

## ***Graduate Research Degrees Regulations***

These Regulations are made under Murdoch University *Statute No. 4 - Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates*. They apply to all graduate research degrees, as set out in the Murdoch University Handbook (hereafter the Handbook).

These Regulations do not apply to courses leading to the award of coursework degrees, diplomas and certificates at the undergraduate and graduate levels, which are covered by the [Coursework Regulations](#).

The Regulations governing the Murdoch University graduate research degrees are as follows:

- Section 1 outlines the Regulations governing all graduate research degrees of the University.
- Section 2 outlines the Regulations governing all matters in relation to courses or units undertaken as a requirement in the graduate research degrees of the University.

The provisions of *Statute No. 8 - Interpretation* apply to these Regulations.

1. In these regulations, the following words have the following meanings:
  - 1.1. “Academic period” means a teaching period for any enrolled graduate research degree.
  - 1.2. “Course” means a combination of coherent units approved by Academic Council that leads to a particular award
  - 1.3. “Dean” means the person occupying the position of Head of Graduate Research Office, by whatever name known.
  - 1.4. “Overseas Candidate” means a candidate who is on an overseas student visa enrolled or seeking to be enrolled in a graduate research degree in the Handbook.
  - 1.5. “Postgraduate Research Chair (PGRC)” has delegated responsibilities for the administration of graduate research degree candidature in a School or multiple Schools.
  - 1.6. “Supervisor Register” means a University database listing staff members who are eligible to act as a Supervisor for a graduate research degree candidate.
  - 1.7. “Principal Supervisor” means a Murdoch University academic who is an employee based in a School or Institute who manages the administrative aspects of a candidature in addition to providing academic guidance for the duration of the candidature.

- 1.8. “Co-Supervisor” means a member of Murdoch University staff, including honorary title holders, appointed in accordance with these regulations and the *Honorary Titles and Appointments Policy*, who in co-operation with other appointed Supervisors provides guidance to candidates in all matters relating to research conduct at the different stages of the research.
- 1.9. “Supervisor” means Murdoch University staff only, who provide guidance to candidates in all matters relating to their research at the different stages of the research. For clarity, the term Supervisor does not include External Supervisors.
- 1.10. “External Supervisor” means someone who is not a member of Murdoch University staff, provides advice to candidates in matters relating to their research on the Supervisory Panel.
- 1.11. “Supervisor Mentor”: Where none of the other Supervisors are eligible for appointment as Principal Supervisor, the Supervisor Mentor, who meets the eligibility criteria for Principal Supervisor, mentors the Principal Supervisor.
- 1.12. “Supervisory Panel” means a panel comprising Supervisors and External Supervisors established for each graduate research degree candidate to oversee candidature, including evaluation for Confirmation of Candidature.
- 1.13. “Adjudicator” means a third party, external to the University, that is an identified expert in the field of research who can be engaged to evaluate differences in the recommended outcomes of a thesis.
- 1.14. “Examiner” means an individual requested by the University to assess and provide a recommended outcome for a thesis.
- 1.15. “Termination” means the discontinuation of a candidate within a HDR degree.
- 1.16. “Research Program” means the approved outline of a comprehensive, independent plan of research activity.

## Regulations

2. To be awarded a graduate research degree from Murdoch University, a candidate must satisfy the requirements of these Regulations and all other relevant Statutes, Regulations, Rules and Policies of the University, including supporting procedures and guidelines.
3. All Supervisors and candidates must comply with the research conduct outlined in the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (the *Code*), the *Research Integrity Policy*, the *Student Code of Conduct* and the *Student Integrity Regulations*.
  - 3.1. A breach of these Regulations, the *Code* or any other relevant legislation and University policies by a candidate or Supervisory Panel member must be reported and will be managed in accordance with the *Research Integrity Procedure*.
    - 3.1.1. A breach by the candidate may result in termination of candidature.
  - 3.2. Any disciplinary matter will be managed under the *Student Integrity Regulations*.

- 3.3. A candidate seeking to raise a complaint about an administration issue in relation to their candidature should refer to the *Graduate Research Degrees Dispute Resolution Procedure*.
- 3.4. For complaints regarding the University, the candidate should refer to the *Complaints Management Policy*.
4. In accordance with the *Student Appeals Policy*, candidates governed by Sections 1 and 2 of these Regulations may appeal the following:
  - 4.1. The result of the examination of a Doctoral Degree or Masters Degree (Research) thesis and the resolution of the final result;
  - 4.2. The final result awarded in a unit in the coursework component of a Doctoral or Masters Degree (Professional); and/or
  - 4.3. A termination from a graduate research degree.
5. The Dean may delegate any authority conferred by these Regulations, but that authority cannot be further delegated.
6. The Pro Vice Chancellor Institute may delegate any authority conferred by these Regulations but that authority cannot be further delegated.
7. The Head of College, by whatever name known, may delegate any authority conferred by these Regulations, but that authority cannot be further delegated.
8. The Postgraduate Research Chair (PGRC) may delegate any authority conferred by these Regulations to another PGRC, but that authority cannot be further delegated.
9. The responsibilities of Murdoch University, Graduate Research Office, Schools, Institutes, Supervisors, Supervisory Panel and candidates are set out in Schedule A.

### **Section 1: Regulations governing all graduate research degrees of the University**

10. The Regulations in Section 1 apply to all Murdoch University graduate research degrees and the respective award titles, as set out in the Handbook unless Academic Council has approved otherwise.
11. Overseas candidates are also subject to the requirements of the *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000*.

