

# 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; and
- (c) Australian Code of Conduct for Research 2007.

## 4. Policy

### Eligibility to supervise

4.1 All supervisors must:

- (a) meet the eligibility criteria of this policy;
- (b) be registered to supervise in accordance with this policy;
- (c) abide by all relevant legislation and University policies, in particular those policies on research conduct and staff conduct;
- (d) be qualified or have equivalent professional experience to at least the same AQF level at which they are supervising;
- (e) perform their role as supervisors in accordance with this policy;
- (f) 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
- (g) complete supervisor training before registration and undertake refresher training every five years.

4.2 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.

4.3 Principal supervisors must be:

- (a) academic staff members of the University in a continuing or fixed-term role who:
  - i. are classified as Teaching and Research, Research Focused, or Academic Specialist at Level B or above; or
  - ii. classified as Teaching Focussed at Level B or above and have the approval of the relevant dean to act as a principal supervisory the dean; and
  - iii. have continuing active participation in original research, or otherwise making original contributions to research and publishing, as determined by the relevant faculty criteria, approved by the dean; or
- (b) honorary fellows who have continuing active participation in original research; or
- (c) clinical honorary fellows at Level B and or above who have continuing active participation in original research.

4.4 Co-supervisors must be:

- (a) any person eligible to be a principal supervisor; or
- (b) academic staff members in a continuing or fixed-term role who are classified as Teaching Specialists at Level B or above; or
- (c) subject to the approval of the relevant dean, academic staff members in a continuing or fixed-term role who:
  - i. are classified as Research Focused or Teaching and Research at Level A; and
  - ii. have a continuing active participation in original research; or
- (d) emeritus professors who have an active continuing participation in research.

4.5 External supervisors must be:

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

- (b) approved by the dean.

## 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 University staff members 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 within the last five years at any University; and

- (b) they have completed an experienced supervisor training refresher at the University within the last 5 years; or

- (c) they have completed new supervisor training, accepted the appointment of either a registered supervisor to be the principal or co-supervisor of a candidate, or accepted the appointment of a mentor and comply with a mentoring plan agreed with the relevant dean.

5.4 The registration of University staff continues until one of the following conditions applies:

- (a) they cease employment with the University;

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

- (c) they have their supervisory privileges revoked as set out below.

5.5 The registration of honorary fellows and clinical honorary fellows continues until one of the following conditions applies:

- (a) they cease their honorary appointment with the University;

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

- (c) they have their supervisory privileges revoked as set out below.

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 For University staff members:

- (a) matters related to supervisor registration, load and performance are managed within the Performance Development Framework;

(b) the supervisor's manager discusses any concerns with the registered supervisor, and where required, agrees to a development plan and gives the supervisor a reasonable length of time to rectify any problems; and

(c) if, after having agreed on a development plan and having given the registered supervisor time to rectify any problems, the manager believes the supervisor's registration should be revoked, they may recommend to the dean that the supervisor be de-registered.

5.8 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 head of department believes the supervisor's registration should be revoked, they may recommend to the dean that the supervisor be de-registered.

5.9 In a decision to revoke a supervisor's registration, the dean may consider whether:

(a) a supervisor no longer has continuing active participation in original research;

(b) there is a record of students failing and/or not completing owing to poor supervision, as substantiated by the head of department;

(c) there is a failure to complete the relevant supervisor training within two years of being due to do so;

(d) concerns and recommendations regarding supervision have been raised by the advisory committee and the recommendations accepted by the head of department;

(e) there is evidence of multiple student requests to change supervisor and the standard of supervision is a factor in the change request;

(f) there is evidence of a pattern of non-compliance with research training policies, procedures and guidelines; and/or

(g) two or more informal and/or formal complaints or grievances regarding supervisory practices have been substantiated after investigation.

5.10 Applications for de-registration and a supervisory plan for the supervisor's current candidates must be approved by the relevant dean then submitted to the Research Higher Degrees Committee (RHDC).

5.11 Any supervisor who has been de-registered may, with the approval of the relevant dean and the RHDC, retain supervision of current candidates, where:

(a) a supervisory plan has been agreed by the supervisor and the head(s) of department(s) of the candidates; and

(b) the dean has appointed a formal mentor to the supervisor.

5.12 At the request of the supervisor, the RHDC may facilitate a meeting between the supervisor, their head of department and the relevant dean. The supervisor is entitled to have a support person present at the meeting. At the meeting the RHDC may:

(a) consider whether the principles of procedural fairness have been applied and whether the decision to revoke registration was justified; and/or

(b) express their view and make suggestions to the parties involved.

5.13 If a staff member wishes to appeal a decision to revoke their registration they can do so according to the processes outlined in [Part N of the Enterprise Agreement](#).

5.14 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;

(c) be endorsed by the head of department and the relevant dean; and

(d) be submitted to RHDC for approval.

5.15 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

<i>Role/Decision/Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Conditions and limitations</i>
Approve supervisory load	Dean of the relevant faculty or head of department authorised by the dean to act	In accordance with section 4.2 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	Dean or head of department, authorised by the	

of honorary fellows and clinical honorary fellows:	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 30 June 2019.

## VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved	Approval	Effective	Sections Modified
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	<b>By</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date</b>	
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)).