

# THESIS AND EXAMINATION OF HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH PROCEDURES 2020

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## 1 Purpose and application

- (1) These procedures are to give effect to the [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015](#) (“the policy”).
- (2) These procedures apply to staff, students, affiliates and any other persons involved in research higher degree theses and examination.

## 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(1) of the policy

<b>copy-editing and proof reading</b>	means identifying errors in, and correcting, the presentation of the text so as to conform with standard usage and conventions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• spelling</li><li>• quotations</li><li>• use of italics</li><li>• lists</li><li>• word usage</li><li>• punctuation</li><li>• graphs</li><li>• charts</li><li>• citations</li><li>• references</li><li>• heading hierarchies</li><li>• symbols and equations</li><li>• headers and footers</li><li>• style of numbers</li></ul>
<b>editor</b>	means any person providing paid or unpaid assistance to students in the preparation of the thesis. This also includes University and faculty writing advisors. Editors are not required to be accredited by the University or any professional organisation.
<b>local availability</b>	means, in relation to a thesis lodged with the University library, the thesis will be able to accessed, viewed, re-used and cited by current staff and students of the University.
<b>open access</b>	means, in relation to a thesis lodged with the University library, the thesis will be available on unrestricted and free online access.
<b>Research Education Candidature System (RECS)</b>	means the software system provided by the University to support higher degree by research students with the management of research education candidature.

## **PART 1 – ADMINISTRATION OF EXAMINATIONS**

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### **4 Administration of examinations**

- (1) Examinations will be managed and administered through RECS, except for.
  - (a) venue booking;
  - (b) scheduling; or
  - (c) remitting with payment of examiner honoraria.

## PART 2 – PROOF-READING AND EDITING OF THESES

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### 5 Proof-reading and editing of theses

- (1) Students are permitted to use editors in preparing their thesis for submission.  
**Note:** See clause 8(2)(c)(ii) of the policy
- (2) Before using an editor, a student must:
  - (a) discuss the use of an editor with their lead supervisor;
  - (b) provide the editor with a copy of these procedures; and
  - (c) require that their editor is aware of and abides by the standards set out in the [Australian Standards for Editing Practice \(ASEP\) 2013](#).  
**Note:** As at the date of these procedures the Australian Standards for Editing Practice (ASEP) 2013 can be found at the website of the [Institute of Professional Editors Limited](#).
- (3) An editor may only be used for:
  - (a) copy-editing and proofreading; and
  - (b) providing advice about:
    - (i) matters of structure (the need to structure and reword, deletions, additions);
    - (ii) conventions of grammar and syntax;
    - (iii) using clear language;
    - (iv) logical connections between phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections;
    - (v) voice and tone; and
    - (vi) avoiding ambiguity, repetition and verbosity.
- (4) When an editor has been used:
  - (a) the name of the editor and a brief description of the service rendered must be printed as part of the list of acknowledgements or other prefatory matter near the front of the work when it is presented for examination; and
  - (b) if the editor's current or former area of academic specialisation is similar to that of the student, this must also be stated.

## PART 3 – THESIS EXAMINATION PROCESS AND OUTCOME

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### 6 Notice of intention to submit

- (1) The student must submit their notice of intention to submit in RECS and should do so at least three months prior to the intended submission date.
- (2) If a student elects to be examined in emergency conditions, the notice of submission must be forwarded to the relevant Associate Dean for consideration of whether the criteria in subclause 9A of the policy have been met.

## 7 Thesis examination progress

- (1) RECS will inform students and supervisors about the progress of the examination by displaying the current stage of the examination and the date on which the examination entered that stage.
- (2) Stages include:
  - (a) examiners nominated;
  - (b) examiners appointed;
  - (c) thesis successfully submitted for examination;
  - (d) thesis checked for integrity and acceptability;
  - (e) thesis sent to examiners;
  - (f) oral examination scheduled, if required;
  - (g) assigned to exhibition, if required;
  - (h) all examiners have reported back;
  - (i) oral or exhibition examinations have been completed;
  - (j) examination reports are with the relevant committee for decision.

## 8 Submission checks

- (1) On receipt of a thesis submitted for examination, the administrative unit responsible for candidature management processes will apply similarity detection software.
- (2) If the similarity detection software results indicate possible inappropriate academic practice, code breach, or research misconduct, the administrative units will arrange for an academic staff member with appropriate expertise in the subject matter of the thesis to review the results and determine if the matter should be further investigated.
- (3) Any possible inappropriate academic practice, code breach or research misconduct will be managed in accordance with the [Academic Integrity Procedures 2022](#).
- (4) The administrative unit may only forward a thesis to examiners once they are satisfied that:
  - (a) it is compliant with the [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015](#); and
  - (b) there is no detected inappropriate academic practice, code breach or research misconduct.

