty or department as the one in which the student is enrolled or from different faculties or departments as appropriate to the research project.
- (3) Supervisors are appointed to a particular candidature by the relevant head of department.
- (4) Research supervisors:
 - (a) have the primary responsibility for the conduct of the candidature in accordance with guidelines determined by the Academic Board;
 - (b) are responsible for monitoring the provision of appropriate support, resources, information and guidance to the student; and
 - (c) are responsible for reporting the progress of the candidature to the relevant head of department and the relevant dean or associate dean.
- (5) Auxiliary supervisors are appointed to assist in the supervision of the candidature.
- (6) The practice of auxiliary supervision is flexible to allow for a variety of models as may be appropriate for individual candidatures. Appropriate models include:
 - (a) a person with considerable experience as a research supervisor serving as an advisor or mentor to a research supervisor who is new to that role;
 - (b) a person with the appropriate knowledge required for part of the student's candidature;
 - (c) a person whose links with industry enable a student to have access to specialised equipment and facilities; or
 - (d) a person in an external institution or university who is an expert on the subject matter.

9 Supervisory teams

- (1) All higher degree by research students will be supervised by a supervisory team consisting of at least two supervisors, of whom at least one will be a research supervisor.
- (2) The relevant head of department must determine appropriate supervisory arrangements for each student based on skills, experience, workload, projected availability of staff and other requirements appropriate to the candidate, degree and research project.
- (3) The head of department may review and change supervisory arrangements as required throughout the course of the candidature.
- (4) Supervisory teams must include at least one member of the academic staff with the requisite skills, knowledge and experience for supervision of the particular student.
- (5) Each individual member of a supervisory team must:
 - (a) be eligible to supervise higher degree by research students;
 - (b) be familiar with the University's policies, procedures and resources, and applicable faculty requirements.
- (6) Together the team must:
 - (a) have content expertise in the area of the student's research;
 - (b) be structured in such a way that no individual supervisor is a research supervisor for more than 5 full time candidates except as permitted according to Clause 13 of this policy; and
 - (c) be able to provide continuous supervision for the likely duration of the student's candidature, allowing for changes in any individual supervisor's availability.
- (7) One research supervisor in the team must be nominated as the co-ordinating supervisor.
 - (a) The co-ordinating supervisor is responsible for:
 - (i) meeting administrative requirements; and
 - (ii) reporting the aggregated views of team members to the head of department or dean or associate dean.
 - (b) An auxiliary supervisor may not act as co-ordinating supervisor except when appointed in the temporary absence of a research supervisor as set out in clause 14(10)(c) of this policy.
- (8) Supervision of higher degree by research students must follow one of the models specified below.
- (9) **Default model of supervision**
 - (a) For an individual student the relevant head of department or postgraduate coordinator will appoint:
 - (i) one research supervisor; and
 - (ii) one auxiliary supervisor.
 - (b) The research supervisor will be the co-ordinating supervisor.

(10) **Co-supervision model**

- (a) The relevant head of department or postgraduate coordinator will appoint two research supervisors to supervise an individual student, each of whom will have equal responsibility for the candidature.
- (b) The relevant head of department or postgraduate coordinator will designate one research supervisor to be the co-ordinating supervisor. Where a student is being supervised by supervisors from different faculties, the co-ordinating supervisor will normally be from the faculty in which the student is enrolled.
- (c) The academic workload for each supervisor will be determined by the dean or associate dean of the supervisors' faculties.

(11) **Supervisory panel model**

- (a) The relevant head of department or postgraduate coordinator may decide that any individual candidature requires the appointment of a supervisory panel of more than two supervisors.
- (b) Such panels will consist of a mix of research and auxiliary supervisors, according to the requirements of individual candidatures.
- (c) The relevant head of department or postgraduate coordinator will nominate one research supervisor as co-ordinating supervisor. Where a student is being supervised by supervisors from different faculties, this will normally be a research supervisor from the faculty in which the student is enrolled.
- (d) The academic workload for each supervisor will be determined by the dean or associate dean of the supervisors' faculties.

