# **Graduate Research Training Policy (MPF1321)**

**Category:**  [Research and Research Training](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/category/Research and Research Training/)   
**Version:** 31  
**Document Type:** Policy  
**Document Status:** Published  
**Approved Date:** 11 September, 2024  
**Audience:** Staff, Students, Research, Academic  
**Effective Date:** 01 January, 2025  
**Review due by:** 01 January, 2028  
**Policy Approver:** Academic Board  
**Policy Steward:** Academic Secretary  
**Supporting Process:**   
[Research and Research Training Processes](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes)

1. Objective
   1. The purpose of this policy is to prescribe the principles and academic standards governing graduate research training.
2. Scope
   1. This policy applies to graduate research candidates, their supervisors, advisory committees, faculties, departments and University administrators. It does not apply to higher doctorates.
   2. Some requirements for graduate research courses are stated by other policies:
      1. the Selection and Admission Policy ([MPF1295](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1295/)) details course entry requirements and accountability for selection decisions
      2. the Enrolment and Timetabling Policy ([MPF1294](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1294/)) sets requirements for enrolment, study load, expected course duration, leave and course withdrawal
      3. the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1363/)) states academic performance and progress requirements to maintain candidature
      4. the Courses, Subjects, Awards and Programs Policy ([MPF1327](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1327/)) states course design requirements and defines course duration
      5. the Intellectual Property Policy ([MPF1320](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1320/)) states how research outputs will be managed
      6. the Research Data Management Policy ([MPF1242](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1242/)) states how research data and records generated during candidature will be managed
      7. the Research Ethics and Biorisk Management Policy ([MPF1341](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1341/)) states requirements for the ethical conduct of research including compliance with export control legislation and regulations
      8. the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1318/)) states requirements for the responsible conduct of research
      9. the Authorship Policy ([MPF1181)](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1181/) states requirements for recognising significant intellectual or scholarly contribution to a research output.
3. Authority
   1. This policy is made under the [*University of Melbourne Act 2009* (Vic)](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/web_notes/ldms/pubstatbook.nsf/edfb620cf7503d1aca256da4001b08af/489fcdb5278f3602ca25767f00102b11/$file/09-078a.pdf) and the [Academic Board Regulation](http://unimelb.edu.au/governance/statutes) and supports compliance with the:
      1. [*Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018*](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018) (the Code)
      2. Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
      3. *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*.
4. Policy
   1. The University will foster outstanding graduate research training by providing:
      1. a safe, respectful and inclusive environment to develop knowledge and skills
      2. high quality supervision, ensuring supervisors are capable, trained and registered to the standards set by the University
      3. opportunities to undertake professional and career development during candidature.
   2. Graduate research selection and admission processes will be transparent, fair and based on merit. Selection decisions will consider:
      1. applicants’ research potential and contribution to the University’s research objectives
      2. the required resources, facilities and supervisory arrangements for the applicants’ full candidature duration
      3. the provisions for Indigenous applicants set by the Selection and Admission Policy ([MPF1295](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1295/)).
   3. Relationships between candidates and supervisors will be professional and respectful, as underpinned by the principles and obligations set out in the:
      1. [Student Charter](https://students.unimelb.edu.au/student-life/policy-and-conduct/student-charter)
      2. Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy ([MPF1359](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1359))
      3. Student Conduct Policy ([MPF1324](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1324/)), and
      4. Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy ([MPF13](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1328/)28).
   4. Any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest that arise during candidature will be identified, declared and avoided or managed in accordance with the Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy ([MPF1366](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1366/)). The procedural principles in Section 5 outline conflicts that must be avoided.
   5. Progression against candidature milestones will be assured through systematic assessment of academic progress and standards of research.
   6. Examination processes will be fair and transparent, and assessment of the quality of the research will be based on merit.
   7. The University will make reasonable adjustments to support equitable access and participation for candidates in accordance with legislative obligations. Any accommodation or adjustment made on this basis must consider the nature and impact of the candidate's circumstances, and must be designed to:
      1. maintain the integrity, validity, and reliability of review and examination processes, and
      2. support the candidate to meet the core participation requirements for their course and achieve the intended learning outcomes.
   8. The University will provide fair complaints and appeals processes to address concerns or grievances that may arise during candidature.

Responsibilities

* 1. The Academic Board is responsible for overseeing the quality of research training and graduate research courses at the University and monitoring potential risks.
  2. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) is accountable for the management of graduate research.
  3. Deans are responsible for managing and maintaining the provision of high-quality research training in their faculty.
  4. Supervisors are responsible for:
     1. guiding and supporting candidates through all stages of candidature
     2. complying with [the Code](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018) and University policies governing the conduct of research
     3. fulfilling their obligations in accordance with the [Roles and responsibilities of supervisors](https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/students-teaching/graduate-research/supervising-students/expectations-responsibilities).
  5. The advisory committee is responsible for:
     1. supporting the candidate
     2. ensuring that the candidate’s research project is achievable within the maximum course duration
     3. supporting the supervision team
     4. monitoring the progress of the candidate’s research project in accordance with the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1363/)).
  6. Candidates are responsible for:
     1. complying with University policies and processes including the [Student Charter](https://students.unimelb.edu.au/student-life/policy-and-conduct/student-charter) and Supervisory Agreement
     2. complying with [the Code](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2018) and any other applicable regulatory requirements
     3. meeting [expectations and responsibilities](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/roles-and-responsibilities/meeting-expectations) as described in the Graduate Research Hub
     4. upholding the University’s standards for honest, responsible and ethical research conduct.

1. Procedural principles

Supervision arrangements

* 1. All candidates are supported from commencement of their candidature to submission of their thesis by a supervision team and an advisory committee.
  2. The roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee, committee members, and chair are documented in [Schedule 1: Advisory committees](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/447218/Schedule-1-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  3. A graduate research supervisory agreement must be completed within 3 months of commencement and reviewed regularly throughout candidature.

**Supervisor registration and allocation**

* 1. Eligibility criteria for supervisory and advisory roles is defined in [Schedule 2: Supervisory and advisory roles](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/447220/Schedule-2-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  2. The head of department approves the registration of graduate research supervisors. The dean approves the allocation of supervisors to candidates.
  3. A supervisor must not be in a [close personal relationship](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1366/) with the candidate or the advisory committee chair.
  4. A supervisor who wishes to supervise more than 10 candidates enrolled at the University, excluding any visiting candidates, must obtain the dean’s approval to do so for each additional candidate. The dean must consider:
     1. evidence the supervisor has sufficient time and capability to adequately support an additional candidate
     2. the supervisor’s track record of completions, and
     3. the endorsement of the relevant head of department.