## 9 Proposing examiners

- (1) The lead supervisor should consult potential examiners before proposing them to confirm that:
  - (a) they are willing and able to act within the timeframe expected; and
  - (b) they agree to their names and comments being released to the student.

**Note:** In exceptional circumstances this information may be withheld. See clause 21 of these procedures.



- (2) The lead supervisor must:
  - (a) propose examiners using RECS;
  - (b) submit the proposal using RECS, within four weeks of the earlier of:
    - (i) the submission of the student's intention to submit; or
    - (ii) the submission of thesis for examination.
- (3) If the lead supervisor has not proposed examiners within two weeks of the date required in subclause 9(2), the Associate Dean must nominate examiners consistently with these procedures.
- (4) The lead supervisor (or, if appropriate, the Associate Dean) must provide the following for each proposed examiner:
  - (a) whether they are currently active in research;
  - (b) their previous experience as an examiner;
  - (c) their relevant expertise;
  - (d) the international standing of the examiner's research
  - (e) whether they have agreed to act as examiner;
  - (f) whether they are able to conduct an oral examination;
  - (g) whether they are able to conduct an exhibition examination;
  - (h) whether they are able to examine the thesis in electronic form;
  - (i) the language, if not English, in which they would submit their report; and
  - (j) a conflict of interests declaration.

**Note:** See [Declaration of external interests](#)
- (5) The lead supervisor must provide written justification if proposing any of the following:
  - (a) an individual who does not come from a university or degree-granting institution;
  - (b) an emeritus or honorary professor, or other retired academic; or
  - (c) an individual with no previous experience examining research higher degree theses; or
  - (d) an individual with a conflict of interests.
- (6) Where appropriate, such written justification should include:
  - (a) information regarding research activity in the past 5 years; and
  - (b) how any conflicts of interest could be effectively and appropriately managed.

## 10 Commissioning examiners

- (1) The administrative unit will commission approved examiners by sending each examiner:
  - (a) access to the thesis in the requested format;
  - (b) a copy of the policy, these procedures and all applicable guidelines;
  - (c) the resolutions applicable to any faculty-based higher degree by research, as appropriate;

- (d) proposed arrangements for an oral examination, if applicable;
- (e) proposed arrangements for an exhibition examination, if applicable;
- (f) any specific conditions relating to the examination process; and
- (g) the name and contact details of the relevant administrative staff member for communication regarding the process.

## **11 Examiners' reports on the thesis**

- (1) Examiners must complete their reports in RECS within six weeks of the despatch of the thesis.
- (2) For examinations undertaken in the usual course each examiner's report must include a statement as to whether the examiner is satisfied that the thesis meets the criteria prescribed in clause 8 of the policy.
- (2A) For examinations undertaken in emergency conditions, each examiner's report must include a statement as to whether the examiner is satisfied that:
  - (a) the thesis meets the criteria prescribed in clause 8A of the policy; and
  - (b) the student has demonstrated the graduate qualities.
- (3) Each examiner must include a recommendation about the outcome of the award consistent with clause 23 of the policy.
- (4) Each examiner's report must specify:
  - (a) the grounds on which their recommendation is based; and
  - (b) the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis and the particular contributions made by the student; and
  - (c) a detailed list of corrections required; or
  - (d) the basis for requiring the student to revise and resubmit; or
  - (e) the basis for non-award.
- (5) Examiners who are submitting a report in a language other than English must provide their recommendation and a summary of their report in English.
- (6) Examiners may include suggestions for the next steps in research or improvements for publication that are not essential for the award of the degree.

## **12 Monitoring examiners' reports**

- (1) When an examiner submits a report, the administrative unit will:
  - (a) acknowledge receipt of the report; and
  - (b) arrange for payment of the appropriate honoraria to external examiners.
- (2) If an examiner has not returned the report within four weeks, the administrative unit will contact the examiner with a reminder of the due date.
- (3) If an examiner has not returned a report within six weeks, the administrative unit will make contact to:
  - (a) remind the examiner of the conditions of examination; and
  - (b) ask when the report can be expected.

- (4) If an examiner has not returned a report within ten weeks, the administrative unit will inform the examiner that if the report is not received within a further two weeks:
  - (a) it will not be accepted;
  - (b) if an external examiner, the examiner will not be eligible for payment of an honorarium; and
  - (c) a replacement examiner will be appointed.

### **13 Replacing examiners**

- (1) If an examiner's report is not received within the further two week period referred to in subclause 12(4):
  - (a) the lead supervisor will propose a replacement examiner; and
  - (b) the faculty will appoint a replacement examiner based on this recommendation.
- (2) If an additional or reserve examiner has already been approved then this person may be used as a replacement examiner.
- (3) If an additional examiner has not already been approved, one must be proposed, approved and commissioned consistently with clauses 9 and 10 of these procedures.
- (4) If the original examiner returns a report after a replacement examiner has been commissioned:
  - (a) the original examiner's report will not form part of the body of evidence considered in awarding the degree;
  - (b) the original examiner will be informed that no further information is required; and
  - (c) no honorarium will be made.