### **Admission**

12. The admission requirements for each graduate research degree are set out in the Handbook.
13. The Dean approves the admission of individual candidates, taking into account:
  - 13.1. the provisions of these Regulations and all other relevant Statutes, Regulations, Rules and Policies of the University;
  - 13.2. decisions on quotas and targets, as well as any operational policies and procedures approved by the Pro Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation;
  - 13.3. English language competence requirements, as approved by Academic Courses and Admissions Committee;

- 13.4. approval from the Head of School, by whatever name known, or relevant Pro Vice Chancellor Institute confirming adequate facilities and resources are available for the applicant's research proposal;
  - 13.5. the appointment of Supervisors on admission, subject to Regulation 35; and
  - 13.6. in the case of applicants proposing to carry out research in the course of employment, that the provisions set out in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure* are met, and a statement agreeing to those provisions is signed by the candidate's employer.
  - 13.7. Candidates who are recipients of a Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend must meet the conditions set in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship Policy*.
  - 13.8. Candidates who are recipients of a stipend not associated with RTP must meet any documented conditions set by the provider(s).
14. The candidate must meet any conditions stated in the offer of admission. Failure to do so may result in the termination of candidature.

### **Enrolment**

15. Candidates will be enrolled in the School of their Principal Supervisor.
16. Candidates must nominate either full-time or part-time enrolment.
  - 16.1. Full-time enrolment is 1.0 EFTSL per annum.
  - 16.2. Part-time enrolment is 0.5 EFTSL per annum.
17. Candidates must be continuously enrolled until all examinable components of their research program have been submitted for examination, subject to any approved leave or unless the Dean permits otherwise.

### **Enrolment Period**

18. Doctoral Degrees have a maximum enrolment of four years full-time equivalent, and Masters Degrees a maximum enrolment of two years full-time equivalent, subject to the enrolment course duration and structure as specified in the Handbook.
  - 18.1. The maximum enrolment periods specified under Regulation 18 are doubled for part-time candidates and are calculated on a pro-rata basis for candidates mixing full-time and part-time candidature during their enrolments.
  - 18.2. In exceptional circumstances, the Dean may approve an extension to the enrolment period, subject to Regulations 20 to 20.2.
  - 18.3. Subject to Regulations 64 and 65, for a candidate who has transferred from enrolment in one graduate research degree to another, the maximum enrolment period includes the candidate's enrolment period in the earlier qualification.
  - 18.4. Unless otherwise approved by the Dean in Regulation 18.2, if a candidate's thesis is not submitted within the enrolment period specified in Regulation 18, the candidature is terminated.

19. Notwithstanding any other provision in Regulation 18, the absolute minimum enrolment period for a Doctoral Degree is one year.
20. Candidates who have exceeded their maximum enrolment period, subject to Regulation 18.2:
  - 20.1. in exceptional circumstances, a candidate may be provided with the opportunity to remain enrolled full-time for a period of fifty per cent of the full-time enrolment period as published in the University handbook.
  - 20.2. may be responsible for paying the associated tuition fees for continued enrolment consistent with their residency status and research program as published on the Graduate Research Office website.

#### Concurrent Enrolment

21. A candidate may apply to enrol concurrently for another qualification at this University or elsewhere with the Dean's written approval, as outlined in the [Graduate Research Degrees Procedure](#).
22. A candidate must withdraw or suspend enrolment in the concurrent program if they do not make satisfactory progress in the graduate research degree at Murdoch University.
23. Subject to exceptional circumstances, an extension or Leave of Absence will not be granted due to concurrent enrolment.

#### Expected Time Commitment

24. It is expected that a full-time candidate would commit a minimum of 37.5 hours per week to their degree

#### Mode of Enrolment

25. Subject to Regulation 26, candidates who are residents within the Perth metropolitan area who are not enrolled in coursework units are normally enrolled in the face to face attendance mode.
26. The Dean may approve the enrolment of existing and new candidates (part-time and full-time) in the mixed mode, which is restricted to candidates who:
  - 26.1. are normally resident outside the Perth metropolitan area;
  - 26.2. are resident within the Perth metropolitan area who, for reasons of disability or infirmity, or other acceptable reasons, are unable to attend the University's facilities on a regular basis;
  - 26.3. reach an agreement with the Principal Supervisor about the amount of candidature time spent at the University and when. Candidatures proposing to have no time spent at the University will not normally be approved, and
  - 26.4. meet any stipulated conditions to ensure adequate supervision and resources are available.

#### Leave Entitlements

27. Candidates are entitled to twenty days Annual Leave, and ten days Personal Leave each year. Personal Leave may include family caring responsibilities.
  - 27.1. Leave entitlements are calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time candidates.

- 27.2. Leave entitlements may be accrued, but unused leave will be forfeited at the end of the enrolment period.
28. Candidates who have completed at least one year of full-time or equivalent part-time candidature, subject to Regulation 46.3, may apply to the Dean, in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure* and subject to any scholarship conditions, for a period of leave as follows:
- 28.1. Parental Leave, for up to a total of one year, which may be granted to the primary carer of a newborn infant or adopted child.
- 28.1.1. To be eligible for a subsequent period of Parental Leave, the candidate must be continuously enrolled for at least another twelve months.
- 28.2. Partner Leave, for up to five days, which may be granted to partners of the primary carer at the time of the birth or adoption.
- 28.3. Leave of Absence, for up to a total of one year, which may be in multiple periods not exceeding a maximum of one year over the enrolment period, for any substantiated personal matter that may arise.
- 28.3.1. Leave of Absence for overseas candidates will only be granted on compassionate or compelling grounds.
- 28.3.2. Leave of Absence will not be granted to candidates enrolled in coursework unless a variation has been approved.
- 28.3.3. Leave of Absence constitutes a period of unpaid leave for scholarship holders.
29. The approved period of leave, as set out in Regulation 28, is not counted as part of the enrolment period for the degree as prescribed in Regulation 18 or the minimum period of candidature for the degree as prescribed in Regulation 19.
30. The approved period of leave may only commence after approval from the Dean has been obtained.
- 30.1. Leave set out in Regulation 28 taken without the Dean's written approval is not recognised.
- 30.2. Apart from an unforeseen brief illness, leave as set out in Regulation 28 is not granted retrospectively except in extraordinary circumstances.
- 30.3. If the enrolment period is consumed as a result of taking leave without the Dean's approval, the candidature may be terminated, and the candidate must re-apply for admission, subject to Regulation 13.
31. Candidates must request to resume their candidature at the end of the approved period of leave and may be required to be enrolled for a minimum period.
- 31.1. The resumption of candidature must be on the same basis unless a variation has been approved by the Dean.
- 31.2. Within one month of the resumption of candidature following an approved period of leave, a meeting of the candidate's Supervisory Panel is required.
32. Any extension to the approved period of leave must be approved by the Dean, subject to Regulation 28, before the approved period of leave ends.

