



## HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH POLICY

### Purpose

To establish the Australian Institute of Business' commitment to ensuring the quality of research training, maximising the likelihood that higher degree by research students successfully complete their course of study, and in the process produce original outputs that contribute to the relevant field, and to set out the principles and practices that apply to admission, enrolment, progression, examination and completion for a higher degree by research (HDR) award, including external panel members, examiners and supervisors.

### Scope

This policy applies to all HDR awards offered by the Australian Institute of Business (AIB), AIB HDR students and staff, including full-time and part-time, continuing and casual, onshore and offshore academic staff. The policy also applies to consultants, contractors and other persons involved in research in collaboration with AIB staff or students, or engaged by AIB to undertake specific research.

### Definitions

Unless otherwise defined in this document, all capitalised terms are defined in the [glossary](#).

### Policy

#### 1. Principles

- 1.1 AIB will admit person(s) to a research degree only if:
  - a) they believe that person has the potential to complete the degree successfully; and,
  - b) if suitable supervisory capacity for the research topic will be available.
- 1.2 AIB will take all necessary measures to facilitate the progress towards the successful completion of the award; it will provide appropriate and effective academic support to all HDR students through the supervisory process, and other personal and learning support at the Institute level.
- 1.3 AIB's Higher Degrees by Research Policy and Procedures will ensure compliance with all aspects of: the Higher Education Standards Framework (especially Standard 4.2); the National Statement on Ethical Conduct of Human Research (revised 2018); and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (the 2018 Code).

#### 2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Institute is responsible for the research and research training environment, and the learning and personal support services provided to HDR candidates.

- 2.2** The Academic Board, through the Research and Higher Degrees Committee, is responsible for the Research Training Policy Framework and for approving admission criteria for each course and candidates for the award of their degree.
- 2.3** The Research and Higher Degrees Committee is responsible for:
- Considering applications for extensions beyond the limits set in the policy and granting an extension of time for such period as it deems appropriate.
  - Making informed decisions about candidates' progress throughout their candidature.
  - Approving supervisors and examiners.
  - Recommending approval of the issue of the award to the Academic Board when the examination result has been determined and the thesis has been accepted.
- 2.4** The Chair of the Research and Higher Degrees Committee is responsible for:
- Making the final decision in regard to an upgrade of a degree where there is disagreement between the panel.
- 2.5** The Research Assessment Panel is responsible for:
- Assessing and (if appropriate) approving research proposals and
  - candidature variations.
- 2.6** The Director of Research and Research Higher Degrees is responsible for:
- Assisting the Research Program Coordinator to resolve issues between a candidate and their Supervisors before an issue becomes a formal grievance.
  - Receiving confidential feedback from candidates or Supervisors about the supervisory relationship either through the quarterly or final review or, in case of urgency, at any other time.
  - Maintaining a complete record of scholarly activity and output.
- 2.7** The Research Program Coordinator is responsible for:
- Maintaining the ready availability of key documents on the responsible conduct of research, including the 2018 Code, AIB guidelines on the conduct of research, requirements for research involving humans and animals, privacy and confidentiality, and AIB's mechanisms for dispute resolution.
  - Managing processes through the candidate life-cycle.
  - Arranging copies of the final form thesis to be lodged in the Library as a bound hard copy and an electronic copy, which will serve as the authoritative version.
- 2.8** Supervisors are responsible for supervising the candidates, specifically:
- Guiding, mentoring and developing research excellence and professionalism in the candidate towards the successful completion of the research degree.
  - Regular communication between the Supervisors and the candidate.
  - Monitoring the candidate's progress.
  - Provision of subject matter and/or methodology expertise.
  - Specific duties as outlined in the AIB Supervisor Guidelines.

a) The Principal Supervisor is primarily responsible for the supervisory duties outlined above and in particular:

- Coordinating and recording regular communication between the Supervisors, the candidate, and the Research Program Coordinator for resolving any issues.
- Monitoring the candidate's progress and making recommendations on milestones.

b) Co-Supervisors are responsible for:

Supporting the Principal Supervisor and replacing them as Principal Supervisor if they are absent from AIB for a period exceeding three months.

c) Associate Supervisors are responsible for:

Supporting the Principal and Co-Supervisor and attending supervisory meetings.

**2.9** The higher degree candidate is responsible for:

- demonstrating a professional attitude towards the research.
- completing induction as soon as practical after starting research in the Institute.
- understanding the requirements of candidature as outlined in the candidate handbook.
- playing an active part in maintaining an appropriate schedule of meetings with their Supervisors.

### **3. HDR Policy**

#### **3.1 Criteria for admission**

3.1.1 The specific criteria for admission depend on the course and, once approved by Academic Board, are made publicly available in official AIB marketing and course information.

3.1.2 Admission criteria relate to prior academic qualifications, work experience and English language proficiency.

3.1.3 Admission of an eligible applicant to an HDR candidature will be based on AIB's assessment of whether the applicant is reasonably likely to be able to successfully complete the requirements of the award in the proposed field of research within the maximum duration (defined in 3.5 of this document).

#### **3.2 Applications for admission**

3.2.1 Applications for admission to an HDR candidature are made and assessed in accordance with the HDR Admission Procedures (Section 1 HDR Procedures).

#### **3.3 Supervision and appointment of Supervisors**

3.3.1 AIB will provide the appropriate mentoring and quality supervision of HDR candidates, acknowledging the importance of Supervisors in the development of research excellence, integrity, professionalism, mutual respect and recognition and to the successful completion of HDR candidatures.