### **14 Considering examiners' reports**

- (1) The administrative unit will release the examiners' reports to the lead supervisor and chair of examination after all examiners' reports have been received.
  - (a) The relevant Associate Dean or Chair of the faculty committee may release reports to the lead supervisor and chair of examination at an earlier date in exceptional circumstances.
- (2) Once all the examiners' reports have been received, the chair of examination:
  - (a) will consider the reports; and
  - (b) should consult the lead supervisor, head of school or postgraduate coordinator, any of whom may provide a written report.
- (3) The chair of examination will then provide a report and make a recommendation to the relevant committee about the outcome of the examination.
  - (a) This report must be completed no less than two weeks after receipt of the examiners' reports and must include:
    - (i) details of the nature and extent of any consultation; and
    - (ii) a copy of any written report received.

- (4) The chair of examination's report must specifically refer to all concerns expressed by the examiners:
  - (a) specifying which concerns must be addressed and which need not be addressed; and
  - (b) including instructions to the student where the recommendation is:
    - (i) award with corrections;
    - (ii) non-award with provision to revise and resubmit; or
    - (iii) non-award with the option to award another degree, where corrections are required.
- (5) After considering the examiners' reports and the chair of examination's recommendation, the relevant committee will determine whether:
  - (a) there is sufficient information to determine the outcome of examination consistently with clause 23 of the policy;  
or
  - (b) further information is required, such as:
    - (i) consulting with the student (which must be done in writing);
    - (ii) requesting additional information from the lead supervisor, chair of examination, Associate Dean, head of school or postgraduate coordinator;
    - (iii) where the relevant committee is the faculty committee, consulting the HDR Examinations Subcommittee; or
    - (iv) obtaining any further information deemed necessary;
  - (c) further action is required, such as:
    - (i) appointing an additional examiner; or
    - (ii) appointing an examiner-as-assessor;
  - (d) there is a need to refer the matter for further investigation, for example in the relation to possible plagiarism or research misconduct.

**Note:** See also clauses 15 and 16 of these procedures

- (6) If the relevant committee is unable to form an intention in respect of an award or non-award, it must appoint an examiner-as-assessor as provided in clause 19 of the policy.
- (7) When it considers that it has sufficient information to do so, the relevant committee will make an initial decision on the outcome of examination consistently with clause 23 of the policy.
- (8) If the initial decision is to award the degree, whether without conditions or with corrections, the relevant committee will follow the steps prescribed in clause 17 of these procedures.
- (9) If the initial decision is not to award (whether with or without an option to revise and resubmit or to award to another degree) the relevant committee must notify the student in writing of the decision, and:
  - (a) provide the student with
    - (i) de-identified copies of the examiners' reports;
    - (ii) the chair of examination's recommendation; and



- (iii) any written supervisor reports; and
  - (b) inform the student that they have:
    - (i) two weeks from the date of notification to state their intention to reply; and
    - (ii) if the student has stated an intention to reply, six weeks from the date of notification to provide written comments to the relevant committee.
- (10) If the student provides comments within the specified time, the relevant committee will:
  - (a) further consider the examiners' reports, the chair of examination's report, and any comments provided by:
    - (i) the student;
    - (ii) the supervisor; and
    - (iii) the head of school or postgraduate co-ordinator;
  - and
  - (b) confirm or revise its initial decision on the outcome of examination. The relevant committee will follow, as appropriate to the decision, the steps prescribed in clauses 17, 18, 19, and 20 of these procedures.

## 15 Additional examiner

- (1) Additional examiners should be proposed and commissioned consistently with clauses 9 and 10 of these procedures.
- (2) These procedures apply to the provision and consideration of an additional examiner's report in the same way as for an original examiner's report.

## 16 Examiner-as-assessor

- (1) An examiner-as-assessor must complete an initial independent examination of the thesis based on the same criteria as all examiners.
  - (a) For exhibition examinations, this will include a review of a documentary recording.

**Note:** See subclauses 8(5)(a) and 13(3) of the policy
- (2) Having completed the initial examination of the thesis, the examiner-as-assessor must then consider:
  - (a) de-identified copies of all examiners' reports;
  - (b) comments from the chair of examination;
  - (c) comments from the supervisor, if received;
  - (d) comments from the student, if received;and assess the validity of the expressed concerns with the work under examination.

- (3) The examiner-as-assessor must provide a written report containing:
  - (a) an examiner's report, including a recommendation about the outcome of the examination; and
  - (b) response to the comments of the other parties.
- (4) The chair of examination will consider the report of the examiner-as-assessor and provide a further report, including a recommendation regarding the outcome of the examination, to the relevant committee.
- (5) The relevant committee will then consider the examiner-as-assessor's report and the chair of examination's report in the manner required by clause 11 of these procedures.