**Supervision teams**

* 1. The University will provide each candidate with a team of suitably qualified and registered supervisors (supervision team) to support the effective completion of the candidate’s course.
  2. Each candidate will be allocated a minimum of two academic supervisors. The minimum requirements for a supervision team are:
     1. a principal supervisor and a co-supervisor, or
     2. a principal supervisor and an external-academic supervisor.
  3. Supervisors must be assigned minimum supervisory loads in accordance with [Schedule 2: Supervisory and advisory roles](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/447220/Schedule-2-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  4. Supervision teams may include additional supervisors, including industry-based supervisors.
  5. The principal supervisor:
     1. is based in the same department as the candidate, unless otherwise approved by the dean
     2. must take primary responsibility for the candidate’s research focus and progress
     3. should intend to supervise the candidate for the expected course duration.

**Change of supervisor**

* 1. Requests to change supervisory arrangements can be initiated by the candidate, the supervisor(s), or the advisory committee chair. Any change to supervisory arrangements must:
     1. be approved in accordance with Table 1
     2. comply with supervisor eligibility requirements
     3. take into consideration consultation with the supervisors and candidate
     4. ensure the new supervisory team has the required expertise to support the candidate to completion.
  2. If a principal supervisor is unable to supervise a candidate to course completion, the head of department must appoint a new principal supervisor.
  3. If the principal supervisor is unavailable for two or more consecutive months during the candidature period, the head of department must appoint an interim principal supervisor.
  4. The head of department may assign new or additional supervisor(s) if the supervision team lacks the required expertise or where supervisory arrangements are unsatisfactory.

**Reviews of eligibility**

* 1. The dean will review supervisor registration annually.
  2. If a supervisor ceases to meet the eligibility criteria in [Schedule 2: Supervisory and advisory roles](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/447220/Schedule-2-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf), their registration will be revoked and they will no longer be permitted to supervise current candidates.
  3. The head of department must ensure continuity of supervisory arrangements for candidates whose supervisor’s registration has been revoked or varied.
  4. A previously de-registered supervisor may apply to be re-registered, subject to endorsement by the head of department and approval by the relevant dean.

**Review of supervision performance**

* 1. Employee matters related to supervisor performance are managed within the [Academic Performance Development Framework](https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/human-resources/academic-careers/academic-performance-development-framework).
  2. Any decision to vary or revoke an employee’s supervisor registration on a performance basis is managed through:
     1. the University’s unsatisfactory work performance process as outlined in the [Enterprise Agreement](https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/human-resources/enterprise-agreement), or
     2. for senior managers and executives, their contractual terms of employment, and the *Fair Work Act 2009*(Cth).
  3. An employee’s supervisor registration may be revoked in response to a finding of misconduct or serious misconduct, in line with the processes outlined in the [Enterprise Agreement](https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/human-resources/enterprise-agreement).
  4. Employee grievances about a decision to vary or revoke supervision registration may be made:
     1. under the terms of the University’s [Enterprise Agreement](https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/human-resources/enterprise-agreement), or
     2. for senior managers and executives, under the dispute resolution provisions of their contract of employment.
  5. The head of department is responsible for reviewing the performance of honorary fellows and honorary clinical fellows performing a supervisory role.

Enrolment

* 1. Candidates must ensure that their enrolment meets course requirements, is consistent with approved course structures and meets student visa conditions, scholarship and/or sponsorship requirements.
  2. Candidates enrolled in a joint research degree may be subject to additional or varied conditions regarding their candidature, supervision, the thesis and thesis examination. Additional conditions will be described in the relevant Individual Graduate Researcher Agreement (IGRA) under which the candidate has been enrolled.
  3. Changes to enrolment must be endorsed and approved in accordance with Table 1 and any requirements stated in the Enrolment and Timetabling Policy ([MPF1294](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1294/)).

**Table 1: Approval to change enrolment**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Enrolment change type** | **Endorse** | **Approve** |
| Department of project | Principal supervisor | Head of department (current faculty), and  Dean of proposed faculty (if applicable) |
| Supervisor or advisory committee | Advisory committee chair | Head of department |
| Minor change in project, thesis title or field of research codes | - | Principal supervisor (or delegate) |
| Substantive change in project, thesis title or field of research code | Principal supervisor | Head of department (or delegate) |
| Study rate | - | Principal supervisor (or delegate) |
| Add or remove coursework subject | Principal supervisor | Subject coordinator |
| Transfer to another graduate research course | Principal supervisor | Head of department (current faculty), and  Dean of proposed faculty (if applicable) |
| Commencement date | - | Principal supervisor (or delegate) |
| Request to Study Away | Refer to the Student Travel and Transport Policy ([MPF1209](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1209/)) | |

**Leave**

* 1. Periods of leave must comply with the Enrolment and Timetabling Policy ([MPF1294](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1294/)), expected course duration and the maximum submission date for examination.
  2. Where the candidate is enrolled in a joint research degree, the supervisor from the partner institution must be consulted on all leave requests.

**Transfer from another institution**

* 1. A candidate who wants to transfer to the University from another institution must:
     1. apply in accordance with the Selection and Admission Policy ([MPF1295](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1295/))
     2. meet the eligibility requirements of the course to which they wish to transfer
     3. meet the requirements of this policy, and
     4. satisfy their prospective supervisors and the dean of their ability to complete within the expected course duration.
  2. Candidature time undertaken at another institution will be deducted from the course duration.
  3. A dean may admit a candidate directly into confirmed candidature if they have successfully completed the confirmation requirements for the project in a graduate research course at the same or higher AQF level at another Australian institution or at the University.

**Internal transfer**

* 1. A currently enrolled candidate who wishes to change from one University graduate research course to another may apply to transfer.
  2. The date of commencement for candidates who are transferring internally will be backdated to the date of commencement of their current course and any candidature time consumed will be deducted from the course duration.
  3. Doctoral candidates transferring to a masters degree (research) who have exceeded the maximum course duration may be granted an extension of the maximum submission date, subject to approval by the relevant dean. Where approved, the revised maximum submission date for the masters degree (research) thesis will be the sooner of:
     1. the date of transfer plus one calendar year, or
     2. their doctoral maximum submission date, as per Table 4.

Location of study

**Residency requirement**

* 1. All candidates, including those who transfer from a graduate research course at another institution, must complete a minimum amount of study at the University (the residency requirement) as follows:
     1. 12 months equivalent full time student load (EFTSL) for doctoral degree
     2. 6 months EFTSL for masters degree (research).
  2. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) for graduate research may waive the minimum residency requirement if they are satisfied that:
     1. exceptional circumstances exist that prevent the applicant from complying with the residency requirement
     2. the applicant has a demonstrated capacity to work independently and effectively, and
     3. the applicant has provided a plan for their regular attendance at the University that has been endorsed by their supervisors.
  3. The residency requirement does not apply if the candidate is located at an approved outside institution.