- 3.3.2 All HDR students will have at least two Supervisors comprising: one Principal Supervisor; at least one Co-Supervisor; and Associate Supervisor(s) as appropriate for the candidate's topic and for the purposes of supervisor development.
- 3.3.3 Supervisors will be appointed during the application phase and will be formalised on admission. The candidate will be consulted and must agree to their appointment before the Supervisors are appointed.
- 3.3.4 Supervisors will have the appropriate qualifications at doctoral level in a relevant discipline and must have relevant research experience in the candidate's field of research.
  - a) Principal Supervisors must have supervised to completion (either as a Principal or a Co-Supervisor) at least one candidate at the level being supervised and must be active in research and publishing or otherwise making original contributions to a relevant field or discipline.
  - b) Co-Supervisors are not required to have supervised a candidate to completion but must have appropriate qualifications at doctoral level in a relevant discipline and must have relevant research experience in the candidate's field of research.
  - c) Associate Supervisors must have appropriate qualifications at doctoral level and some research experience in a related discipline.
- 3.3.5 Supervisors will conduct themselves in accordance with the AIB Supervisor Guidelines.
- 3.3.6 Implementation of these provisions must occur in accordance with the HDR Supervision and Appointment of Supervisors Procedures (Section 2 of HDR Procedures).

### **3.4 Enrolment**

- 3.4.1 To be an enrolled higher degree candidate, a successful applicant to a higher degree candidature must enrol in accordance with the HDR Enrolment Procedures (Section 3 of HDR Procedures) by the date specified in the letter of acceptance of candidature. If the candidate has not enrolled by the date specified, the offer will lapse.

### **3.5 Enrolment duration**

- 3.5.1 Unless approved otherwise, the maximum duration of candidature will normally be:
  - a) for PhD and DBA awards, three years for a full-time candidate and six years for a part-time candidate;
  - b) for a Master's degree by research, one and a half years for a full-time candidate and three years for a part-time candidate.
- 3.5.2 Duration is measured from the date of enrolment to the date of submission of the thesis, excluding any periods of approved intermission.
- 3.5.3 Upon the recommendation of the Principal Supervisor, the Research Program Coordinator may approve an extension to candidature provided the candidature does not exceed seven years in the case of a PhD or DBA candidate, or four years in the case of a Master's degree by research candidate.

### **3.6 Variations to enrolment conditions**

3.6.1 Any changes to enrolment must be approved as per the Procedure for Variations to HDR Enrolment (Section 4 of HDR Procedures). This includes: leave of absence of candidature; candidature extensions; changes to full-time / part-time status or internal / external status; upgrade or transfer between awards; and significant amendment to research topic.

### **3.7 Withdrawal of enrolment**

3.7.1 A higher degree candidate's enrolment may be withdrawn by either the candidate or AIB, in accordance with the Withdrawal of Candidature procedures in Section 4.9 of HDR Procedures.

### **3.8 Student progression**

3.8.1 All higher degree candidates must satisfactorily complete, or otherwise make satisfactory progress in, the Required Structured Activities, the Research Proposal and regular Reviews of Progress, as specified in the HDR Progression Procedures (Section 5 of HDR Procedures).

3.8.2 Failure to make satisfactory progress may lead to the candidate being asked to show cause why their candidature should not be terminated or, if appropriate, transferred to another candidature.

### **3.9 Examination**

3.9.1 Only an enrolled higher degree candidate may submit work for examination for the award of a higher degree by research.

3.9.2 The candidate must lodge an electronic copy of their final thesis in the format and location specified in the HDR Examination Procedures (Section 6 of HDR Procedures).

3.9.3 The candidate's thesis must comply with AIB's Academic Integrity Policy and provisions for the responsible conduct of high quality research as set out in the Research and Scholarship Policy.

3.9.4 At least two independent, qualified, research-active examiners must be appointed to examine the work submitted by the higher degree candidate as specified in the HDR Examination Procedures (Section 6 of HDR Procedures);

a) For a PhD, DBA and MMgt (Research) degree, at least one examiner must have international standing in the discipline being examined;

b) For a MMgt, MMgt (WAL), at least one examiner must have nationally-recognised standing in the discipline being examined.

3.9.5 The identity of the examiners must remain confidential from the time they are formally nominated to the Research Program Coordinator.

3.9.6 A higher degree candidate must not attempt to identify or communicate with any examiner or potential examiner of their thesis, either before or during the examination process.

3.9.7 Supervisors must not communicate with the examiners, once appointed, and individual examiners must not communicate with each other, about any aspect of the examination during the examination process.

3.9.8 Each examiner must provide AIB with a report on the prescribed form with a recommendation for one of the outcomes listed in Schedule 1 of HDR Procedure.

3.9.9 After consideration of the examiners' reports, AIB will make a determination based on Schedule 1 of HDR Procedures.

3.9.10 Implementation of the examination provisions must occur in accordance with the HDR Examination Procedures (Section 6 of HDR Procedures).

### **3.10 Award requirements, conferral and thesis lodgement**

3.10.1 Following a determination to award a degree after thesis examination, and AIB's acceptance of any amendments to the thesis, the candidate will qualify for the award of the degree, provided the candidate has satisfied all coursework requirements (if applicable) specified in the Course Brief.

3.10.2 When the award is certified by the Academic Board, the candidate will be notified of the degree conferral procedures.

3.10.3 The Research Program Coordinator will arrange copies of the final form thesis to be lodged in the Library as a bound hard copy and an electronic copy, which will serve as the authoritative version.

3.10.4 Implementation of these provisions must occur in accordance with the HDR Award Requirements, Conferral and Thesis Lodgement Procedures (Section 7 of HDR Procedures).

#### **Responsibility:**

Academic Dean

Director of Research and Research Higher Degrees

#### **Related Policies and Procedures:**

Higher Degrees by Research Procedures

Research and Scholarship Policy

AIB Supervisor Guidelines

Academic Integrity Policy

Assessment Policy

Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure

Course Briefs

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