## **17 Outcome of examination: award without conditions or with corrections**

- (1) If the outcome of an examination is that the degree be awarded without conditions, the relevant committee must:
  - (a) set the latest date by which the final version of the thesis must be lodged with the University. The latest date will normally be three months from the date of notification of outcome of examination; and
  - (b) notify the student in writing.
- (2) If the outcome of an examination is that the degree be awarded subject to corrections, the relevant committee must:
  - (a) detail the corrections required to be made to the final version of the thesis;
  - (b) set the latest date by which the final version of the thesis, including the corrections, must be lodged with the University.
    - (i) The latest date should be consistent with the extent of corrections required and usually not more than three months from the date of notification of outcome of examination; and
  - (c) notify the student in writing.
- (3) When the corrected version is provided, the chair of examination will review the final version of the thesis and either:
  - (a) verify that the required corrections have been addressed to their satisfaction; or
  - (b) notify the student in writing of the further corrections required to be made and set the latest date by which the final version of the thesis must be lodged with the University.
- (4) Where the student does not lodge the final version of the thesis by the set date, the Associate Dean must either:
  - (a) set a new latest date by which the final version must be lodged and notify the student in writing; or
  - (b) determine the result to be 'not awarded'.

## **18 Outcome of examination: non-award with revision and re-examination**

- (1) If the outcome of an examination is that the degree not be awarded, but the student be permitted to revise and resubmit the thesis for re-examination, the relevant committee must:
  - (a) specify the reasons for non-award;
  - (b) prescribe a maximum period of further candidature, normally two to four research periods;
  - (c) set the latest date for the student to resubmit their thesis for examination;
  - (d) set the date by which the student must re-enrol or apply for suspension of candidature consistently with subclauses 18(2) and 18(3);
  - (e) detail the additional work or changes required;
  - (f) prescribe any other conditions that must be met by the student; and
  - (g) notify the student in writing within one week of the decision being made.
- (2) The student must re-enrol for the degree whilst the thesis is being revised.
- (3) The student must re-enrol or apply for a suspension of candidature no later than census date of the next research period following the notification of permission to revise and resubmit.
  - (a) If the student does not do so, the Associate Dean must determine the result to be 'not awarded'.
- (4) The original examiners should be invited to re-examine the thesis if they are available and willing to do so unless, in the opinion of the relevant committee:
  - (a) they have previously required modifications to the thesis that are considered unnecessary or undesirable; or
  - (b) there are academic reasons for not recommissioning any or all of the original examiners.
- (5) The examination of a revised and resubmitted thesis is a new examination of the whole thesis, which must be carried out in accordance with the policy and these procedures.
- (6) The HDR Examinations Subcommittee may prescribe a form for presentation of reports by examiners of a revised and resubmitted thesis and examiners must use any such form.
- (7) The examination of a thesis resubmitted after a period of revision can be done in oral or thesis-only mode. Exhibition mode examinations are unavailable.
  - (a) The documentary record of the exhibition or performance must be included in a resubmission of a thesis previously examined in exhibition mode.
- (8) No further opportunity to revise and resubmit the thesis is permitted as an outcome of the new examination.

## 19 Outcome of examination: non-award with option to award another degree

If the outcome of an examination is that the degree not be awarded, but with the option to award another degree, the relevant committee must:

- (a) specify the reasons for non-award;
- (b) specify the other degree for which the student is eligible which may be awarded instead;
- (c) detail any corrections required to be made to the final version of the thesis to the satisfaction of the chair of examination as per the process in subclauses 17(2), (3) and (4) of these procedures;
- (d) set the latest date by which the final version of the thesis, including the corrections, must be lodged with the University. The latest date will normally be three months from the date of notification of outcome of examination; and
- (e) notify the student in writing within one week of the decision being made.

## 20 Outcome of examination: non-award

If the outcome of an examination is that the degree not be awarded, the relevant committee must:

- (a) specify the reasons for non-award; and
- (b) notify the student in writing within one week of the decision being made.

## 21 Communication with the student during examination process

- (1) Any consultation with the student required under the policy or these procedures must be undertaken in writing and appropriately recorded.

**Note:** See [Recordkeeping Policy 2017](#)

- (2) Unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Associate Dean determines otherwise, the administrative unit should provide the student with de-identified examiners reports:
  - (a) as part of any consultation process with the student; and
  - (b) at the notification of the result of the examination.
- (3) Unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Associate Dean determine otherwise, the administrative unit will provide the student with the names of the examiners at the conclusion of the examination process.