**Approved outside institutions**

* 1. Candidates may be located at an [approved outside institution](https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/students-teaching/graduate-research/policy/approved-outside-institutions) for the duration of their candidature if they:
     1. attend the University in person to take part in activities required by the enrolling department, and
     2. meet all progress requirements for their course.
  2. The PVC for graduate research may approve outside institutions for the placement of candidates where the following criteria are met:
     1. the academic environment and standard of research at the institution is comparable to that of an internationally recognised university
     2. the institution can provide supervision in accordance with this policy
     3. the institution is willing to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the University to formalise the placement of candidates at the institution, and
     4. adding the institution to the approved list will not significantly impact the selection of examiners for University graduate research theses.
  3. The PVC for graduate research maintains and publishes the list of [approved outside institutions](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/roles-and-responsibilities/outside-institutions-list).

**Study away from University campuses**

* 1. Candidates who wish to undertake research activities while not resident at the University must apply to study away in accordance with this policy and the Student Travel and Transport Policy ([MPF1209](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1209/)).
  2. Time spent studying away from the University is counted towards course duration as defined in Table 4.
  3. Candidates who are studying away must meet all progress requirements including academic progress reviews and submission deadlines.
  4. Regular academic supervision must be maintained during study away periods.

Candidature progression

* 1. The University supports candidates to achieve timely completion, through:
     1. formal progress reviews under the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1363/)) which candidates must successfully complete at standard milestones, as specified in Table 2, and
     2. ongoing monitoring and feedback provided by supervisors and the advisory committee throughout the duration of candidature.

**Table 2: Standard progress milestones**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Candidature milestone** | **Doctoral degree** | **Masters by research** |
| Pre-confirmation progress review | 6 months EFTSL | - |
| Confirmation | 1 year EFTSL (1 year, 6 months if ≥ 75 credit points of mandatory coursework) | 6 months EFTSL |
| Progress review | 2 years EFTSL | 1 year EFTSL |
| Second progress review | 3 years EFTSL | 1 year, 6 months EFTSL |
| Third progress review | 3 years, 6 months EFTSL | - |
| Completion seminar | Within 6 calendar months of thesis submission | |

* 1. Part-time candidates must complete additional progress reviews so that there is a formal assessment of progress at least once every calendar year.
  2. Where a candidate does not successfully complete a progress review, their academic progress may be deemed at risk. Appropriate remedial and support measures must be implemented under the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1363/)) to assist the candidate to achieve timely completion.

**Confirmation**

* 1. Candidates must progress from probationary candidature to confirmed candidature by completing the requirements documented in the [Confirmation Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/confirmation).
  2. Candidates must successfully complete the confirmation requirements for their course by the maximum probationary period outlined in Table 3.

**Table 3: Probationary candidature period**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Probationary period** | **Doctoral degree (research and professional)** | **Masters degree (research)** |
| Minimum probationary period | 6 months EFTSL | 3 months EFTSL |
| Maximum probationary period | 1 year EFTSL (1 year, 6 months if ≥ 75 credit points of mandatory coursework) | 6 months EFTSL |
| Extension to the maximum probationary period | Up to 3 months (up to 1.25 consumed EFTSL maximum) | Up to 6 weeks (up to 0.625 consumed EFTSL maximum) |

* 1. A candidate who has not been confirmed by the end of the maximum probationary period will be placed ‘at risk’. The candidate’s advisory committee must follow the procedures set out in the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1363/)).
  2. An extension to probationary candidature may only be approved by the head of department if a confirmation meeting is delayed for reasons beyond the candidate’s control.

**Training and development**

* 1. Supervision teams will support candidates to undertake opportunities for skills training and development including through the [Researcher Development Unit](https://research.unimelb.edu.au/facilities/support/researcher-development-unit).
  2. Candidates must complete all <mandatory training> within the first six months EFTSL of candidature. The PVC for graduate research will periodically review mandatory training requirements.
  3. Candidates may undertake an internship of up to 120 EFTSL days during their enrolment, including while under examination, if:
     1. the internship scope and conditions have been confirmed in an agreement between the University and the external party, and
     2. the candidate:
        1. is making satisfactory progress
        2. has completed mandatory research integrity training
        3. has the approval of their principal supervisor
        4. has been approved to [study away](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/being-a-candidate/study-away) if applicable, and
        5. can complete the internship prior to completion of their course.

**Completion seminar**

* 1. Candidates must present their research findings at a public completion seminar within the six months prior to thesis submission, in accordance with the [Completion Seminar Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/completion-seminar).

Completion timeframes

**Course duration and maximum submission date for examination**

* 1. Graduate research course duration is summarised in Table 4. The calculation of the maximum submission date is based on the maximum course duration and a provision for late submission in exceptional circumstances.
  2. Candidature may be extended in six-month (EFTSL) increments up to the maximum course duration:
     1. subject to progression through compulsory milestones, and
     2. with the approval of the advisory committee.

**Table 4: Course duration**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Doctoral degree (research and professional)** | **Masters degree (research)** |
| Minimum period of candidature | 2 years EFTSL | Course without mandatory coursework – 6 months EFTSL  Course with mandatory coursework – 1 year EFTSL |
| Expected course duration | 3 years EFTSL | 1.5 years EFTSL |
| Maximum course duration | 4 years EFTSL | 2 years EFTSL |
| Maximum course duration (candidate enrolled on or before 1 March 2020 and had not reached the maximum course duration at that date) | 4.5 years EFTSL | 2.5 years EFTSL |

* 1. In limited circumstances, a candidate who is unable to submit their thesis by the maximum course duration may apply for late submission in accordance with Table 5. Only candidates confirmed on or before 31 December 2017 are eligible to apply for lapse.