33. Candidates who do not comply with Regulations 31 and 32 before the approved period of leave ends may have their candidature terminated.
34. Any leave taken must be recorded on the Annual Progress Report along with any relevant supporting documentation.

## **Supervision**

### Appointment of Supervisors

35. Subject to Regulation 37 to 42 and 45, the Dean must appoint a Principal Supervisor and at least one Co-Supervisor at the time of the candidate's admission.
36. A candidate or Supervisor may apply to the Dean at any time for a change in supervision arrangements, subject to Regulation 35.

### Supervisor Eligibility Criteria

37. A Principal Supervisor or Co-Supervisor must be on the Supervisor Register and must maintain their registration in order to supervise candidates.
  - 37.1. To be registered, staff must meet the criteria for supervision as detailed in Regulations 37 to 42, and as outlined in the Supervisor Register.
38. Principal Supervisors must meet the following criteria:
  - 38.1. possess a degree at least equivalent to that undertaken by the candidate;
  - 38.2. be a University academic employee based in a School or Institute who can be expected to provide supervision for the duration of the candidature;
  - 38.3. satisfy the University's definition of research-active.
39. A proposed Principal Supervisor who meets Regulations 38 must also comply with the supervisory registry specifically as it pertains to the requirements for additional supervisors and/or the appointment of a mentor supervisor.
40. Co-Supervisors must be a Murdoch staff member and will normally possess a degree at least equivalent to that undertaken by the candidate.
41. Staff supervising more than the EFTSL caps outlined in Schedule A must seek the endorsement of the Head of School, by whatever name known, or relevant Pro Vice Chancellor Institute, as well as approval by the Dean for each additional candidate supervision.
42. A Supervisor appointed under Regulation 35 will:
  - 42.1. meet the eligibility criteria specified in Regulations 37 to 41;
  - 42.2. be free of conflict of interest, as outlined in the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#); and
  - 42.3. meet the Supervisor responsibilities outlined in Schedule A.
43. If a Supervisor is unable to continue supervising a candidate for any reason, the Head of School, by whatever name known, or relevant Pro Vice Chancellor Institute, in consultation with the candidate, is responsible for ensuring that adequate and acceptable supervision arrangements, subject to Regulations 37 to 42, are made prior to the Supervisor ceasing their supervisory commitments.

44. If a Supervisor plans to take leave for any period of more than three months during the candidature, in consultation with the candidate and subject to the Head of School, by whatever name known, or relevant Pro Vice Chancellor Institute's endorsement, the Supervisor must obtain approval from the Dean for the supervision arrangements for the period of their absence, which remain subject to Regulations 37 to 42.
45. Subject to these Regulations, in exceptional circumstances, the Dean may determine any special arrangements required for the candidate's supervision.

### **Confirmation of Candidature**

46. Candidature is deemed to be probationary until confirmed in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure* within the confirmation of candidature timeframe set out in the Handbook.
  - 46.1. Unless previously arranged with the Dean, a candidate's enrolment may be terminated if candidature is not confirmed within the timeframe set out in the Handbook.
  - 46.2. In exceptional circumstances, a candidate may extend their confirmation of candidature up to the timeframe set out in the Handbook to a maximum of three months after discussion with their Supervisory Panel and by notifying the Graduate Research Office.
  - 46.3. A candidate may not apply for Leave of Absence on the basis of the candidate's failure to complete the requirements for confirmation of candidature within the timeframe set out in the Handbook.
47. Candidates who may include a creative component must:
  - 47.1. be the single or lead practitioner in their proposed creative component, that is, they are the primary artist, director, dramaturg, choreographer or writer for the performance;
    - 47.1.1. Group-devised productions/objects will not be accepted.
  - 47.2. meet the requirements of the creative component as outlined in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*.
48. Following the confirmation of candidature process, as outlined in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*, on the recommendation of the Supervisory Panel and the endorsement of the relevant PGRC, the Dean must either:
  - 48.1. confirm the candidature;
  - 48.2. recommend that the candidate revises and resubmits the research program for re-evaluation by the Supervisory Panel within the maximum period allowed for each degree as detailed in the Handbook;
  - 48.3. transfer the candidate's enrolment to another degree; or
  - 48.4. terminate the candidate's enrolment on the basis of unsatisfactory progress.

### **Research Program**

49. A candidate must comply with the approved research program, and the subject matter of the candidate's thesis shall conform to the general area of the approved research program.

- 49.1. Failure to comply with Regulation 49 may result in the termination of candidature, subject to Regulations to 52.2.
50. A candidate enrolled for a Doctoral Degree (Research), or Master of Philosophy may include coursework units to a total value of not more than 12 credit points in the research program as set out in the Handbook.
51. Where a Doctoral Degree (Research) or Master of Philosophy candidate includes coursework units in the research program:
- 51.1. any coursework units must be directly related to the area of the candidate's research thesis in an integrated and complementary way and normally chosen in consultation with the Principal Supervisor;
- 51.2. the Principal Supervisor must recommend, and the Dean must approve the coursework units; and
- 51.3. the coursework unit results must not be considered in determining the award of the degree.
52. A candidate may apply to the Dean to change the research program at any time after the Confirmation of Candidature, following discussion with the Supervisory Panel, in accordance with the [Graduate Research Degrees Procedure](#).
- 52.1. Significant changes to the research program may require changes to the Supervisory Panel.
- 52.2. In the case of significant changes to the research program, the candidature must be confirmed again, without extension to candidature.