## **PART 4 – ORAL AND EXHIBITION EXAMINATIONS**

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### **22 Requesting an oral or an exhibition examination**

- (1) Oral examinations may be requested by:
  - (a) the student, at the notification of intention to submit, after discussion with the lead supervisor; or
  - (b) a lead supervisor when proposing examiners.
- (2) Proposed examiners must have agreed to an oral examination.
- (3) Prior to commissioning an in-person oral examination, the postgraduate coordinator must have:
  - (a) agreed to financial support for the examiner's travel and accommodation; and
  - (b) have secured the relevant budget-holder's approval for expenditure of funds.
- (4) Proposed examiners must have agreed to the way in which the oral examination is to be held, such as in-person, or through electronic conferencing.

### **23 Conduct of oral examinations generally**

- (1) If an oral examination is to be held the chair of examination will act as convenor of the oral examination, noting that the chair of examination is not an examiner.
- (2) Supervisors must not be present in the oral examination.
- (3) All parties to an oral examination must participate in person, or by telephone, video, web or teleconference.
- (4) The student may elect to have a support person attend the oral examination. In this case, the support person must also participate in person, or by telephone, video, web or teleconference. In-person participation is preferable.
- (5) The chair of examination will set the date of the oral examination.
  - (a) Where an oral examination is planned from the outset of the examination process, this date should be when the thesis is ready to be sent to examiners and no more than six weeks from despatch of the thesis to examiners.
- (6) Each examiner will be sent the thesis or, in the case of an exhibition mode examination, the written component of the thesis, as soon as possible after the date of submission.
- (7) Each examiner must submit an interim report at least seven days prior to the scheduled date for the oral examination, including interim recommendations for the outcome.
  - (a) These recommendations must not be passed on to the student.



- (8) This interim report must contain:
  - (a) interim recommendations for the outcomes;
  - (b) a summary of key strengths and weaknesses of the work presented in the thesis;
  - (c) indicative questions that may be asked of the student to help clarify issues raised by the summary of strengths and weaknesses.
- (9) If one or more examiners do not submit their interim reports by the due date, the administrative unit must:
  - (a) contact them to determine whether an interim report will be received before the scheduled date for the oral examination; and
  - (b) advise the chair of examination of the new due date, or if the report is not going to be received.
- (10) The chair of examination will determine whether:
  - (a) the oral examination will proceed on the scheduled date, with or without all of the interim reports; or
  - (b) the oral examination should be re-scheduled; and
  - (c) will notify the student of the decision in writing.
- (11) The chair of examination will:
  - (a) review the interim reports; and
  - (b) release them to the lead supervisor no less than three days before the scheduled date of the oral examination.
- (12) The lead supervisor must discuss the interim reports with the student no less than two days before the scheduled date of the oral examination.
- (13) Unless local provisions prescribe otherwise, oral examinations should not exceed six hours duration.
- (14) If one or more examiners recommend that the thesis is not sufficiently prepared for an oral examination, then:
  - (a) each examiner making such a recommendation must give:
    - (i) reasons for this recommendation; and
    - (ii) guidance for the student on remediation.
  - (b) the chair of examination must advise the relevant committee whether or not the oral examination should proceed, with written reasons; and
  - (c) the relevant committee must decide whether to proceed with the oral examination or cancel.
- (15) An oral examination cancelled on the basis of subclause 23(14) will be treated as a decision not to award with an option to revise and resubmit, in accordance with clause 18 of these procedures.
- (16) If the examined thesis was submitted in response to a previous revise and resubmit decision, the relevant committee will determine the outcome which must be either:
  - (a) non-award with option to award another degree, as provided in clause 18 of these procedures; or
  - (b) non-award as provided in clause 20 of these procedures.



- (17) An oral examination of a thesis which includes a creative or artistic component must:
- (a) test the comprehension of the student of the field of study described by the thesis and presented in the creative or artistic component;
  - (b) clarify points either of principle or of detail in the creative or artistic component; and
  - (c) assess the contribution made by the student to the content and presentation of the creative or artistic component and the written component of the thesis.
- (18) The oral examination will be conducted in three phases:
- (a) initial consensus, where the examiners will meet, discuss their interim recommendations and agree questions to be asked;
  - (b) examination phase where the examiners discuss the thesis with the student, noting that the chair is not an examiner, and that student may have a support person such as a colleague, friend, family member or student representative present;
    - (i) A support person may discuss or consult with the student during the examination;
    - (ii) A support person has no right to be heard or contribute to examination discussions, except with the consent of the chair of examination.
  - (c) final consensus, where the examiners agree a recommended outcome and necessary actions to be completed by the student. Only the chair of examination and the examiners may be present at this discussion.
    - (i) if a consensus has been reached, the student may be invited back to the meeting; and
    - (ii) informed of the recommendation being made.
  - (d) The chair of examination must update the examination record in RECS as to whether consensus was reached, no more than 24 hours after the oral examination of exhibition has been concluded.
- (19) The chair of examination must prepare a single report containing a consensus recommendation about the outcome and must specify:
- (a) the recommended outcome of the examination, consistent with clause 23 of the policy;
  - (b) the process undertaken by the conduct of the oral examination;
  - (c) the information provided to the candidate; and
  - (d) recommendations for any corrections or other conditions necessary for an award.
- (20) The oral examination report will be considered together with, and in the same manner as, the examiners' reports.