10 Supervisor development

- (1) All academic staff with supervisory responsibilities must undertake development activities relating to the supervision of higher degree by research students. This may involve taking part in formal and informal opportunities for exchanging expertise on research supervision, research learning and research processes - whether at a department, faculty, division or University-wide level.
- (2) Academic staff new to supervision should undertake University staff development programs for research supervision.
- (3) If a potential supervisor has already undertaken an equivalent course or has substantial suitable experience in supervising students to completion, the relevant dean or associate dean may exempt them from taking the Educational Innovation course. However, it is strongly recommended that such staff participate in the Educational Innovation development course or other workshops to ensure familiarity with current supervisory practices and expectations.

11 Supervisor eligibility

- (1) Subject to clause 10(2) above, to be eligible to be approved as a supervisor, a person will:
 - (a) be a member of the academic staff at Level B or above; or
 - (b) have a current affiliation with the University approved by the relevant faculty or department; *and*

- (c) have participated in ongoing and appropriate development activities including but not limited to:
 - (i) the Foundations of Research Supervision course run by Educational Innovation; or
 - (ii) other relevant workshops and programs; or
 - (iii) demonstrated experience at supervising at another university; *and*
- (d) be research active; *and*

Note: Standards for research activity are set by each faculty and are available through [Career Path](#).

See also:

[Performance Planning and Development Policy 2012](#);
[Academic Planning and Development Guidelines](#)

- (e) be 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.

12 The Supervisor Register

- (1) The HDR Administrative Centre will maintain a register of all individuals approved as supervisors for higher degree by research students.
- (2) The register will distinguish between those people who are approved to act as:
 - (a) research or auxiliary supervisors; and
 - (b) auxiliary supervisors only.
- (3) Academic staff at Level B or above who have completed the Foundations of Research Supervision course run by Educational Innovation will automatically be approved and registered as a research supervisor.
- (4) Affiliates and academic staff below Level B who have completed the Foundations of Research Supervision course run by Educational Innovation will automatically be approved and registered as an auxiliary supervisor.
- (5) Academic staff and affiliates who have not completed the Foundations of Research Supervision course run by Educational Innovation require approval for registration from the dean or associate dean of the relevant faculty.
- (6) **Routine deregistration**
 - (a) A person will be routinely removed from the Supervisor Register when that person:
 - (i) is no longer actively affiliated with the University;
 - (ii) no longer meets the supervision criteria as specified in clause 11 of this policy; or

- (iii) has not supervised an enrolled student for a period of three continuous years.

(7) Performance related deregistration

- (a) The relevant dean or associate dean must request removal of an approved supervisor from the Supervisor Register when that person is identified in their academic performance and development review as failing to perform their duties to a satisfactory standard.

Note: See [Performance Planning and Development Policy 2012](#) and [Academic Planning and Development Guidelines](#)

- (b) The relevant dean or associate dean must notify any person who is deregistered on this basis, in writing.
- (c) The relevant dean, associate dean or academic advisor may recommend suitable development activities for such people.

(8) Misconduct related deregistration

- (a) When a person is found to have committed research misconduct or other professional misconduct, the Provost, in consultation with the relevant delegate (or their designated nominee) responsible for managing the misconduct proceedings and the dean of the relevant faculty, may request removal of the person from the Supervisor Register.

- (b) The Provost must notify any person who is deregistered on this basis, in writing.

Note: See:
[Research Code of Conduct 2013](#)
[Enterprise Agreement 2013- 2017](#).

(9) Appeals against deregistration

- (a) A person may appeal against routine deregistration to the HDR Administrative Centre.
- (b) A person may appeal against performance related deregistration to the relevant dean or associate dean.

(10) Reactivating registration

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

(11) Reporting

- (a) The HDR Administrative Centre will report annually to the Graduate Studies Committee of the Academic Board on issues relating to the Supervisor Register.
- (b) Reports must include a summary of actions taken and any recommendations relating to operation of the Supervisor Register.

13 Supervisor workload

- (1) A research supervisor will not normally supervise more than 5 full-time equivalent postgraduate research students at one time, or pro rata for a supervisor employed on a fractional basis.
- (2) A research supervisor may only exceed the normal load with approval from the relevant dean, which may only be provided after consideration of a

recommendation, including reasons, from the relevant head of department or postgraduate coordinator.

- (3) The relevant dean must report all such approvals to the HDR Administrative Centre as soon as possible after they are given.
- (4) The dean may assign a student to an auxiliary supervisor if the dean is satisfied that the auxiliary supervisor can provide the necessary skills and expertise, without compromising their existing students' candidatures. Academic workload should also be taken into consideration.

Note: See the [Enterprise Agreement 2013 -2017](#), Section G.