### **Progress Reports**

53. During the period of confirmed candidature, the Supervisory Panel and the candidate must jointly provide the Dean with Progress Reports (Annual and Interim) in accordance with the [Graduate Research Degrees Procedure](#).
54. Failure to submit the Progress Reports may result in termination of candidature.
55. After reviewing the candidate's Progress Report, the Dean must:
- 55.1. confirm the candidate's continued enrolment;
- 55.2. place any conditions on the continuation of the candidature;
- 55.3. in consultation with the Supervisory Panel, transfer the candidate's enrolment to another degree; or
- 55.4. terminate the candidate's enrolment on the basis of unsatisfactory progress.
56. Before making a referral under Regulation 55.4, the Dean may require a candidate to provide additional reports to ascertain what progress the candidate is making and/or to assist the candidate in completing within the enrolment period set out in Regulation 18.
57. If the candidature is terminated for unsatisfactory progress, from the date of termination, a candidate will not be permitted to enrol in a new graduate research degree for a period of not less than fifty per cent of the maximum enrolment period.

### **Variations to Candidature**

58. A candidate may transfer between full-time and part-time candidature, subject to the Dean's approval on the recommendation of the Principal Supervisor and endorsement by the PGRC.
  - 58.1. Candidates who are scholarship recipients will be required to check their scholarship conditions before applying to transfer between full time and part-time enrolment.
  - 58.2. The candidate must report to the Dean any significant changes in other commitments outside the research program that are likely to hinder satisfactory progress.
59. A candidate may transfer between attendance modes, subject to the Dean's approval on the recommendation of the Principal Supervisor and endorsement by the PGRC, any scholarship conditions, and in accordance with Regulations 25 and 26.

#### Withdrawal from Candidature

60. A candidate may withdraw from candidature up until the date that the thesis is submitted by informing the Dean in writing.
  - 60.1. The candidature is terminated once the candidate withdraws and Regulation 66 applies.
  - 60.2. Withdrawal from candidature is not granted retrospectively.
  - 60.3. Enrolment load and associated fees or charges stand for withdrawals made after the census date.
61. Where a candidate's enrolment is terminated following a withdrawal from candidature the candidate subsequently enrolls in a new graduate research degree at the same level:
  - 61.1. if at least three years have elapsed since the previous enrolment, the candidate is entitled to the maximum enrolment period allowed for the course, as outlined in Regulation 18, subject to any restrictions placed by the relevant professional bodies; or
  - 61.2. if fewer than three years have elapsed since the previous enrolment, the candidate is entitled to the maximum enrolment period allowed for the course, as outlined in Regulation 18, subject to Regulation 13, less any period of prior entitlement consumed; or
  - 61.3. if fewer than three years have elapsed since the previous enrolment and the full entitlement period has been consumed, re-admission will be subject to the Dean's approval in accordance with Regulations 20.
62. Where a candidate withdraws from candidature and subsequently enrolls in a different graduate research degree course at a different level, the candidate is entitled to a full enrolment period for the new course, as outlined in Regulation 18, provided the change in enrolment is not a transfer as set out in Regulations 64 to 65.

#### Withdrawal from a Coursework Unit

63. Candidates who are completing coursework units in accordance with Regulations 50 and 51 may withdraw before the census date without penalty from a unit or incurring fees.

63.1. Unit withdrawals shall be recorded on the candidate's academic transcript.

63.2. Candidates can only apply for approved withdrawal or fee remission for a unit with the approval of the Dean, in accordance with the [Graduate Research Degrees Procedure](#).

63.2.1. Fees may apply.

### Transfer of Candidature

64. Subject to Regulation 64.2, candidates enrolled for a Master of Philosophy may apply to transfer to a Doctoral Degree (Research) with credit for the work completed for the Master of Philosophy, in accordance with the [Graduate Research Degrees Procedure](#).

64.1. The research undertaken by the candidate while enrolled for the Master of Philosophy must be continued for the Doctoral Degree (Research) or modified to meet the requirements for the Doctoral Degree (Research).

64.2. Transfers may take place no earlier than at the point of Confirmation of Candidature and, other than in special circumstances, no later than 18 months (three years for part-time candidates) after initial enrolment.

64.3. Transfers must take place without a break between candidature for the Master of Philosophy and the Doctoral Degree (Research) subject to any approved period of leave.

64.4. The same enrolment period for a Doctoral Degree (Research) as outlined in Regulation 18 applies, with the time completed as a Master of Philosophy candidate deducted from the enrolment as a Doctoral Degree (Research) candidate.

65. Candidates enrolled for a Doctoral Degree (Research) may elect to transfer to a Master of Philosophy for academic or personal reasons, subject to Regulation 13, in accordance with the [Graduate Research Degrees Procedure](#).

65.1. Transfers may take place at the point of Confirmation of Candidature in the Doctoral Degree (Research), subject to Regulation 18.

65.2. The same enrolment period for a Master of Philosophy as outlined in Regulation 18 applies, with the time completed as a Doctoral Degree (Research) candidate deducted from the enrolment as a Master of Philosophy candidate.

### **Termination of Candidature**

66. On the termination of candidature, candidates will immediately lose their right to access the University's resources and facilities, including supervisory support.

67. Candidates seeking to apply for re-admission into a graduate research degree following termination will be assessed by the Dean, subject to Regulation 13 and the cause of termination.

67.1. Candidates will not usually be admitted into any graduate research degree if they have been terminated for misconduct or unsatisfactory progress.