**Note:** See clause 14 of these procedures

- (21) If the examiners fail to reach consensus:
- (a) each examiner must confirm or revise their interim reports within two weeks of the private meeting; and
  - (b) the examiners' final reports and the chair of examination's report must then be considered in the same manner as examiners' reports in a thesis-only examination.

**Note:** See clause 21 of the policy and clause 14 of these procedures

## **24 Exhibition examinations**

- (1) An exhibition examination is one where a physical installation, a gallery display or an in-person performance is part of the thesis under examination.
- (2) Supervisors must not be present during an exhibition examination.
- (3) An exhibition examination consists of two phases:
  - (a) a gallery phase where the student presents their art work to the examiners and may discuss the research with examiners, mediated by the convenor; and
  - (b) an oral examination phase as described in clause 22.
- (4) An exhibition examination may also include any of:
  - (a) a contextualisation of the student's work, where the student presents the development of the thesis to the examination panel;
  - (b) discussion of the creative or artistic component of the thesis at the site of the exhibition with the student; or
  - (c) discussion of the written component and related matters with the student.

## **25 Role of the chair of examination in an oral examination**

The chair of examination is a representative of the faculty and must:

- (a) inform the examiners and the student of the administrative arrangements for holding the oral examination;
- (b) discuss with the student, prior to the examination, the nature of an oral examination, noting that students are expected to prepare their own responses;
- (c) inform the student of the main issues that may be raised by the examiners, noting that the examiners have the right to raise additional questions;
- (d) assure the student that the examination is intended to be constructive and helpful;
- (e) to explain the proceedings to the examiners and to the student;
- (f) chair the oral examination of the thesis, and any subsequent meeting of examiners;
- (g) provide a report to the relevant committee; and
- (h) inform the student about the examiners recommendations.

## PART 5 – JOINT PHD DEGREES

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### 26 Examination of joint PhD degrees

- (1) Where the examination of a joint PhD is to be conducted by the partner institution:
  - (a) The faculty must notify the HDR Examinations Subcommittee when the examination commences. This notification must include:
    - (i) confirmation that the examination meets the conditions of the individual student agreement; and
    - (ii) the names and affiliations of all the examiners.
  - (b) The faculty must notify the HDR Examinations Subcommittee of the completion of the examination. This notification must include:
    - (i) a summary of the examination process;
    - (ii) a statement of the outcome of the award from the partner institution; and
    - (iii) copies of the examiners reports and English summaries, where the language of the reports is in a language other than English

**Note:** see subclause 11(5) of these procedures.
- (2) The HDR Examinations Subcommittee will determine the outcome of the examination in accordance with the policy, based on the notification from the partner institution.
- (3) Where the examination of a joint PhD is to be conducted by the University of Sydney, the relevant committee will be the HDR Examinations Subcommittee.
  - (a) The examination will be conducted in accordance with the policy and these procedures.
  - (b) The faculty will notify the partner institution of the outcome of the examination in writing.
- (4) Where a student enrolled in a joint PhD subsequently transfers to a degree solely awarded by the University, the examination will be conducted according the policy and these procedures, but the HDR Examinations Subcommittee may approve the use of any existing examiners' reports in fulfilment of the applicable requirements.

## PART 6 – THESIS WITH PUBLICATIONS

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### 27 Nature of publications to be considered with thesis

- (1) Students may include as a publication material that is:
  - (a) submitted for publication;
  - (b) under review for publication;
  - (c) in press; or
  - (d) published.

- (2) The thesis must form a cohesive and unified whole.

**Note:** See subclause 8(1)(e) of the Policy.

## **28 Method of inclusion of published material in a thesis**

- (1) Sections of the thesis that have been published previously must be clearly identified as such.
- (2) Published material may also be included as an appendix.
- (3) Published papers may be reformatted as long as it is clear that the text in the thesis is identical to that in the published paper.
- (4) If the text of the thesis differs substantially from the published version, the published material should be included by citation and quotation rather than directly included in the thesis.

## **29 Authorship of papers included in a thesis with publications**

- (1) Previously published material should only be included in the thesis where the student's contribution is substantial.
- (2) Where a student is an author of a work but had a lesser contribution to the published work, the paper may be included as an appendix.
- (3) Students must clearly indicate their role and the extent of their contribution to the paper either in the introduction to the thesis or the introduction to the chapter. Provided that this is done, where more than one of the authors of a work is a higher degree by research student, each student may include the work as part of their thesis.
- (4) Works with multiple authors should only be included with the permission of the corresponding author.
- (5) Where a student is a joint author of a previously published work, the supervisor or corresponding author must submit a supporting statement identifying the student's contribution to the work covered in the article.
- (6) The convention for author placement in the list of contributing authors within the discipline should be stated e.g. alphabetical, corresponding author first.