14 Responsibilities of supervisors

- (1) Unless otherwise specified, the responsibilities described in this clause apply equally to each supervisor of a student.
- (2) Where the supervisory team contains more than one research supervisor, each research supervisor must fulfil all of the responsibilities of research supervisors described in this clause.
- (3) Supervisors must maintain a professional relationship with their students, other supervisors and other University staff.
- (4) The supervisor's primary role is to provide academic support and guidance throughout a candidature with the objective of enabling the student to achieve a high standard of research activity and output.
- (5) In agreeing to registration on the Supervisor Register, the supervisor accepts the responsibilities set out in this clause.
- (6) **Selection of student and or project**
 - (a) The research 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 manageable. If the supervisor is not confident at the application stage that the research proposal is likely to be manageable and consistent with the aims of the doctoral degree, they must raise their concerns with the head of department.
 - (b) The supervisor will ensure that they have the ability, capacity and related research interest in the project to carry out the supervision. If a supervisor has any doubts about their capacity to supervise a student for any reason, they must raise their concerns with the head of department.
- (7) **Conflicts of interests**
 - (a) Where the supervisor becomes aware of an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interests in relation to a particular project or student, the supervisor must immediately declare the conflict of interests in accordance with the [External Interests Policy 2010](#).
 - (b) The head of department may vary the supervisory arrangements as a result of a conflict of interests declaration.
- (8) **At the commencement of the candidature**
 - (a) The research supervisor will:
 - (i) notify the student about orientation and induction events run by the University, faculty or department;



- (ii) ensure that the student participates in induction programs and workshops as directed by the faculty or department;
 - (iii) ensure that the student participates in programs and workshops in accordance with University, faculty or departmental work health and safety requirements.
- (b) The research supervisor must be aware of the attributes that the University expects its graduates to have and, in consultation with the student, prepare a plan for future skill acquisition as the student proceeds through their degree program.

Note: See [Learning and Teaching Policy 2015](#)

- (c) The research supervisor is responsible for identifying, with the student, the most appropriate data-gathering and analysing techniques.
- (d) All supervisors must familiarise themselves with the [Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016](#), and use it to inform their discussions with the student and the department about the resources that may be available to support each particular candidature.
- (e) The research supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the facilities which are identified as necessary for the project to succeed are available.
- (f) If the research supervisor is not confident that the required facilities are or will be available they must raise this with the head of department, postgraduate coordinator or faculty.
- (g) The research supervisor may be expected to help their student develop a research budget, and advise them on how to acquire information about relevant research funding schemes.

(9) **During the candidature: supervisory teams and relationships**

- (a) The composition of a supervisory team will depend on faculty arrangements, the interdisciplinary nature of the research project, or other criteria as determined by the faculty, project, and as appropriate to the project, the candidate and the degree.

Note: See clause 9 of this policy for models for supervisory teams.

- (b) The head of department must approve all supervisory arrangements.
- (c) Members of a supervisory team should clarify the responsibilities of each person in the team, and coordinate advice and guidance appropriately. The research supervisor, or where there is more than one research supervisor, the co-ordinating supervisor, is responsible for advising the student of these arrangements.
- (d) All supervisors must:
 - (i) build and maintain 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 their students; and
 - (iv) fulfil their side of any agreement.
- (e) The research supervisor should be available to meet with their student at least once per fortnight during the probationary period.
- (f) After the completion of the probationary period, the research supervisor and their student are jointly responsible for negotiating ongoing and appropriate



contact arrangements. This may include face to face or electronic forms of communication.