68. Candidates may appeal against a candidature termination in accordance with the [Student Appeals Policy](#).

### **Thesis Submission**

69. The thesis shall be based on research supervised during the enrolment period at Murdoch University, as outlined in Regulation 18, with the following learning outcomes:
  - 69.1. the Doctoral Degree (Research) must make a significant and original contribution to knowledge and demonstrate the learning outcomes at the relevant Australian Qualifications Framework level;
  - 69.2. the Doctoral Degree (Professional) must make a significant and original contribution to knowledge in the context of professional practice, and demonstrate the learning outcomes at the relevant Australian Qualifications Framework level; and
  - 69.3. the Masters Degree (Research) must apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research and scholarship and as a pathway for further learning and demonstrate the learning outcomes at the relevant Australian Qualifications Framework level.
70. At the time of thesis submission, the candidate must be enrolled, subject to Regulation 19.
71. At least two months before the thesis submission, the candidate must submit the title of the thesis, together with a draft abstract of approximately 300 words, to the Supervisors, PGRC, and Graduate Research Office as notification of the intention to submit.
72. The candidate's thesis content, in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure* :
  - 72.1. must include a written declaration by the candidate to verify, among other things, authorship and originality, and a substantial portion can be attributed to the candidate's contribution at a minimum of 75 per cent, subject to Regulations 69 and 72.2;
  - 72.2. may describe work done in conjunction with the Principal Supervisor and/or other persons, provided that the candidate's personal share of at least fifty per cent in their contribution to any publication included in the thesis is clearly stated.
    - 72.2.1. Statements relating to author contributions of publications must be certified by the Principal Supervisor and/or other persons, as outlined in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*;
  - 72.3. (except for a resubmitted thesis) the thesis contains as its main content work which has not been previously submitted for a degree at any university;
  - 72.4. must conform to scholarly standards of presentation and format for examination, citation, word length and referencing for the School, as set out in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*;
  - 72.5. must conform to the University's requirements in regards to the structure of the thesis, as outlined in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*; and
  - 72.6. any required approvals.
73. The Principal Supervisor must provide a statement confirming the candidate's thesis content meets the requirements set out in Regulation 72 and

recommending the thesis for examination, in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*.

74. Except in extraordinary circumstances, a thesis will not be examined if the Principal Supervisor, in consultation with the Supervisory Panel, or PGRC in the absence of an agreement in the Supervisory Panel, does not declare that the thesis is complete and suitable for examination, in accordance with Regulation 69.
  - 74.1. Further to Regulation 74, a thesis will not be examined if the Principal Supervisor or candidate have not met the requirements for submission as set out in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*.
  - 74.2. Notwithstanding Regulations 74 and 74.1, a candidate may make a request in writing to the Dean that the thesis nevertheless is accepted for examination against the advice of the Supervisory Panel or PGRC.

### **Nomination of Examiners**

75. Following the candidate's notice of intention to submit, the Principal Supervisor, in consultation with the other Supervisors, must nominate examiners in accordance with Regulations 76 and 77 and the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*.
  - 75.1. Candidates may contribute a list of potential examiners and exclusion list to their Supervisor/s, but otherwise must play no part in determining their examiners.
  - 75.2. Candidates must not communicate with examiners during the course of the nomination and examination process, as outlined in Regulations 85 to 85.3.
76. Subject to Regulation 77, the Dean will normally appoint three (two preferred and one reserve) examiners; with at least two from the recommendations of the Principal Supervisor.

At the time of recommending possible examiners to the Dean, the Principal Supervisor can choose to recommend only two examiners if the recommendation is received with documentation signed by the Principal Supervisor and Candidate acknowledging possible delays that can occur in these circumstances.

77. Except where the Dean is satisfied that extraordinary circumstances exist, the appointment of examiners under Regulation 76 must meet the following criteria:
  - 77.1. all examiners, in the examination of the thesis, must be free from any conflict of interest, in accordance with the *Conflict of Interest Policy* and the Australian Council of Graduate Research *Conflict of Interest in Examination Guidelines*;
  - 77.2. an examiner cannot be an affiliate of Murdoch University;
  - 77.3. all examiners must be independent of the candidate and the Supervisory Panel with no formal collaboration within the previous five years;
  - 77.4. the examiners must not have supervised the candidate for any graduate research degree at any institution;
  - 77.5. the examiners will be external to the university and considered to have international standing in their field;

- 77.6. no more than one examiner can be from a Western Australian University or Industry body;
  - 77.7. for all Doctoral degrees at least one of the examiners must be based outside Australia;
  - 77.8. all examiners must be currently active researchers and have expertise in the general area of the thesis (i.e. have a record of recent refereed publications in a relevant field of study);
  - 77.9. all examiners must be familiar with the expectations of the relevant graduate research degree (e.g. have experience in the supervision of the relevant graduate research degree candidates to completion, and/or have previously examined theses in the relevant graduate research degree);
  - 77.10. all examiners must normally hold a degree either equivalent to or higher than the graduate research degree for which the thesis is being examined; and
  - 77.11. all examiners must have confirmed, prior to being appointed as an examiner, that they are available to complete the examination of the thesis within 8 weeks of receiving it.
78. Before submitting a thesis to the examiners, the Dean must:
- 78.1. be satisfied that the Principal Supervisor's recommended examiners have met the requirements of Regulation 77;
  - 78.2. be satisfied with the Principal Supervisor's statement, as set out in Regulation 73; and
  - 78.3. be satisfied that the candidate has complied with Regulation 72.
79. If Regulations 78.2 and 78.3 cannot be satisfied, the Dean must decide, in consultation with the candidate and the Principal Supervisor, whether the thesis should be sent to the examiners or returned to the candidate for further work.

### **Thesis examination**

80. From the date of approval of these Regulations, the following examination process applies, as set out in the [Graduate Research Degrees Procedure](#):
- 80.1. Candidates enrolled in a Doctoral Degree prior to 1 January 2022 may elect to undertake an oral examination (viva).
    - 80.1.1. Doctoral Degree candidates enrolled prior to 1 January 2022 not undertaking an oral examination must give a completion seminar prior to submitting their thesis for examination.
  - 80.2. Candidates enrolled in a Doctoral Degree after 1 January 2022 must undertake an oral examination.
  - 80.3. Masters Degree candidates are not required to undertake an oral examination
81. Following the receipt of all examiners' recommendations relating to the written thesis, the Dean will recommend that the candidate:
- 81.1. proceeds to the oral examination; or