## **30 Examination of a thesis with publications**

- (1) The examination process is the assessment of the thesis against the criteria set out in clause 8 of the policy. This examination is a different process than the refereed assessment of material for publication.
- (2) Examiners must address:
  - (a) whether the thesis including previously published material indicates that the student has made a substantially original contribution to the knowledge of the subject concerned; and
  - (b) for publications where there are multiple authors, whether the quality and extent of the student's contribution merits the award of the degree.
- (3) As the included publications are examined as part of a larger work, reviewers of individual papers may be nominated to act as examiners if they meet the criteria set out in clause 15 of the policy.

## **PART 7 – THESIS CONTAINING CREATIVE OR ARTISTIC COMPONENTS**

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### **31 Examination of a thesis containing creative or artistic components**

- (1) The creative work and the written component will be examined as an integrated whole.
- (2) The creative work may be presented in the context of an exhibition, installation, performance or other in-person context.
- (3) Where the creative component is an exhibition or installation, the documentary record may take the form of a catalogue with images of sufficient quality for examination.
- (4) The student is responsible for creating the documentary record of the creative work.
- (5) Where the examination of a creative work component includes a performance, installation or exhibition, the written component of the thesis should be provided to the examiners prior to the examination of the creative component.
- (6) Where the examination of the creative work component is in exhibition mode, examiners should attend in person.
- (7) Where there is no performance, installation or exhibition, or where an examiner cannot attend in person the examiner(s) shall conduct their examination using the documentary record of the creative work.
- (8) Except as otherwise stated in faculty resolutions, the examination of a thesis with a creative component must comply with procedures, including (where appropriate) those relating to oral examinations, as determined in Part 4 of these procedures.
- (9) The outcomes of the examination for a thesis submitted with a creative or artistic component must relate to the whole thesis, including the artistic or creative work.

**Note:** See clause 23 of the policy.

## **PART 8 – LODGEMENT OF THESES IN LIBRARY**

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### **32 Lodgement of theses in the University library**

- (1) The final copy of the thesis lodged in the University library must be in electronic format except as permitted by the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Academic Board.
- (2) The copy must be complete, including:
  - (a) any appendices submitted for examination;
  - (b) any published material included in the thesis;
  - (c) documentary recording of any artistic or creative works; and
  - (d) any corrections required by the University addressed to the satisfaction of the chair of examination.

- (3) The student must provide the title and an abstract of the thesis by the time of lodgement to be included in the Library catalogue meta-data.
- Note:** All information on thesis preparation, submission and lodgement is available through the University website <http://sydney.edu.au/students/prepare-your-thesis.html> and <http://sydney.edu.au/students/thesis-submission.html>.
- (4) The student may specify at the time of lodgement whether they prefer their thesis to be locally available or published to open access. Where a student does not indicate a preference, the thesis will be lodged in the Library for local access.
- Note:** All information on thesis preparation, submission and lodgement is available through the University website <http://sydney.edu.au/students/prepare-your-thesis.html> and <http://sydney.edu.au/students/thesis-submission.html>.
- (5) Where a student has been permitted to include an appendix of material that is not to be available for public inspection as provided by the [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research Rule\) 2011 \(as amended\)](#), the appendix must be lodged separately to the remainder of the thesis in a form prescribed by the University Librarian.
- Note:** A student may also apply for a period of embargo on the availability of their thesis. See [University of Sydney \(Higher Degree by Research Rule\) 2011 \(as amended\)](#).
- (6) The Library catalogue meta-data, including the student's name, thesis title, and abstract, must be publicly available.
- (7) A student may also opt to publish sections of their thesis as part of their faculty's open research collection. For example, this may be used:
- where copyright restrictions on published material prevent the open access publication of the whole thesis; or
  - where the student opts to publish the written component of the thesis but not a creative work.
- (8) The final copy of the thesis lodged in the Library cannot be altered.
- (9) The Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee may approve that an errata notice be appended to a lodged thesis. The errata notice must:
- be clearly distinguishable from the thesis as originally lodged;
  - be labelled as "errata notice";
  - identify the author of the notice;
  - clearly state the date of the notice; and
  - list each erratum separately with a page reference, and in page reference order.

## **PART 9 – AEGROTAT AND POSTHUMOUS AWARDS**

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### **33 Eligibility**

- (1) Aegrotat and posthumous awards may be made in circumstances involving serious illness or death.