**Table 5: Lapse and late submission timelines**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Doctoral degree (research and professional)** | **Masters degree (research)** |
| **Late submission (candidature was confirmed on or after 1 January 2018)** | | |
| Late submission (initial period) | 6 calendar months | 3 calendar months |
| Late submission (maximum period) | 2 calendar years | 1 calendar year |
| **Lapse (candidature was confirmed on or before 31 December 2017)** | | |
| Lapse period | 2 calendar years | 1 calendar year |
| Maximum extension to lapse period | 2 calendar years | 1 calendar year |

**Late submission (for candidates confirmed on or after 1 January 2018)**

* 1. Applications for late submission are made by the candidate’s advisory committee and considered by a late submission panel, in accordance with the [Late Submission Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/late-submission).
  2. The late submission panel is composed of:
     1. the faculty ADGR or equivalent, who will chair the panel
     2. one academic employee from a faculty other than the candidate’s faculty, appointed by the PVC for graduate research, and
     3. one academic employee from the candidate’s faculty, appointed by the ADGR.
  3. All members of the late submission panel must have significant research training experience, be registered supervisors and have a record of timely completions.
  4. A supervisor or advisory committee chair of a candidate under consideration by the panel may not serve on a late submission panel. If the panel chair is conflicted, the dean must appoint another senior academic from the faculty as the panel chair.
  5. A quorum for the late submission panel is three members.
  6. Late submission may only be approved where the candidate:
     1. provides evidence that they have sufficient understanding of the research topic to make completion likely
     2. has set out an achievable plan for completion within the requested period, and
     3. makes a strong case that research has been delayed due to circumstances which are beyond their control and related to the conduct of the research.
  7. The late submission panel may approve an initial late submission period of 6 calendar months. In exceptional circumstances the chair of the late submission panel may grant further periods of late submission, up to the maximum late submission period in Table 4.
  8. On the recommendation of a dean, the PVC for graduate research may waive the maximum time to submit for examination for a particular candidate.
  9. The total late submission period including any extension(s) must not exceed:
     1. 2 calendar years for doctoral degrees
     2. 1 calendar year for masters by research degrees.
  10. Candidates who have successfully completed an [approved research internship](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/developing-my-skills/graduate-research-internships) of at least 60 EFTSL days are eligible for late submission of an equivalent duration to the internship.
  11. Candidates will remain enrolled during late submission and provided with access to:
      1. University services such as a student email account and library
      2. an advisory committee and ongoing supervision
      3. University facilities, where required.
  12. A candidate’s progress is deemed unsatisfactory, and their enrolment is terminated without further warning if the candidate:
      1. is not approved for late submission and does not submit their thesis by the maximum course duration plus 10 business days
      2. is approved for late submission and does not submit their thesis by the approved maximum submission date plus 10 business days.

**Lapse (for candidates confirmed on or before 31 December 2017)**

* 1. The advisory committee may recommend that the dean approve a period of lapse if they consider the candidate has:
     1. demonstrated sufficient understanding of the research topic to make thesis completion likely
     2. provided a credible plan for completion during the lapsed candidature period, and
     3. personal circumstances that will support completion during the lapse period.
  2. If an application to lapse is rejected, the candidate is classified as making unsatisfactory progress and the dean will issue a formal warning of unsatisfactory progress in accordance with the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1363/)).
  3. Candidates who are permitted to lapse:
     1. will have access to University services such as a student email account and library
     2. will not be able to access University facilities, unless otherwise approved by the head of department
     3. may be provided with access to an advisory committee or ongoing supervision with permission from the relevant dean.
  4. Candidates are not enrolled during lapse, except where they have been approved to access University facilities, and must return to active candidature to submit their thesis.
  5. A dean may approve an extension to lapse in accordance with Table 4 where compelling personal, medical or compassionate grounds exist.
  6. The total lapse period including any extension(s) must not exceed:
     1. 4 calendar years for doctoral degrees
     2. 2 calendar years for masters by research degrees.
  7. A candidate’s enrolment will be terminated if they do not submit their thesis within the agreed period of lapse.

Submission

**Eligibility to submit**

* 1. To be eligible to submit their thesis for examination, candidates must have:
     1. a current enrolment and active candidature
     2. met the minimum period of candidature
     3. been confirmed
     4. met the minimum residency requirement for study
     5. presented their research findings at a public completion seminar
     6. approval from the principal supervisor and the chair of examiners to submit for examination.
  2. In exceptional circumstances, the PVC for graduate research may grant permission to submit a thesis before the minimum period of candidature.
  3. If the principal supervisor or chair of examiners does not approve the thesis to proceed to examination, they must document the reasons for their decision in a report to the PVC for graduate research and the candidate. In response, the candidate may:
     1. withdraw the submitted thesis and submit an amended version, provided they have a current enrolment and active candidature, or
     2. request that the examination proceed and provide a written response to the PVC for graduate research, who will make a decision on the basis of the reports provided.

**Submission requirements**

* 1. The thesis embodies the results of original research and must:
     1. address a significant research objective
     2. be primarily the candidate’s own work
     3. have been completed during the period of enrolment for the course, including transferred candidature
     4. not include work which has been submitted previously, in whole or in part for any other academic award
     5. not be substantially similar to a thesis or work previously examined or assessed and rejected unless approved by the PVC for graduate research
     6. be written in English, unless approval to submit in another language has been granted by the PVC for graduate research on commencement
     7. comply with the maximum word limit and proportion of creative outputs outlined in the [handbook](https://handbook.unimelb.edu.au/search), unless prior approval has been granted by the PVC for graduate research
     8. be prepared in accordance with the [Preparation of Graduate Research Theses Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/preparation-of-graduate-research-theses).
  2. A thesis may include:
     1. creative outputs
     2. publications, or sections of publications if:
        1. work on the publication was undertaken during candidature
        2. the candidate made a substantial contribution to the publication, in line with the Authorship Policy ([MPF1181](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1181/))
        3. the [coordinating author](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1181/) and principal supervisor have consented to the incorporation of the publication
        4. the candidate has outlined their actual contribution to the publication within the thesis.
  3. Assistance with thesis preparation must comply with:
     1. the Australian Standards for Editing Practice outlined in the [Preparation of Graduate Research Theses Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/preparation-of-graduate-research-theses), and
     2. the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1318/)).

**Selection of examiners**

* 1. Examiners must:
     1. have international standing in the research topic of the thesis
     2. be qualified to at least the same level as the award they are examining or have equivalent research experience
     3. have supervisory and/or examiner experience at the AQF level at which they examine, and
     4. be actively associated with a university or an institution of higher learning, or a research institution.
  2. Examiners must not:
     1. be employed by the University in any capacity, or have been employed at the University within the last 5 years
     2. be employed by an approved outside institution
     3. be a supervisor or advisory committee member of the candidate under examination
     4. have had direct involvement with the conduct of the research
     5. have been a close collaborator or close co-author of the candidate or their supervisors within the last 5 years
     6. have any other conflict of interest with the candidate, the supervisory team or anyone involved in the candidature.
  3. Examiners must be from different institutions, and at least one examiner must be based overseas except for:
     1. masters degree (research) examinations, where at least one examiner must be based outside Victoria
     2. doctoral examinations with creative outputs that include a live performance or exhibition, where at least one examiner must be from outside Victoria.
  4. Candidates may request the exclusion of up to two specific individuals as their examiners.
  5. Examiners are nominated by the principal supervisor and approved by the chair of examiners.
  6. In exceptional circumstances, the PVC for graduate research may approve an examiner if their experience is considered essential to the examination.