- 81.2. should not proceed to the oral examination and that recommended outcomes be sent to the Board of Studies for further discussion and resolution.
82. The oral examination process, as further outlined in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*, will:
- 82.1. consist of, at minimum, the candidate, an independent chair of proceedings, and the examiners.
- 82.2. normally be scheduled within twenty days of the Dean approving all examiner recommendations from the written documentation.
- 82.3. last between one to two hours, inclusive of all discussion and decision-making.
- 82.4. be conducted in a hybrid meeting model using an appropriate online collaborative meeting software, when necessary.
83. For Doctoral Degree candidates enrolled prior to 1 January 2022 not undertaking an oral examination, only the examiner reports relating to the written thesis will be considered in determining the final outcome.
84. For candidates undertaking an oral examination, the final examiner reports will consider both the written thesis and oral examination.
85. Communication during thesis examination must be conducted as follows:
- 85.1. The examiners must not consult one another before the submission of an independent report.
- 85.2. Except for the discussion held as part of the oral examination, the candidate must not discuss any aspect of the examination with the examiners during the period from submission of the thesis until a decision on conferral is reached by Academic Council.
- 85.3. The Supervisory Panel or PGRC must not discuss any aspect of the thesis under examination with examiners during the period from submission of the thesis until a decision is reached by Academic Council, except where prior approval is given by the Dean.
86. If an examiner does not provide a report on the thesis within a reasonable time, the Dean may appoint a reserve examiner in that examiner's place.
87. Following the thesis examination process, as outlined in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*, each examiner will normally submit a written report to the Dean and a recommendation for one of the following classifications and actions:
- 87.1. Award (A): that the degree be awarded.
- 87.1.1. This is subject to the insertion of corrections and/or additions in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*, which are to be completed within two months of receiving the outcome.
- 87.2. Revise and Resubmit (RR): that the degree not be awarded, but that the candidate be permitted to submit a revised thesis for the same degree.
- 87.2.1. This may include re-organisation of the existing data and/or the collection of new data;

- 87.2.2. resubmission must be completed within three months of the candidate receiving the outcome, or the candidature may be terminated;
- 87.2.2.1. an extension to six months will be provided in the case of a request for the collection of new data or under extraordinary circumstances for which the candidate and Principal Supervisor would need to seek permission from the Dean in writing.
- 87.2.3. A candidate whose thesis is classified as RR will remain enrolled until the thesis is resubmitted for examination, subject to Regulation 87.2.2.
- 87.3. Non-Award (NA): that the degree not be awarded and the candidature is consequently terminated.
- 87.4. Alternative Degree (AltD): that a Masters Degree be awarded if the thesis, not meeting the requirements of a Doctoral Degree, meets the requirements of a Masters Degree.
- 87.4.1. The examiner may request additional changes that are necessary to meet the requirement for a Masters Degree.
- 87.4.2. The candidate would be provided three months to address all necessary comments for the award.
88. The Dean will ensure that the actions in relation to determining the outcomes resulting from the examiner reports are followed in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*.

#### Adjudicator

89. The appointment of an adjudicator will only be considered in an extreme circumstance where an examiner recommends A, as outlined in Regulation 87.1, and the other examiner recommends RR, as outlined in Regulation 87.2, and the two reports demonstrate a substantive disagreement between the recommendations of the examiners.
- 89.1. An adjudicator is required to adjudicate between the examiner reports in the context of the thesis and to make a recommendation to the Board of Studies.
- 89.2. An adjudicator must be an independent senior academic with expertise in the field of the research topic, appointable as an examiner per Regulation 75, and have extensive experience in graduate research degree supervision and the Australian thesis examination system.
- 89.3. The adjudicator should be determined by the Dean after consultation with the Principal Supervisor and relevant PGRC.

#### New examiner

90. The appointment of a new examiner, in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*, will only be considered in the extraordinary circumstances where the Board of Studies finds that one of the examiner reports is biased or otherwise inappropriate and should be disallowed.

#### **Award of Degree**

91. Where it is recommended that a degree be classified Award (A), Academic Council must be advised for conferral once the requirements for the final production of the thesis have been met, as outlined in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*.

### **Thesis Access**

92. In accordance with open access principles, the candidate's thesis is available through the University Library for consultation, loan and photocopying, subject to any restrictions contained in the *Copyright Act 1968 (C'th)*.
- 92.1. Subject to Regulation 92.2, an access restriction (embargo) normally not exceeding one year may be approved by the Dean in exceptional circumstances, if requested by the candidate in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure*.
- 92.2. Where, pursuant to the terms of any agreement between the University, the candidate and/or any third party, obligations of confidentiality are imposed in relation to all or a section/s of a candidate's thesis, an access restriction as specified in the agreement will automatically apply to the thesis or section/s of it, consistent with the terms and conditions of those confidentiality obligations.

### **Section 2: Regulations governing all matters in relation to coursework undertaken as a requirement in the graduate research degrees of Murdoch University**

93. The Regulations in Section 2 apply to all matters governing courses or units undertaken as a requirement in the graduate research degrees of the University unless Academic Council has approved otherwise.

### **Award of Credit or Advanced Standing**

94. Subject to Regulation 19, candidates may be granted credit on the coursework component of their degree on the basis of previous studies undertaken at this or another recognised university or tertiary institution, in accordance with the *Advanced Standing Policy*.
- 94.1. Where credit is granted, the maximum enrolment period, as set out in Regulation 18, will be reduced accordingly.
95. Enrolment in Work Integrated Learning units must be in accordance with the *Work Integrated Learning Policy*
96. The assessment methods of each coursework unit shall comply with the *Assessment Procedure*.

### **Structure of Graduate Research Degree Courses**

97. Unless otherwise approved by Academic Council, in addition to Regulation 2, in order to be awarded a graduate research degree at Murdoch University, a candidate must successfully complete the number of credit points required for that award (subject to reduction as a result of the use of any credit awarded under Regulation 94), as outlined in the Handbook.

### **Academic Progress**

98. Academic Chairs are responsible for the academic matters and the respective enrolled graduate research degree candidates within their relevant School.

