

Category: [Research and Research Training](#)
Version: 5
Document Type: Policy
Document Status: Published
Approved On: 04 July, 2022
Audience: Staff, Students, Research, Academic
Effective Date: 02 July, 2022
Review due by: 31 March, 2023
Policy Approver: Academic Board
Policy Steward: Academic Secretary
Supporting Process: [Research Training Processes](#)

Supervisor Eligibility and Registration Policy (MPF1322)

1. Objective

The objective of this policy is to ensure the maintenance of academic standards and integrity in the eligibility criteria and appointment of supervisors of graduate research candidates.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all:

- (a) graduate research courses;
- (b) University staff responsible for graduate research courses and candidates; and
- (c) people external to the University appointed as external supervisors or examiners.

3. Authority

This policy is made under the [University of Melbourne Act 2009 \(Vic\)](#) and the [Academic Board Regulation](#) , and supports compliance with the:

- (a) *Higher Education Support Act 2003* ;
- (b) Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) 2013;
- (c) Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018; and
- (d) Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015.

4. Policy

Eligibility to supervise

4.1. All supervisors must:

- (a) meet the eligibility criteria of this policy;

(b) abide by all relevant legislation and University policies, in particular those policies on research conduct and staff conduct; and

(c) perform their role as supervisors in accordance with this policy.

4.2. In addition to the conditions in 4.1 above, all principal and co-supervisors must:

(a) have no more than seven full-time equivalent enrolled higher degree by research candidates under their supervision at any time unless otherwise approved by their dean; and

(b) complete supervisor training before registration and undertake refresher training every five years.

4.3. When approving supervisory load above seven full-time equivalent enrolled graduate research candidates, the dean considers:

(a) University, faculty and department workload models;

(b) workload balance between administrative, teaching and research commitments;

(c) completion rates of the supervisor's previous students;

(d) consideration for exceptions based on discipline-specific issues; and

(e) evidence that there is a supervisory team with involvement of co-supervisors.

4.4. Principal supervisors must be:

(a) academic staff members of the University in a continuing or fixed-term role who:

i. hold a doctoral degree, or have equivalent research experience; and

ii. are classified at Level B or above; and

iii. have continuing active participation in original research, or are otherwise making original contributions to research and publishing, as determined by the relevant faculty criteria, approved by the dean; or

(b) Professors emeritus or honorary fellows who hold a doctoral degree or have equivalent research experience and have continuing active participation in original research; or

(c) clinical honorary fellows at Level B or above who hold a doctoral degree or have equivalent research experience and have continuing active participation in original research.

4.5. Co-supervisors must be:

(a) any person eligible to be a principal supervisor; or

(b) subject to the approval of the relevant dean, academic staff members in a continuing or fixed-term role at Level A and who have a continuing active participation in original research.

4.6. External supervisors must be:

(a) appropriately qualified with sufficient professional experience to assist in supervision; and

(b) approved by the dean.

4.7. Where a candidate is enrolled in a dual or jointly awarded degree, the supervisors of the partner institution must be eligible to supervise according to their own institution's policy.

Eligibility to Chair Advisory Committees

4.8. A principal supervisor who, typically, has supervised at least three graduate researchers to completion, either at the University of Melbourne or elsewhere.

5. Procedural principles

Supervisor registration

5.1. Applications for supervisor registration must be endorsed by the relevant dean. All applicants must complete the supervisor training before they are eligible for registration.

5.2. The dean must maintain the record of registration status of supervisors in their faculty.

5.3. Eligible persons may be registered if:

(a) within the last five years at any University, they have supervised or co-supervised (at a minimum supervisory percentage load of 25% for the duration of the candidature) at least one candidate to successful completion, at the same level or higher to which they will supervise and they have completed an experienced supervisor training refresher at the University within the last 5 years; or

(b) they have completed new supervisor training and accepted the appointment of a mentor and comply with a mentoring plan agreed with the relevant dean.

Revocation or variation of supervisor registration

5.4. The registration of University staff is revoked if one or more of the following conditions applies:

(a) they cease employment with the University; and/or

(b) they are no longer actively participating in original research; and/or

(c) they fail to complete refresher training within six months of being required to do so.

5.5. The registration of professors emeritus, honorary fellows and clinical honorary fellows is revoked if one or more of the following conditions applies:

(a) they cease their honorary appointment with the University; and/or

(b) they are no longer actively participating in original research; and/or

(c) they fail to complete refresher training within six months of being required to do so.

5.6. A supervisor who ceases their employment or honorary appointment may apply to the dean to continue as an external supervisor for current candidates.