- (g) Supervisory arrangements should be adapted according to the nature of the candidature (full-time or part-time) and make due allowance for approved absences by the student.
 - (h) If it is not possible for the supervisor and student to meet regularly, then the head of department should be consulted by either the student or the supervisor regarding appropriate alternative arrangements.
 - (i) The auxiliary supervisor should negotiate ongoing and appropriate contact arrangements with their student.
 - (j) Where a change in research direction occurs, appropriate supervisory arrangements should be negotiated by the student, supervisor, and head of department as required. Changes in supervision as a result of these negotiations must be approved by the head of department.
- (10) **During the candidature: administrative requirements**
- (a) The research supervisor must identify applicable degree and other administrative requirements and advise the student as necessary, although the student is responsible for ensuring that these requirements are met. This includes but is not limited to planned leave or time away, re-enrolment, and progress reviews.
 - (b) Where there are two supervisors with equal responsibility for the candidature, the co-ordinating supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all administrative requirements are met. This includes but is not limited to: re-enrolment advice, progress review reporting, and leave arrangements.
- (11) **During the candidature: absence of supervisor**
- (a) Supervision must be provided for the duration of a candidature. It is not acceptable for a student to have their candidature disrupted by supervisor absence.
 - (b) The research supervisor who is intending an absence of one month or more must ensure that the head of department is informed that appropriate alternative supervisory arrangements should be put in place.
 - (c) Alternate supervisory arrangements may comprise remote supervision (e.g. email, phone, video link), or increased direct supervision from another member of the supervisory team (e.g. the auxiliary supervisor).
 - (d) If the supervisor appointed to cover a research supervisor's absence has not previously been involved in the supervision of the student, it is the responsibility of the current research supervisor to inform the acting supervisor about the progress of the candidature.
 - (e) Where an absence is foreseeable, the supervisor must notify the head of department, the student and any other supervisor at least one month before the intended departure date so that appropriate supervisory arrangements can be put in place.
 - (f) If the supervisor is leaving the University, the head of department must notify the student as soon as is practical. In that event:
 - (i) the departing supervisor must discuss ongoing supervisory arrangements with the student and the head of department; and
 - (ii) the head of department may vary the supervision arrangements, including appointing a new research supervisor, as required.

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

- (a) The research supervisor should ensure that the student works within a planned framework which marks out the milestones expected to be completed at various stages.
- (b) Planning and time management should begin at an early stage and the research supervisor must encourage the student to make productive use of their time.
- (c) Where the supervisory team consists of a research supervisor and an external auxiliary supervisor, the research supervisor must ensure that the direction of the work is entirely under the control of the University and the student.
- (d) The research 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.
- (e) The supervisor must return written work to the student, with constructive feedback, in a timely fashion. Unless other time frames are agreed between the supervisor and the student:
 - (i) written work up to the equivalent in length to a chapter must be returned within one month; and
 - (ii) written work up to the equivalent in length to two chapters must be returned within two months.
- (f) The research supervisor must provide feedback on progress to the student and make progress reports to the faculty and any scholarship authority.
- (g) The research supervisor must monitor progress within the context of the overall research plan, ensuring that sufficient time is left for writing up the thesis and, if necessary, that the scope of the project is reduced to meet the time available.
- (h) The research supervisor must inform the student about inadequate progress or standards of work that are below that generally expected, identify problems and suggest ways of addressing them.
- (i) The research supervisor should work with the student to ensure that, by the end of the probationary period, the student's research topic and aims are clearly defined.
- (j) At the end of the probationary period, the research supervisor must determine whether the student is able to identify, access, organise and communicate knowledge in both written and oral English to a standard generally acceptable to the discipline. If necessary, the supervisor will direct the student to relevant courses available at the University.

Note: See [Learning and Teaching Policy 2015](#)

- (k) The research supervisor must advise the student in writing when progress is unsatisfactory and identify improvements which are necessary for continuation of the candidature.

Note: See [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research\) Rule 2011](#) for further requirements relating to progress and progress reviews.

(13) **During the candidature: duty of care**

- (a) The research supervisor must be aware of, and inform the student about, the range of support services which exist to help them while they are studying at the University, including University Health Services, Counselling and Psychological Services, other student support services, and SUPRA.

Note: see Student Support services website for a list of available services
http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/student_services/index.shtml

Note: Students can seek professional advice through the University Health Service (<http://sydney.edu.au/health-service/services/index.php>) and the Counselling and Psychological services (http://sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/).

- (b) Supervisors must recognise and respond to varying student circumstances such as illness or personal issues which may arise and be able to establish processes to manage these issues.
- (c) The research supervisor must encourage a student with health concerns to seek professional assistance and must be prepared to discuss the various candidature options available, such as sick leave, approved leave of absence or a move to part time study.
- (d) The research supervisor must ensure that the head of department and the dean are informed in writing if concerns regarding the candidature arise.
- (e) The research supervisor must be aware of the particular challenges that may be faced by an international student and be sensitive to the social, academic and intellectual transition issues that an international student moving to Australia for the first time may experience.
- (f) The supervisor should be aware of 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 from the International Office, international student advisors and SUPRA.