- (2) Aegrotat awards:
  - (a) are made in circumstances where serious illness precludes a student from making the final submission of the thesis, modifications to the thesis or resubmission; and
  - (b) the student or student's family are required to confirm that they will accept and aegrotat award prior to any examination.
- (3) Posthumous awards:
  - (a) are made when, at the time of death, the student is considered to have completed sufficient work that, in the normal course of events, they would have satisfied requirements for the award; and
  - (b) should have the support of the deceased student's family prior to any examination.

### **34 Prior to examination**

- (1) The lead supervisor is responsible for requesting aegrotat and posthumous awards.
- (2) For aegrotat awards, if the student is not well enough:
  - (a) the lead supervisor will present the student's work for submission; and
  - (b) the Associate Dean will have to make the case that there is sufficient material to prepare a thesis before proceeding to examination.
- (3) For posthumous awards, the lead supervisor should:
  - (a) present the deceased student's work for submission;
  - (b) confirm the work as the student's own;
  - (c) compile final edits;
  - (d) provide a declaration on the frontispiece about what they have done to the thesis since the student's passing;
  - (e) provide a brief summary of the research project to aid examiners in the understanding of the student's research contribution; and
  - (f) the Associate Dean will have to make the case that there is sufficient material to prepare a thesis before proceeding to examination.

### **35 The examination**

- (1) Examination for aegrotat and posthumous awards will follow the processes set out in Part 3 of these Procedures.
- (2) For aegrotat awards:
  - (a) examiners will be informed that the student is seriously ill and unable to complete the thesis; and
  - (b) the option of awarding a lesser degree may be considered if the thesis does not meet the requirements for the degree for which it is being presented.
- (3) For posthumous awards, examiners will be advised that:
  - (a) the student has passed away; and
  - (b) the only options are 'award with no corrections' or 'don not award'.

- (4) The examiners' recommendation will be passed to the relevant committee who will determine if the thesis fulfils the requirements given in clause 8 of the [Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015](#).

### 36 Conferral of the degree

- (1) The decision to confer the degree will be made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) upon the recommendation of the faculty and the determination of the relevant committee.

**Note:** See Section 4.26 of the [University of Sydney \(Delegations of Authority\) Rule 2020](#).

### 37 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the *Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2015*, which are rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document.

## NOTES

### Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2020

Date adopted:	9 June 2020
Date commenced:	1 July 2020
Date amended	8 September 2020 (administrative amendment)
	23 November 2020
	4 February 2021
	1 March 2021
	14 September 2021, commencing 21 September 2021
	24 April 2023 (administrative amendments)
Current Owner:	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training)
Review date:	1 July 2025
Rescinded documents:	<i>Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Procedures 2015</i>
Related documents:	
	<i>Australian Standards for Editing Practice (ASEP) 2nd ed. Point Cook: Institute of Professional Editors, 2013</i>
	<i>University of Sydney (Higher Degree by Research Rule) 2011 (as amended)</i>

*University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2020*

*Academic Integrity Policy 2022*

*Dual and Joint Degrees Policy 2019*

*External Interests Policy 2010*

*Privacy Policy 2017*

*Thesis and Examination of Higher Degrees by Research Policy 2015*

*Higher Degree by Research Degree Supervision Policy 2020*

*Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedures 2020*

*Privacy Procedures 2018*

## AMENDMENT HISTORY

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Commencing</b>
23(5)	'Associate Dean' replaced with 'chair of examination'	8 September 2020
23(18)(b)	'such as a colleague, friend, family member or student representative' inserted between 'support person' and 'present'	23 November 2020
23(18)(b)(i) and (ii)	New subclauses inserted	23 November 2020
23(5)(a)	'before the thesis is submitted and should be' replaced with 'when the thesis is ready to be sent to examiners and'	4 February 2021
Part 9	New part added: Aegrotat and Posthumous Awards; clauses 33 – 36; subsequent renumbering of previous clause 33.	1 March 2021
6(2)	New subclause added	21 September 2021
11(2)	Insert 'For examinations undertaken in the usual course' at beginning of clause. Replace 'Each' with 'each'	21 September 2021
11(2A)	New subclause added	21 September 2021
16(1)(a) note	Subclause 8(4)(a) replaced with subclause 8(509a)	21 September 2021

<b>Provision</b>	<b>Amendment</b>	<b>Commencing</b>
5(2)(c) and note	correction of external hyperlink	24 April 2023
8(3)	'Academic Honesty Procedures 2015' replaced with 'Academic Integrity Procedures 2022'	24 April 2023
36(1)	'Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)' replaced with 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	24 April 2023
	Consequential amendments due to organisational design change	
Notes	Amended Policy Administrator from Director, Graduate Research to Current Policy Owner: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Researcher Training)	24 April 2023
Related documents	'Academic Honesty in Coursework Policy 2015' replaced with 'Academic Integrity Policy 2022'	24 April 2023