99. The Academic Progress of each candidate enrolled in the coursework component of a graduate research degree is reviewed periodically, usually at the end of each academic period.
100. For the purpose of determining satisfactory progress where a unit is taken over two or more academic periods, the credit points for the unit will be counted within the total of the final academic period. Withdrawals that occur after the end of one academic period of the unit but before the start of the next period shall be considered to have occurred during the former period.
101. The Manager of Candidacy will ensure that graduate research degree candidates are notified that they must meet with their supervisor and make an Academic Performance Plan if they:
  - 101.1. fail any unit
  - 101.2. are awarded supplementary assessment
  - 101.3. withdraw from any unit before census
  - 101.4. withdraw from any unit after census
102. Candidates who have withdrawn from all their coursework units in an academic year before the Census Date of the relevant academic period(s), must apply for re-admission in order to study in the following year, subject to Regulation 13.
103. Candidates who have successfully completed all units required for the coursework component of the graduate research degree, subject to Regulation 105, are eligible to commence the research component towards the thesis.
104. Candidates who do not successfully complete all units required for the coursework component of the graduate research degree will not commence the research component.
105. Candidates who do not successfully complete the coursework component within the first third of the enrolment period, as set out in the Handbook, must seek approval from the Dean to continue with the graduate research degree.
106. The Academic Courses and Admissions Committee may recommend to Academic Council to establish additional rules for satisfactory progress in the coursework component of a graduate research degree. These rules shall be included in the Handbook.
  - 106.1. Candidates may be terminated from the candidature if they fail to meet these additional rules.
107. A candidate may appeal against the final result awarded in a coursework unit in accordance with the [Student Appeals Policy](#).

#### Termination from a Course

108. Graduate research degree candidates may be terminated from their course if they:
  - 108.1. fail any coursework unit for a second time
  - 108.2. fail 50 per cent or more of their coursework units in any teaching period
  - 108.3. fail to meet the commitments they made in a previous Academic Performance Plan.

109. A candidate who is terminated from a graduate research degree course is not permitted to complete any continuing unit for that course and shall not be eligible for re-admission to the same course as per Regulation 67.1.

109.1. The candidate may apply for re-admission to another course in accordance with Regulations 13 and 18.

## Governance

<b>Approval Authority</b>	Senate
<b>Owner</b>	
<b>Legislation mandating compliance</b>	[e.g. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021]
<b>Category</b>	Primarily academic
<b>Related University Legislation and Policy Documents</b>	<p><i>Statute No. 4 - Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates</i></p> <p><i>Graduate Research Degrees Procedure</i></p> <p><i>Graduate Research Degrees Dispute Resolution Procedure</i></p> <p><i>Advanced Standing Policy</i></p> <p><i>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research</i></p> <p><i>Award Nomenclature, Certification and Issuance Policy</i></p> <p><i>College and School Regulations</i></p> <p><i>Complaints Management Policy</i></p> <p><i>Conflict of Interest Policy</i></p> <p><i>Conflict of Interest in Examination Guidelines</i></p> <p><i>Copyright Act 1968</i></p> <p><i>Curriculum Policy</i></p> <p><i>Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</i></p> <p><i>Honorary Titles and Appointments Policy</i></p> <p><i>Student Appeals Policy</i></p> <p><i>Student Code of Conduct</i></p> <p><i>Student Integrity Regulations</i></p> <p><i>Work Integrated Learning Policy</i></p>
<b>Date effective</b>	11/03/2025
<b>Review date</b>	06/12/2025

## Revision History

Approved/Amended	Date Approved	Resolution No. (if applicable)
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AC recommended to Senate	29/01/2025	AC/09/2025
Supported by SLT	16/12/2024	
RC recommended to SLT	28/11/2024	RC/02/2024
GRDAB recommended to RC		GRDAB/09/2024
Administrative Amendment	08/10/2024	
Administrative Amendment	19/03/2024	
Administrative Amendment	08/08/2023	
Administrative Amendment	16/01/2023	
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Approved	19/10/2021	S/51/2021(i)(ii)
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Rescinded S/09/2020	19/10/2021	S/51/2021(iv)
AC recommended to Senate	06/10/2021	AC/76/2021
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RC recommended Schedules A,B,C,D,E to AC	04/03/2020	RC/02/2020(iii)
Schedule B amended by AC	06/07/2018	AC/57/2018
Schedule E amended by AC	05/07/2017	AC/79/2017
Approved	09/03/2017	S/07/2017(i)
Rescinded S/44/2014(i)	09/03/2017	S/07/2017(ii)
AC recommended to Senate	17/02/2017	AC/29/2017(i)(ii)
Schedule D approved by AC	17/08/2016	AC/95/2016(i)
Schedule D rescinded by AC AC/144/2014(vii)	17/08/2016	AC/95/2016(ii)
Approved	10/12/2014	S/44/2014(i)
Rescinded S/22/2012(i)	10/12/2014	S/44/2014(ii)
AC recommended to Senate	05/11/2014	AC/144/2014(i) to (x)
Approved	03/10/2012	S/22/2012(i)
AC recommended to Senate	08/08/2012	AC/124/2012(i)

## Attachments

## SCHEDULE A

**This Schedule sets out the responsibilities for Murdoch University, the Schools and Institutes, Supervisors, Supervisory Panels and candidates in relation to graduate research degrees.**

### Responsibilities of the University and Schools

1. Murdoch University must inform graduate research degree candidates of the importance of responsible research conduct in accordance with these Regulations.
  - 1.1 Murdoch University must provide all candidates with access to these Regulations and their accompanying policies and procedures on enrolment and maintain ready availability of key documents on the responsible conduct of research to candidates.
  - 1.2 Murdoch University must ensure that candidates and new staff receive early induction and training on applicable legislation, codes and the University's research policies on research ethics and safety and discipline-related matters.
2. Murdoch University must adequately resource and support staff supervision training activities.
  - 2.1 Supervisors are required to attend approved training at Murdoch University as specified in the *Graduate Research Degrees Procedure* and continue to meet the criteria required to maintain their listing on the Supervisor Register.
3. The Head of School, by whatever name known, and the relevant Pro Vice Chancellor Institute must ensure:
  - 3.1 discipline-specific supervision training is provided.
  - 3.2 Supervisors have PhD supervisory load included as part of their overall workload;
  - 3.3 Supervisors should ordinarily supervise no more than 10 EFTSL.
  - 3.4 Principal Supervisors must normally have the larger share of the supervisory responsibility.
  - 3.5 All other Co-supervisors must normally have a minimum of 20% supervision.
  - 3.6 Laboratory access where necessary. The amount of bench space and access to relevant equipment should be adequate for the research conducted.
4. Murdoch University must provide every enrolled candidate with the following minimum resources:
  - 4.1 Full library services including access to inter-library loans and document services.
  - 4.2 Opportunities to participate in University induction programmes.