(14) **The research community**

- (a) The research supervisor must arrange for the student to participate in the work of the department, including attendance and presentation at departmental seminars.
- (b) The supervisor must encourage the student to extend their contacts within the academic community e.g. in the department, faculty, University and external to the University. This may include academic staff, postgraduate fellows, and other higher degree by research students.
- (c) The supervisor must 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.

(15) **Thesis content, writing and submission**

- (a) The research supervisor must give appropriate and timely advice on the requirements regarding content, style, presentation and production of theses.
- (b) As far as possible, the research supervisor should ensure that the work submitted is the student's own and that data are valid.



- (c) When required by the course resolutions of the degree, the research supervisor will:
 - (i) consider the suitability and availability of potential examiners; and
 - (ii) make recommendations to the head of department regarding potential examinersin good time before the thesis is submitted.
- (d) The research supervisor is responsible for certifying that a thesis is in a form suitable for examination at the time of submission.

(16) **Compliance requirements**

- (a) The research supervisor must ensure that students are aware 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](#).
- (b) The research supervisor must advise the student of the requirement to obtain ethics approval for studies on animal and human subjects (including the use of questionnaires) prior to undertaking research to which such requirements may apply.
- (c) As chief investigators on student ethics applications, the research supervisor is responsible for submission of the application, including review of content and accuracy.

Note: Ethics approval cannot be provided retrospectively.
- (d) The research supervisor must advise the student about academic honesty, and in particular the avoidance of plagiarism.
- (e) The research supervisor must ensure that the student is aware of their rights with respect to intellectual property and encourage, where appropriate, the exploitation of such intellectual property through the University. The student may be encouraged to seek independent advice regarding their intellectual property.

Note: See [Intellectual Property Policy 2016](#)
- (f) The supervisor must reach agreement with the student concerning authorship of publications and acknowledgement of contributions during and after the candidature. It is recommended that, wherever necessary, the agreement be re-evaluated just prior to publication in case of any significant shifts to workload allocations and intellectual input since the agreement was initially made.

Note: See [Research Code of Conduct 2013](#).
- (g) There should be open and mutual recognition of the student's and the supervisor's contributions on all published works arising from the project.
- (h) A research supervisor must ensure that student is aware of all applicable requirements for retention of data, and requirements for members of staff to complete a statement of authorship for each paper submitted for publication.



- (i) The supervisor must ensure that safe working practices are developed and maintained at all times. This includes:
 - (i) ensuring that the student is aware of the University's work and health safety requirements; and
 - (ii) recommending that the student participates in appropriate work health and safety training.

Note: See [Work Health and Safety Policy 2012](#).

- (j) Supervisors must be aware of, and abide by, their obligations under the *Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 (Cth)*.

Note: As at the date of this policy, Commonwealth legislation is available at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Home>

- (k) The research supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the student is aware that a copy of their thesis will be lodged with the University Librarian, and should guide the writing of the thesis to ensure that they fulfil the necessary requirements.

Note: See [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research Rule\) 2011](#).

15 Responsibilities of students

- (1) It is the responsibility of students to maintain a professional relationship at all times with supervisors and other University staff.

- (2) **At the commencement of the candidature**

- (a) Students 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](#)

- (b) Students must ensure that they are correctly enrolled according to faculty and University requirements prior to commencing their degree program and throughout their candidature.
 - (c) Students must comply with the requirements of any scholarship, external funding, sponsorship or other monetary provisions.
 - (d) Students should take part in University or faculty or department orientation programs, and must take part in induction programs and workshops if directed by the supervisor, faculty or department. This may include attendance at workshops on safety and health procedures.

Note: See also [Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016](#)

- (e) Students should familiarise themselves with the qualities and skills the University expects its graduates to have and must, with the assistance of their supervisors, prepare a plan for future skill acquisition as they proceed through their degree program. This will include undertaking a research training needs analysis at the beginning of, and during, their candidature, to identify specific areas in which development is required.

Note: See [Learning and Teaching Policy 2015](#)

- (f) Students must undertake any coursework or other activities required by the University.