**Chair of examiners and viva chair**

* 1. The chair of examiners is the head of department of the candidate, or a person nominated by the head of department. The chair of examiners must meet the eligibility criteria for an advisory committee chair as described in [Schedule 1: Advisory committees](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/447218/Schedule-1-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  2. The viva chair is the candidate’s advisory committee chair, unless otherwise appointed by the chair of examiners, in accordance with the [Examination of Doctoral Degrees by Viva Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/examination-of-doctoral-degrees-by-viva).
  3. Where the chair of examiners or viva chair has a conflict of interest with an examiner, a different chair must be appointed.

**Research integrity concerns identified after thesis submission**

* 1. Where a potential breach of the Code is identified by an examiner or any other person after thesis submission:
     1. the examination process must be suspended, and
     2. the potential breach must be referred to the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity (OREI) for management in accordance with the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1318/)).
  2. The outcome of a preliminary assessment or investigation under the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1318/)) will inform whether the examination will resume, with or without revisions to the thesis.
  3. If the candidate is requested or permitted to revise the thesis following the conclusion of a preliminary assessment or investigation, the chair of examiners and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research (or delegate) must review the changes made to the thesis by the candidate. If the chair of examiners and DVC Research (or delegate):
     1. agree that the candidate has adequately addressed the research integrity concerns and examiners’ comments, the examination of the thesis may proceed, or
     2. conclude that the candidate has not adequately addressed the research integrity concerns or the examiners’ comments, they may recommend a Fail result, or that the candidate be given one final opportunity to make further revisions.

Examination

* 1. The purpose of graduate research examination is to assess a candidate’s capacity to design, conduct and communicate a body of original research.
  2. The award of a graduate research degree will be based on an assessment of the thesis undertaken in accordance with the mode of examination prescribed in Table 6.

**Table 6: Assessment for the award of a graduate research degree**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Award** | **Mode of examination** |
| Doctoral degree (research) – commenced on or after 1 January 2025 | Both a thesis and an oral examination (viva) on the program of research. |
| Doctoral degree (research) – commenced before 1 January 2025 | * A thesis on the program of research, or * Both a thesis and viva, where the candidate elects to be examined by viva. |
| Doctoral degree (professional) | A thesis on the program of research. |
| Masters degree (research) |

* 1. The candidate, supervisors and advisory committee members must not communicate with examiners while the thesis is under examination, regardless of mode.
  2. In cases where a confidentiality agreement is required, the thesis must not be sent to an examiner until they have signed a confidentiality agreement.

**Examination of doctoral degree by thesis**

* 1. Examiners will independently assess whether the thesis meets the examination criteria in [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf) and provide a written report recommending an outcome.
  2. An examiner may request that a candidate:
     1. make changes to or clarify any part of the thesis
     2. provide written answers to questions about the thesis or work
     3. re-present or re-document creative outputs if they do not meet the examination requirements.
  3. In exceptional circumstances, the PVC for graduate research may approve a candidate to undertake an examination by viva.
  4. Assessment that includes creative outputs will be examined as an integrated whole in accordance with the examination criteria in [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  5. Requirements for the examination of a performance or exhibition of creative works are detailed in the [Examination of a Live Performance or Exhibition Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/live-performance-and-exhibition).

**Examination of doctoral degrees by viva**

* 1. The viva is an oral examination conducted as part of the assessment of the thesis. The viva is the final summative examination event for a candidate that is conducted in accordance with the [Examination of Doctoral Degrees by Viva Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/examination-of-doctoral-degrees-by-viva).
  2. Examiners will independently assess the thesis against the criteria in [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf) and write a preliminary report. The preliminary report must not contain a provisional result.
  3. The preliminary reports are provided to the chair of examiners, viva chair and the other examiner prior to the viva. The reports are not shared with the candidate or their supervisors.
  4. There will be a single viva attended by the viva chair, two examiners and the candidate.
     1. The candidate’s supervisors must not attend the viva examination.
     2. If an examiner is unable to attend the viva at short notice (and rescheduling is impractical), the attending examiner can present questions from the absent examiner by proxy.
  5. The viva chair will:
     1. ensure the professional conduct of the viva
     2. assist the examiners to reach agreement and complete the final report
     3. not participate in the assessment or recommendation for classification of thesis
     4. take all reasonable measures to safeguard the integrity of the viva process.
  6. The PVC for graduate research may waive the requirement to hold a viva.
  7. The PVC for graduate research (or delegate) may approve reasonable alternative arrangements for the conduct of the viva.

**Examination of masters degrees (research) by thesis**

* 1. Examiners will independently assess whether the thesis meets the examination criteria in [Schedule 4: Masters degree (research) examination criteria and outcomes.](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/447226/Schedule-4-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf) Examiners will provide a written report containing a numeric mark.
  2. Examiners cannot request revisions to the masters degree (research) thesis.

**Posthumous examination**

* 1. Posthumous examination for doctoral degrees will be conducted according to *Examination of doctoral degree by thesis*.
  2. Posthumous examination for masters degree (research) will be conducted according to *Examination of masters degrees (research) by thesis*.

**Examiner conduct**

* 1. On the recommendation of the chair of examiners, the PVC for graduate research may replace an examiner and/or annul their report where:
     1. the examiner fails to return a completed examination report by the due date
     2. there has been unauthorised contact between the examiner and the candidate or their supervisors
     3. an unmanageable conflict of interest is identified during or after the examination
     4. the chair of examiners has reason to believe that the examination has otherwise not been properly conducted.
  2. Where a replacement examiner has been appointed, any report received from the examiner who has been replaced is not considered.
  3. The PVC for graduate research is authorised to redact sections of an examiner’s report in exceptional circumstances, such as where the report contains inappropriate commentary.

Outcomes of examination

* 1. The outcome of a doctoral degree examination will be one of the following:
     1. Pass (P)
     2. Pass with minor revisions (PR)
     3. Major revision (MR)
     4. Fail (F)
  2. The outcome of a masters degree (research) examination will be a numeric grading in accordance with Table 1 in [Schedule 4: Masters degree (research) examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/447226/Schedule-4-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).

**Doctoral degree examination by thesis**

* 1. An examination result cannot be confirmed until two valid examiners’ reports have been received.
  2. Following receipt of all examiners’ reports and recommendations, the examination results will be reconciled in accordance with Table 2 in [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf). The chair of examiners will review and endorse each examiner’s recommendation.
  3. Where only one examiner recommends Fail, the chair of examiners will invite the examiners to confer with each other to achieve a joint recommendation.
     1. Where an outcome of Major Revision is agreed, both examiners will assess the revised thesis.
     2. Where examiners cannot reach consensus, the PVC for graduate research may appoint an adjudicator.