- 4.3 Opportunities to participate in research training programmes, including English language support programs, where available.
- 4.4 Financial support to assist with presentation in at least one conference in Australia or overseas (subject to specified conditions of the Conference Travel Award program).
5. The Graduate Research Office is normally expected to provide enrolled, face to face attendance mode candidates with the following resources:
  - 5.1 For full time, PhD candidates, and other Doctoral Degree candidates who have completed coursework unit requirements, appropriate access to buildings and a workspace with desk and chair.
  - 5.2 For Masters degree, part-time Doctoral Degree, and full-time Doctoral Degree candidates undertaking required coursework units, appropriate access to buildings, and a flexible workspace.
  - 5.3 Access to telephone and IT facilities for research purposes.
  - 5.4 Reasonable photocopying allocation.
  - 5.5 Reasonable provision for access to stationery, including Murdoch University letterhead where necessary.
  - 5.6 Opportunities to participate in induction programmes.
  - 5.7 A maintenance fund to assist in supporting the costs of the approved research program, in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Maintenance Fund Procedure*.
  - 5.8 Where needed, in order to satisfy ethics or confidentiality requirements associated with their research project, candidates may be provided access to an individual lockable filing cabinet/drawer.
  - 5.9 Enrolment of candidates in the mixed mode requires evidence of access to appropriate resources at the agreed external location. Provision of resources in relation to 5.4 to 5.8 remains the responsibility of the Graduate Research School.
6. The Graduate Research Office must monitor the quality of supervision and resources provided annually as a basis for appropriate recommendations to the Board of Studies.

#### Responsibilities of the Supervisors, Supervisory Panels and Candidates

7. All Supervisors, Supervisory Panels and candidates must comply with these Regulations and any other relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
8. The Supervisors and candidate are jointly responsible for:
  - 8.1 establishing timeframes and expectations in a negotiated agreement within six months of full-time enrolment;
  - 8.2 establishing agreed-upon expectations regarding contact with re-assessment as needed throughout candidature;
  - 8.3 convening meetings as soon as possible to develop the research program for Confirmation of Candidature;

- 8.4 ensuring active engagement in the research program, including acting on agreed amendments, to meet milestones and the thesis submission deadline;
  - 8.5 ensuring active participation in the intellectual activity of the University and other relevant networks; and
  - 8.6 ensuring that original data are recorded and stored in accordance with the University's applicable policies.
9. The Supervisors and Supervisory Panel are jointly responsible for:
- 9.1 overseeing the candidature and the candidate's professional development, including mentoring and discussions on career plans post submission;
  - 9.2 ensuring the commencement of training early in the candidate's career as a researcher, including recommending that candidates enrol in required and relevant training such as workshops for safety and ethics, and as required for English language support;
  - 9.3 ensuring the candidate is making satisfactory academic progress and suggest ways to address problems, as appropriate;
  - 9.4 executing all administrative duties, correspondence with the Graduate Research Office and reporting in relation to the candidature.
10. The candidate's Principal Supervisor is responsible for:
- 10.1 undertaking supervisor training as necessary;
  - 10.2 ensuring that where a change in research direction occurs, appropriate supervisory adjustments are negotiated;
  - 10.3 providing timely feedback to the candidate;
  - 10.4 communicating any concerns in the candidate's academic progress by recording such in progress reports and providing an opportunity for the candidate to respond;
  - 10.5 communicating with other Supervisors and the candidate to resolve any issues;
  - 10.6 advising the candidate about any proposed extended leave or plans for retirement/resignation/redundancy, in accordance with these Regulations;
  - 10.7 giving appropriate credit for the candidate's contribution towards the work, in accordance with the *Authorship Attribution Policy*;
  - 10.8 nominating examiners for approval by the Dean at least two months before the thesis is due to be submitted;
  - 10.9 contacting proposed examiners and determining their availability to examine; and
  - 10.10 consulting where appropriate on an adjudicator or new examiner if required under Regulations 89 and 90.
11. Co-supervisors have shared responsibilities with the Principal Supervisor, as listed in 9 above.
12. The candidate is responsible for:

- 12.1 seeking assistance from the Supervisory Panel, as appropriate, in areas relating to their candidature;
- 12.2 updating contact details within seven days of any change to residential address, telephone number, email address via MyMurdoch (overseas candidates must ensure that their Australian contact details are current to comply with their visa conditions);
- 12.3 completing all mandatory induction and training courses, including safety and ethics workshops, as soon as is practical after commencing candidature. Failure to complete this requirement may result in termination of candidature;
- 12.4 submitting Progress Reports to the Supervisory Panel as required;
- 12.5 proactively maintaining and monitoring their own academic progress as noted in progress reports;
- 12.6 advising the Principal Supervisor about any proposed leave during the candidature and applying to the Dean for Parental Leave or a Leave of Absence, in accordance with these Regulations;
- 12.7 submitting the title of the thesis, with a draft abstract of approximately 300 words, at least two months before submission for examination;
- 12.8 completing the online Graduation Statement including an abstract of 80-100 words, which also meets the Australian Higher Education Graduate Statement requirement; and
- 12.9 producing final copies of the thesis in accordance with the requirements as established by this University.

*Please refer to the electronic copy in the Policy and Procedure Manager to ensure you are referring to the latest version.*