- (g) Students must familiarise themselves with the [Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016](#), to inform their discussions with their supervisors, department, faculty and the University about the resources that may be available to support their candidature.
 - (h) Students may be expected to develop a research budget in consultation with their supervisors, and to seek information about relevant research funding schemes.
- (3) **During the candidature**
- (a) Students are responsible for meeting the administrative requirements of their candidature. This includes but is not limited to planned leave, time away and re-enrolment.
 - (b) Students must ensure that all administrative requirements of the faculty and the University, such as re-enrolment and progress reviews are met.
 - (c) 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.
 - (d) Students should make every effort to build and maintain satisfactory supervisory relationships. This includes:
 - (i) establishing with their supervisors agreed methods of working;
 - (ii) fulfilling their side of any agreement; and
 - (iii) meeting regularly with their supervisors. In the probationary period of their candidature this should be at least fortnightly. As the candidature progresses different contact arrangements may be negotiated as appropriate.
 - (e) Students must devote sufficient time to their research. Full time candidature requires at least the same time commitment as would full time professional employment in Australia.
 - (f) Students should plan and execute the project within the time limits defined, taking into account the nature of the program (full time or part-time) and the milestones agreed with supervisors.
 - (g) Students are expected to attend as agreed for consultation and provide evidence of progress made.
- (4) **The research community**
- (a) Students should be aware of opportunities for meeting other researchers in the field and attend internal and external seminars, meetings and conferences.
 - (b) Students should participate in the opportunities offered by the department to be part of that intellectual community. This includes taking part in activities of the faculty or department such as presentation of research at University seminars and conferences.
- (5) **Compliance requirements**
- (a) Students must be aware 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](#).
 - (b) Students must familiarise themselves with the resolutions governing the degree course in which they are enrolled.



- (c) 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).
- (d) Ethics approval must be applied for prior to the commencement of the project and cannot be provided retrospectively.
- (e) Students must ensure that they avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism.
- (f) Students must familiarise themselves with the requirements of the [Research Code of Conduct 2013](#).
 - (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, the student should approach the postgraduate co-ordinator or associate dean for the faculty.
- (g) Students should read 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.
- (h) Students must at all times adopt safe working practices relevant to the field of research and comply with the University's work health and requirements.
- (i) Students must attend any workshops on safety and health procedures required by the faculty or department in which the student is undertaking research.

Note: See [Work Health and Safety Policy 2012](#)

(6) **Grievances**

- (a) 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 during the progress review process or at any other time.
- (b) Students are encouraged to inform supervisors or postgraduate co-ordinators about difficulties being experienced as soon as possible.
- (c) In the first instance, locally negotiated solutions should be sought before recourse to formal processes.
- (d) Students must be aware of, and implement as required, the University's grievance resolution policies and procedures, including:
 - (i) [Research Code of Conduct 2013](#);
 - (ii) [Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy 2015](#);
 - (iii) [Reporting Wrongdoing Policy 2012](#);
 - (iv) [Resolution of Complaints Policy 2015](#).
- (e) Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the mechanisms available for helping with supervisor-student difficulties and to take advantage of them if necessary.
- (f) Students may seek independent advice or representation, including from the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA).

16 Responsibilities of departments

- (1) Departmental responsibilities for higher degree by research students will be discharged by the head of department.
- (2) Departments are responsible for:
 - (a) determining appropriate supervisory arrangements for each student based on skills, experience, workload, projected availability and other requirements appropriate to the candidate, degree and research project;
 - (b) varying supervisory arrangements as required;
 - (c) requiring, when necessary, all supervisors to participate in University supervision development courses and workshops;
 - (d) explaining their respective roles to all members of a supervisory team;
 - (e) making recommendations to the dean for approval of proposed increases in the supervisory workload of research supervisors;
 - (i) A normal supervisory workload is the equivalent of supervising five full time higher degree by research students.
 - (ii) The dean is responsible for approving all such arrangements.
 - (f) determining appropriate alternative supervision arrangements if a research supervisor is absent for one month or more, and is unable to adequately supervise their students remotely;
 - (g) 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;
 - (h) clearly defining the duties and responsibilities of postgraduate co-ordinators providing adequate resources to assist in the performance of those duties and properly recognising the workload these duties entail;
 - (i) determining coursework or alternative development activities required by individual students, after consultation with the relevant research supervisors and consideration of the applicable research training needs analysis;
 - (j) ensuring that review procedures, including progress reviews, are carried out in accordance with University policies and procedures;
 - (k) ensuring that necessary approvals for conditions of candidatures are obtained from the faculty, and that scholarship reporting requirements are met;
 - (l) determining, in consultation with the research supervisors, the facilities likely to be required for any particular candidature, and ascertaining their availability;
 - (m) advising applicants 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;
 - (n) reporting to the dean or associate dean if the required facilities are not available;
 - (o) encouraging interaction and the development of beneficial intellectual relationships amongst students and staff and encouraging students to participate in appropriate departmental or faculty activities;
 - (p) providing students with the names of individuals to whom they can turn to for advice;

- (q) the proper and expeditious conduct of the examination process, including the timely selection of appropriate examiners in accordance with University policies and procedures; and
- (r) informing students and supervisors of the University's policies and procedures with respect to ethics, intellectual property, academic dishonesty and plagiarism, research integrity, and grievance procedures.