**Doctoral degree examination by viva**

* 1. Following the viva, examiners are expected to reach agreement on the result through deliberation in the presence of the viva chair. If the examiners are unable to achieve consensus, the examiners’ recommendations will be reconciled in accordance with Table 2 in [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  2. Where only one examiner recommends Fail, the viva chair will invite the examiners to confer with each other to achieve a joint recommendation.
     1. Where an outcome of Major Revision is agreed, the examiners will nominate one examiner to assess the revised thesis.
     2. Where examiners cannot reach consensus, the PVC for graduate research may appoint an adjudicator.
  3. After the examiners have concluded their deliberation, the candidate is verbally advised of the examination result and given an indication of any revisions required.
  4. The examiners must co-author and submit a combined final report that provides the final result and details of any revisions required.
  5. Both examiners’ preliminary reports and the combined final report are released to the candidate and principal supervisor following approval by the chair of examiners.

**Revisions to the doctoral degree thesis**

* 1. Where revision is required as an outcome of doctoral examination (by thesis or viva), the candidate has one opportunity to ensure the thesis meets the requirements for the award of the degree. Requirements for revision to the doctoral degree thesis are provided in Table 3 in [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  2. The candidate must:
     1. revise the thesis according to each examiner’s requirements
     2. provide an enumerated index summarising any changes or revisions made with the revised thesis.
  3. Candidates who do not submit their revised thesis within the time specified in Table 3 in [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf) are awarded a Fail. In exceptional circumstances, the PVC for graduate research may grant an extension to submit the revised thesis.
  4. If a thesis requires major revision, examiners may only make a recommendation of either Pass, Pass with minor revision, or Fail following examination of the revised thesis. The examination outcome following thesis revision is final.

**Recommendation of a masters degree (research) following unsuccessful doctoral degree (research) thesis submission**

* 1. If the result of a doctoral degree (research) thesis is Fail, the candidate may elect to resubmit the thesis for a masters degree (research) award, subject to approval by the chair of examiners and the PVC for graduate research.

**Masters degree (research) examination**

* 1. The outcome of a masters degree (research) examination is determined in accordance with Table 2 in [Schedule 4: Masters degree (research) examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/447226/Schedule-4-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  2. Examiners will be provided with their co-examiner’s report and asked to reconsider their marks where there is a difference of opinion as outlined in Table 2 of [Schedule 4: Masters degree (research) examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/447226/Schedule-4-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).
  3. If after reconsideration the examiners’ recommendations cannot be reconciled, consensus will be sought via moderation with the chair of examiners. Where consensus is not achieved, the PVC for graduate research may appoint an adjudicator.
  4. Where examiners cannot reach consensus, the PVC for graduate research may appoint an adjudicator. The adjudicator must meet all criteria for an examiner, as described in clauses 5.85 and 5.86. The adjudicator will be:
     1. recommended by the principal supervisor, endorsed by the chair of examiners and approved by the PVC for graduate research
     2. in exceptional circumstances, recommended by the dean for approval by the PVC for graduate research.
  5. The adjudicator will be provided with a copy of the thesis as submitted for examination and all examiners’ reports with the examiners’ names removed where possible.
  6. The adjudicator will:
     1. assess the causes and nature of the disagreement between the examiners’ reports
     2. evaluate the justifications provided in the examiners’ reports, and
     3. examine relevant sections of the thesis.
  7. The adjudicator will provide the PVC for graduate research with a recommended outcome in accordance with [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf) (for a doctoral degree), or a mark in accordance with [Schedule 4: Masters degree (research) examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/447226/Schedule-4-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf) (for a masters degree), along with a short written report justifying the recommendation.
  8. The PVC for graduate research will determine the examination outcome after considering the examiners’ reports and the adjudicator’s report.
  9. If the PVC for graduate research allows the candidate to make revisions to a doctoral degree thesis:
     1. both examiners will be asked to make a final recommendation of Pass or Fail based on the revised thesis, and
     2. if the examiners’ final recommendations differ, the PVC for graduate research will determine an outcome based on the examiners’ reports, the adjudicator’s report, and the final recommendations of the examiners.

Course completion

* 1. To be conferred with their degree, candidates must:
     1. achieve a pass grade in their examination
     2. complete all course requirements as outlined in the Handbook
     3. receive approval for the final thesis from the chair of examiners
     4. deposit the final electronic copy of the thesis in the University repository after completion of any revisions deemed necessary by the University, and
     5. provide a citation in accordance with the [Graduate Research Citation Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/graduate-research-citation).
  2. The chair of examiners approves completion of the degree once all requirements have been met. No part of the thesis may be modified once the thesis has been approved.
  3. The PVC for graduate research (or delegate), in consultation with the relevant dean, may approve to embargo a thesis or work for a period of time.
  4. Any concerns regarding potential serious errors in the thesis, identified after a degree has been conferred, must be referred to the Academic Registrar.
     1. If the errors relate to a potential breach of the Code, the matter must be referred to OREI for management in accordance with the Research Integrity and Misconduct Policy ([MPF1318](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1318/)).
     2. If the errors do not relate to a potential breach of the Code, the PVC for graduate research, in consultation with the relevant dean, will determine whether a full retraction, partial redaction or corrigendum is required and advise the University Library accordingly.

Appeals

* 1. A candidate may appeal an academic progress review decision or the outcome of an examination in accordance with the Student Appeals Policy ([MPF1323](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1323/)).