5.7. A supervisor whose registration has been revoked is not permitted to continue supervising current candidates in the capacity of a principal or co-supervisor.

5.8. For University staff members matters related to supervisor registration, load and performance are managed within the Performance Development Framework. Any decision to vary or revoke supervisor registration on a performance basis is managed through the University's unsatisfactory work performance process.

5.9. For honorary fellows and clinical honorary fellows:

- (a) the dean reviews supervisor registration, load and performance at least annually;
- (b) the dean must discuss any concerns with the registered supervisor in the first instance;
- (c) if the dean determines that skills development is required, they must consult with the registered supervisor and the supervisor's non-University employer and give the supervisor a reasonable amount of time to rectify any problems; and
- (d) if, having given the registered supervisor time to rectify any problems, the dean is not satisfied that the supervisor's performance or capacity has improved, the dean may vary or revoke the supervisor's registration.

5.10. While a supervisor's performance is being reviewed under 5.8 or 5.9, the supervisor must not be assigned supervision of additional candidates, and their net supervision load must not be increased.

5.11. For the avoidance of doubt, a significant breach of University policies may result in a supervisor's registration being revoked.

5.12. While any allegations of supervisor misconduct are under investigation, the supervisor must adhere to any reasonable management direction with regards to supervision of candidates.

5.13. Any supervisor who has been de-registered may not retain supervision of current candidates.

5.14. The dean is responsible for ensuring suitable arrangements for the ongoing supervision of candidates whose supervisors' registration has been revoked or varied in accordance with the [Graduate Research Training Policy](#) .

5.15. If a staff member wishes to raise a grievance in regard to a decision to vary or revoke their registration they can do so under the terms of the University's Enterprise Agreement.

5.16. A previously de-registered supervisor may apply to be re-registered. The application must:

- (a) demonstrate that the conditions leading to the de-registration have been resolved;
- (b) include a formal performance management plan and the appointment of a mentor; and
- (c) be endorsed by the head of department and the relevant dean;

5.17. Any records created through the implementation of this policy must be managed in accordance with the University's [Records Management Policy](#) .

6. Roles and responsibilities

Role/Decision/Action	Responsibility	Conditions and limitations
Approve supervisory load	Dean of the relevant faculty or head of department authorised by the dean to act	In accordance with section 4.3 of this policy
Endorse applications for supervisor registration	Dean or head of department and faculty associate dean (research training) or equivalent, authorised by the dean to act	
Maintain the registration status of supervisors	Dean or head of department, authorised by the dean to act	

Annually review the supervisor registration, load and performance of honorary fellows and clinical honorary fellows:	Dean or head of department, authorised by the dean to act	
Apply for de-registration of a supervisor and submission of a supervisory plan to RHDC	Dean, or head of department and endorsed by the dean	
Apply for re-registration	Supervisor	Must have the support of the head of department and the dean

7. Definitions

Advisory committee is a committee appointed by the head of department in which the candidate is enrolled.

Candidate means any person admitted to and enrolled in a planned course of research leading to a graduate research course at the University of Melbourne. A candidate is a student of the University.

Co-supervisor means an appropriately qualified person designated to assist in the academic supervision of a candidate's research and candidature.

Department means the academic department, school or research centre that has responsibility for the candidate.

External supervisor means an appropriately qualified person who is neither employed by the University nor holds an honorary appointment at the University, who assists in the academic supervision of a candidate's research and candidature.

Principal supervisor means an appropriately qualified person who takes primary responsibility for the academic supervision of a candidate's research and candidature.

Supervisor means an appropriately qualified person who is responsible for the academic supervision of a graduate research course candidate.

University means the University of Melbourne.

POLICY APPROVER

Academic Board

POLICY STEWARD

Academic Secretary

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed by 31 March 2023.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	President, Academic Board	20 July 2016	21 July 2016	New policy resulting from the University's revised regulatory framework and the policy consolidation project (incorporating the former Supervision of Research Higher Degree Students Policy (MPF1244)).
2	Academic Board	26 March 2020	27 May 2020	Modifications throughout to reflect eligibility changes and status changes if registration is revoked.
3	Academic Board	24 March 2022	25 March 2022	Minor amendments. Changes as follows: Editorial at 5.3. Addition of "Professor Emeritus" to 5.5, 5.8 (b) Deletion of 4.4 (c)
4	N/A	N/A	N/A	<i>Created in error.</i>
5	President, Academic Board	4 July 2022	4 July 2022	4.1 has been separated into two clauses to clarify that external supervisors are not required to complete supervisor training and be registered Editorial amendment to combine 5.3(a) and (b) into one run-on clause.