17 Responsibilities of faculties

- (1) Faculty responsibilities for higher degree by research students will be discharged by the relevant dean or associate dean.
- (2) Faculties are responsible for:
 - (a) ensuring that applicants for admission to candidature meet the minimum requirements for admission to the relevant degree and the proposed course of study;
 - (b) ensuring that all supervisors in their faculty are included in the Supervisor Register;
 - (c) establishing and explaining appropriate review mechanisms, including the progress reviews, within departments;
 - (d) explaining students' rights and obligations;
 - (e) providing necessary resources in accordance with the [Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016](#), and discussing the availability of necessary resources, appropriate to the candidature, with students and their supervisors as required;
 - (f) monitoring students during their candidature through reports from departments, and intervening where necessary;
 - (g) providing students with the names of individuals to whom they can turn to for advice;
 - (h) ensuring that examiners recommended are appropriately qualified and that the examination process maintains the standards required for the degree concerned; and
 - (i) lodging of an awarded thesis to the University Library. This is to ensure that the Library receives the properly awarded thesis and an assurance that all compliance requirements under the [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research Rule\) 2011](#) have been met.

18 Responsibilities of the University

- (1) The University will ensure that higher degree by research students are provided with an acceptable level of access to physical space and other facilities, including library facilities, and that departments are required to advise applicants about the facilities that are available.
- (2) The University is responsible for maintaining the Supervisor Register and providing:
 - (a) support services in areas such as learning assistance;
 - (b) development activities for supervisors of postgraduate students;

- (c) effective reporting and review mechanisms throughout the candidature;
- (d) procedures which allow students to seek assistance in the resolving difficulties; and
- (e) appropriate appeal mechanisms.

19 Rescissions

This policy replaces the *Code of Practice for Supervision of Postgraduate Research Students*, the *Postgraduate Research Higher Degree Training Supervision at the University of Sydney Policy*, and the *Probationary candidature and English expression policy*, all of which are rescinded as from the effective date of this policy.

NOTES

Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2012

Date adopted:	22 February 2013
Date commenced:	22 February 2013
Date amended:	2 December 2015, commencing 1 January 2016 17 August 2016 (administrative amendments) 30 August 2016 (administrative amendments) 1 May 2017, commencing 23 May 2017 5 June 2017 (administrative amendments)
Administrator:	Director, Graduate Research
Review date:	20 February 2018
Related documents:	Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011 (Cth) Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 (Cth) University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research) Rule 2011 Intellectual Property Policy 2016 Learning and Teaching Policy 2015 Academic Planning and Development Guidelines Code of Conduct for Students Research Code of Conduct 2013 Code of Conduct - Staff and Affiliates Essential Resources for Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2016

Work Health and Safety Policy 2016

Performance Planning and Development Policy 2012

Enterprise Agreement 2013-2017

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

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
Various clauses	Amendments throughout the policy to align it with the new Progress Planning and Review for HDR Students Policy, recognise the change in administrative processes from the Graduate Studies Office to the HDR Administration Centre, and to reflect agreed amendments to the processes associated with the Supervisor Register.	1 January 2016
Various	Updated references and hyperlinks to other documents	1 January 2016
Various	Updated references and hyperlinks to other documents	17 August 2016
Various	Updated references to ITL and hyperlinks to other documents	30 August 2016
4	Statement of intent updated to reflect health, safety and well being	23 May 2017
6(1)	Definitions updated to reflect organisational design	23 May 2017
12(5)	Changed responsibility for approving entry onto supervisor register	23 May 2017
Notes	Change of Administrator	23 May 2017
6	Updated references to <i>University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Academic Functions) Rule 2016</i> and <i>University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016</i>	5 June 2017
11(1)	Administrative amendment: insertion of reference to clause 10(2)	5 June 2017