1. Roles and responsibilities

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Responsibility** | **Conditions and limitations** |
| Academic Board | Fulfil the responsibilities outlined in clause 4.9.  The Board is supported by the Higher Degrees by Research Committee, established to advise the Board on all matters relating to higher degrees by research candidature. | n/a |
| Academic Registrar | Administer the examination of all masters degrees (research) and doctoral degrees (research), subject to the direction of the PVC for graduate research | n/a |
| Advisory committee | In addition to the responsibilities outlined in clause 4.13, the advisory committee supports and monitors the candidate’s progress during their course, including to:  - advise on the scope of the proposed project  - identify resources and training required by the candidate  - evaluate the disciplinary coverage and suitability of supervisors | n/a |
| Advisory committee chair | - Ensure the advisory committee fulfils its responsibilities  - Advise and support the candidate and their supervisors  - Facilitate mediation between the candidate and their supervisors where required | n/a |
| Candidates | Fulfil the responsibilities outlined in clause 4.14 | n/a |
| Chair of examiners | - Make recommendations regarding the appointment of examiners, in compliance with both the spirit and guidelines for selection, while avoiding any actual, perceived, or potential conflict of interest  - Oversee and ensure the integrity of the graduate research examination | No delegation is permitted. If the CoE is unable to discharge their responsibilities, the head of department must appoint a new or interim chair of examiners |
| Dean | In addition to the responsibilities outlined in this policy:  - administer the examination of performances and exhibitions, where relevant | The responsibilities listed in this policy may be delegated to the ADGR, except:  - approval of a previously de-registered supervisor  - appointment of a new late submission panel chair if the chair is conflicted  - administration of music recital examinations, which may only be delegated to the faculty graduate research manager |
| Head of department | Oversee and approve key aspects of graduate research within their department, including supervisor registration, supervisor variations during candidature, candidate project changes, and undertaking the role of the chair of examiners to manage the examination process. | Where denoted in this policy, the head of department may delegate to:  - the supervisor’s line manager (where relevant), or  - the delegate of the dean |
| Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) | Fulfil the responsibilities outlined in clause 4.10 | Appoints the Pro Vice-Chancellor for graduate research (however so named) to undertake their responsibilities in relation to this policy |
| Pro Vice-Chancellor for graduate research | - Undertake the responsibilities of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) as delegated by this policy  - In consultation with faculties, develop and approve University-wide processes to support this policy  - Oversee some operational processes and make decisions on waivers and exceptional requests for individual candidates (including those related to examinations) within the remit of the policy | Where denoted in this policy, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) may appoint a delegate for the PVC for graduate research |
| Supervisors | In addition to the responsibilities outlined in clause 4.12, supervisors have overarching responsibility to provide candidates with professional guidance and oversight throughout the research process. This includes:  - ensuring adherence to university policies, codes of conduct and supervisory agreements  - managing any potential conflicts of interest  - monitoring academic progress  - facilitating training and professional development appropriate to the research project | Where denoted in this policy, the principal supervisor may delegate to the advisory committee chair |
| Viva chair | - Represent the University and uphold the University’s policies at the viva  - Ensure the appropriate conduct of the viva examination | n/a |

1. Schedules
   1. The following documents are established in accordance with this policy:
      1. [Schedule 1: Advisory committees](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/447218/Schedule-1-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf)
      2. [Schedule 2: Supervisory and advisory committees](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/447220/Schedule-2-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf)
      3. [Schedule 3: Doctoral degree examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/447221/Schedule-3-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf)
      4. [Schedule 4: Masters degree (research) examination criteria and outcomes](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/447226/Schedule-4-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf)
2. Processes
   1. The following documents are established in accordance with this policy:
      1. [Confirmation Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/confirmation)
      2. [Late Submission Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/late-submission)
      3. [Completion Seminar Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/completion-seminar)
      4. [Preparation of Graduate Research Theses Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/preparation-of-graduate-research-theses)
      5. [Examination of a Live Performance or Exhibition Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/live-performance-and-exhibition)
      6. [Examination of Doctoral Degrees by Viva Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/examination-of-doctoral-degrees-by-viva)
      7. [Graduate Research Citation Process](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/processes/graduate-research-citation)
      8. [Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarships Policy](https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/scholarships/research-training-program-rtp-scholarship-policy)
3. Definitions

**advisory committee** means the advisory committee chair, the candidate’s supervisors and any additional members as per [Schedule 2: Supervisory and advisory roles](https://about.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/447220/Schedule-2-Graduate-Research-Training-Policy-MPF1321-Approved-12-September-2024.pdf).

**active in research** means active in research and publishing in, or otherwise making original contributions to, a relevant field or discipline.

**associate dean graduate research (ADGR)** means the faculty associate dean graduate research, or equivalent.

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

**candidature** means the period of study towards the graduate research course being the period from the date of commencement until the end of enrolment based on successful completion of all coursework and mandatory training completed satisfactorily leading to lodgement for thesis examination (after which time the candidate holds the status of 'Under Examination’) or until the candidature is terminated or the candidate withdraws, but excludes periods spent on leave of absence or lapsed.

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

**creative output** means performance, musical composition, exhibition, writing (poetry, fiction, script or other written literary forms), design, film, video, e-portfolio or website, multimedia or other new media technologies and modes of presentation.

**department** means the academic department or school in which the candidate is enrolled.

**EFTSL** means equivalent full-time student load.

**graduate research course** includes masters degree (research), doctoral degree (research) and doctoral degree (professional).

**head of department** means the head of department in which the candidate is enrolled.

**joint research degree** means a degree course designed, developed and delivered collaboratively by the University and another institution, resulting in a single award.

**lapse** is a period of time beyond the maximum course duration to allow candidates to complete their thesis.

**late submission** is a period of enrolment, beyond the maximum course duration, granted under specific conditions by a late submission panel.

**major revision** means the thesis may be passed, subject to the corrections being made to the examiner’s satisfaction.

**milestone** means any milestone:

* referenced in Table 2: Standard Progress Milestones
* set by the candidate’s supervisor(s) and/or the advisory committee in accordance with the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) ([MPF1363](https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1363/)).

**maximum submission date** means the maximum number of years allowed to submit a thesis or dissertation for examination, and to undertake any other examination components, for graduate research courses taking into account an allowance for late submission.

**minor revision** means the thesis may be passed, subject to the corrections being made to the Chair of Examiner’s satisfaction.

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

**Research Training Program (RTP)** means the block grant provided to higher education providers (universities) by the Australian Government to support both domestic and overseas students undertaking research doctorate and research masters degrees**.**

**residency requirement** means the minimum amount of study that must be completed at the University of Melbourne.

**supervisor** means an appropriately qualified person who is responsible for the academic supervision of a candidate.

**thesis** means either a dissertation embodying the results of original research, or dissertation and creative output which together embody the results of original research.

**viva** means an oral examination that is final summative examination event for a candidate.

POLICY APPROVER

Academic Board

POLICY STEWARD

Academic Secretary

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed by 01 January 2028.

## **VERSION HISTORY**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Approved By** | **Approval Date** | **Effective Date** | **Sections Modified** |
| 1 | President of the Academic Board | 20 July 2016 | 21 July 2016 | New policy arising from the revised Regulatory Framework and the Policy Consolidation Project (incorporating the former Statute 11.4 Unsatisfactory Progress as well as matters previously contained in the Examination of Graduate Research Students Policy MPF1207, Examination of Graduate Research Students Procedure MPF1262, Preparation of Graduate Research Theses Procedure MPF1263, Graduate Research Candidature Policy MPF1280, Graduate Research Candidature Procedure MPF1281, Graduate Research Progress Procedure MPF1264 and some matters previously in the Supervision of Research Higher Degree Students Policy MPF1244. |
| 2 | Academic Secretary | 27 July 2016 | 27 July 2016 | Correction of error in section 5.48(c). |
| 3 | Academic Board | 8 December 2016 | 1 January 2017 | Change to number of supervisors required (to 2) comply with TEQSA standards. Change to include secondary/review publications in a thesis (4.66) |
| 4 | Academic Board | 7 December 2015 | 1 January 2017 | Delete 4.82(c) requirement to submit a hard copy bound thesis. Amend wording at 4.129 to reflect different arrangements for restricting access. |
| 5 | Academic Board | 22 June 2017 | 22 June 2017 | Amendment to 3(h) change to correct name of the code; 4.8 and 4.32– changes to reflect change to name of funding scheme; Changes to reflect removal of lapsed category availability from 1 January 2018 and introduction of a late submission category at: 4.23(a); 4.49; delete 4.59 and 4.60 and consequent renumbering; add 4.59 (d) and consequent renumbering; 5.40(c); 5.51; 5.52; 5.54; 5.56; 5.88 and consequent renumbering; inclusion of a definition of maximum submission date. Addition of “permanently” at 4.61. Amendment to 3(h) change to correct name of the code;4.8 and 4.32– changes to reflect change to name of funding scheme; Changes to reflect removal of lapsed category availability from 1 January 2018 and introduction of a late submission category at: 4.23(a); 4.49; delete 4.59 and 4.60 and consequent renumbering; add 4.59 (d) and consequent renumbering; 5.40(c); 5.51; 5.52; 5.54; 5.56; 5.88 and consequent renumbering; inclusion of a definition of maximum submission date. Addition of “permanently” at 4.61. |
| 6 | Academic Board | 7 September 2017 | 10 October 2017 | Amendment to section 4.67 - To permit in progress articles to be included in research theses with clear acknowledgement of the publication status of article/s in the preface of the thesis. |
| 7 | Academic Board | 19 October 2017 | 9 November 2017 | Amendment to section on late submission to allow for medical or personal reasons that have arisen during candidature to be grounds for late submission.  Includes procedural principles for considering late submission proposals.  Update throughout to align with regulatory requirements for academic progress review e.g. throughout “progress” to read “academic progress”; and ensuring that academic progress review takes into account expected course duration.  Changes throughout to replace the head of department approval steps in nomination of examiners and thesis submissions with chair of examiners. |
| 8 | Error |  |  | *Made in error - never published* |
| 9 | Academic Secretary | 19 October 2017 | 9 November 2017 | Editorial changes to fix typographical errors and correction to numbering reference at 4.120 |
| 10 | error |  |  | *editorial changes to Information section made in error and corrected* |
| 11 | Academic Secretary | 6 June 2018 | 6 June 2018 | Editorial change to update reference to the National Code in section 3 Authority |
| 12 | Policy Officer | 6 June 2018 | 21 June 2018 | Fixing minor errors to document information |
| 13 | Academic Board | 11 April 2019 | 11 April 2019 | Editorial changes consequent upon the change of the name of the Research Higher Degrees Committee to the Higher Degrees by Research Committee. Editorial correction to numbering at 4.103. |
| 14 | Academic Board | 16 May 2019 | 2 July 2019 | Amendment to late submission – procedural principles section and consequential renumbering |
| 15 | Academic Board | 17 October 2019 | 28 October 2019 | 4.25(e) – remove “convene”  4.65 - updated to include e-portfolio or website  4.68 - added - minimum dissertation as a % with creative works  4.73 – clarification of language of the thesis for jointly awarded degrees  4.87 (d) (i) – completion seminar timing details added  5.10 (j) – added - Amendments to align with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research  5.70- amended wording  5.72 – 5.73 – added – 10 day extension to submit  5.75 – 5.79- updated – completion seminar requirements  Responsibilities table – updated – extension to submission date |
| 16 | President, Academic Board | 1 November 2019 | 11 November 2019 | Amendment to section 4.89 |
| 17 | President, Academic Board | 6 August 2020 | 10 August 2020 | Addition of section 4.38A |
| 18 | President, Academic Board | 3 September 2020 | 7 October 2020 | Amendment to section 5.14, 4.108(f) and 4.108(g), and addition of 4.108A and 4.108B. |
| 19 | President, Academic Board | 16 November 2020 | 17 December 2020 | Updates to address diversity and inclusion requirements at 4.5(d), and 4.28(e). |
| 20 | Academic Secretary | 15 January 2021 | 20 January 2021 | Removal of introductory statement at 5.75 (Completion seminar). |
| 21 | Academic Secretary | 27 July 2021 | 19 August 2021 | Updated Australian Standards for Editing Practices hyperlinks at 4.77 and 4.78. |
| 22 | Academic Secretary | 21 October 2021 | 4 November 2021 | Removal of all policy matters related to academic progress review consequent upon the Academic Board approving the Academic Progress Review Policy (Graduate Research) at its meeting of 21 October 2021 – consequent renumbering. Updated terminology related to associate deans. Clarifying the possibility of late submission date revisions. Clarifying that candidate’s suspended for misconduct lose the equivalent amount of time in their candidature. |
| 23 | - |  |  | Created in error. |
| 24 | Academic Board | 9 December 2021 | 5 January 2022 | Changes to Examination Rules. |
| 25 | Academic Secretary | 25 January 2022 | 25 January 2022 | Editorial corrections to errors at 5.97 made during publication and editorial updates at 5.68 and 5.70 to align with the changes to Examination Rules approved on 9 December 2021. |
| 26 | Academic Board | 15 December 2022 | 22 December 2022 | Minor editorial amendments for clarity at 4.43 and 4.44. Dead hyperlinks resolved and duplication of 5.20-5.22 removed. |
| 27 | Academic Secretary | 18 January 2023 | 18 January 2023 | Updated broken hyperlink at 4.12. |
| 28 | Academic Board | 8 December 2022 | 30 March 2022 | Amendment to the definition of Thesis to include an option comprising a creative work and dissertation which together embody the results of original research and especially substantiating a specific view.  Removal of the definition “creative equivalent” throughout the policy.  Editiorial amendments throughout to remove references to “creative equivalent”.  Removal of references to a Master Degree (Research) undertaken entirely in creative form. |
| 29 | Academic Board | 30 March 2023 | 2 May 2023 | Amendment to 4.65g to allow the candidate’s Principal Supervisor and the publication’s Coordinating Author (who may also be the Principal Supervisor) to provide their consent for published material to be included in the thesis. |
| 30 | Academic Board | 12 September 2024 | 1 January 2025 | Major review streamlines the policy for improved readability, incorporates content from the rescinded Supervisor Eligibility and Registration Policy (MPF1322) and seeks to improve the overall effectiveness of the University’s policy framework related to research training. |
| 31 | Academic Board | 12 September 2024 | 1 January 2025 | Minor formatting changes made. |