



## HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH PROCEDURE

### Governing Policy

Higher Degrees by Research Policy

### Purpose

This procedure outlines the guidelines and process for higher degrees by research courses for AIB Staff, Supervisors, applicants and candidates. The procedure covers the following sections:

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### Definitions

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

### Procedure

#### 1. HDR Admission

##### 1.1 Approval and publication of admission criteria

1.1.1 The criteria for admission depend on the course and relate to prior academic qualifications, work experience and English language proficiency.

1.1.2 Specific admission criteria for each course are approved by Academic Board.

1.1.3 Admission criteria for each course are made publicly available in official AIB marketing and course information, which includes publication on the AIB website.

##### 1.2 Admission process

1.2.1 On receipt by AIB of an indication of interest in any HDR course, the applicant will be asked to provide:

- a) A completed Application Form;

- b) Official certified transcripts of academic records, including full details of all courses undertaken and grades obtained. English translations must be supplied for documents in languages other than English;
- c) Proof of English proficiency, where applicable;
- d) Evidence of work experience, where applicable;
- e) An up to date Curriculum Vitae;
- f) An outline of the proposed research topic.

1.2.2 The following will be taken into consideration when assessing applications for admission to candidature:

- a) whether the applicant meets the entry criteria;
- b) whether the proposed research topic is acceptable to AIB and can be matched to AIB's research resource capabilities;
- c) whether the research site (if industry- or workplace-based) is supportive of the research, and
- d) whether appropriate Supervisors are available.

1.2.3 In the case of overseas candidates, AIB will consider any legislative requirements regarding specific registrations for providers accepting Student Visa holders: AIB does not have such registration and therefore cannot accept Student Visa holders.

## **2. HDR Supervision and Appointment of Supervisors**

### **2.1 Appointment of Supervisors**

2.1.1 AIB works with the applicant to agree to a minimum of two Supervisors (a Principal and a Co-Supervisor) who will meet the research needs of the candidate and have the appropriate skill sets to enable the research project and the course to be completed in a timely manner and of a quality to make a contribution to knowledge at the Masters level, or an original contribution to theory and its application at the Doctoral level. Associate Supervisors may be appointed to support the Principal and Co-Supervisors, and are expected to develop their skill and experience for future appointment as Co-Supervisors.

2.1.2 The skill set AIB seeks in the Supervisors for a candidate, through their qualifications and experience, is two-fold. The primary skill is in mentoring candidates through a high-quality research project process, including: development of a value-added research proposal; sound, relevant and valid data collection and analysis; and communication of findings through a thesis. The primary skill is supported by expert in-depth knowledge of the underlying disciplines of the research, and the skill to assist candidates to identify gaps in relevant theory and application knowledge.

2.1.3 AIB has a core of part-time and full-time academic staff and research advisors who may be appointed as Principal Supervisors. To cover facilitation and transdisciplinary needs AIB has a list of available and approved adjunct staff who may be Co-Supervisors. Supervisors, other than members of staff or adjunct staff, will be formally contracted and accountable to AIB for supervisory duties.

## **2.2 Supervision**

- 2.2.1 Although the Supervisors have joint responsibility to supervise the candidate for the duration of candidature, the Principal Supervisor has the main responsibility of coordinating and recording communication between the Supervisors and the candidate, and for resolving any issues.
- 2.2.2 Supervisors must fulfil their responsibilities as detailed in the AIB Supervisor Guidelines, paying attention to the duties specified for the various phases of candidature, i.e. before candidature, during candidature and towards the end of candidature.
- 2.2.3 Regular contact should be maintained between candidates and their Supervisors by appropriate means including face-to-face meetings, telephone, mail, email and online learning technologies, for academic supervision, guidance, and academic support and feedback. Candidates requiring personal support should utilise the Institute's central services. Candidates should contact their Supervisors regularly to discuss progress, identify any issues early and seek appropriate guidance.
- 2.2.4 Where a candidate's Principal Supervisor is absent from AIB for more than three months, the Research Program Coordinator will appoint a temporary replacement Supervisor, preferably an existing Co-Supervisor.
- 2.2.5 The Research Program Coordinator will, after consultation with the candidate, appoint a permanent replacement Principal Supervisor where:
- a) the Supervisor is no longer with AIB; or
  - b) there is a change in the candidate's research project such that a different Principal Supervisor would be more appropriate; or
  - c) irreconcilable differences between the candidate and the Supervisor require a change in supervision arrangements.
- 2.2.6 Supervisors are responsible for overseeing compliance by higher degree candidates with the provisions of AIB policies (refer to 1.1 in this document).
- 2.2.7 In the case of problems between a candidate and their Principal Supervisor:
- a) Before an issue becomes a formal grievance the Research Program Coordinator:
    - (i) will facilitate discussion between the candidate and their Principal Supervisor to help resolve any issues; and
    - (ii) if there is no resolution to the problem, will then seek assistance from the Director of Research and Research Higher Degrees to resolve the issues.
  - b) If there is still no resolution to the problem after following the process described in Section 2.2.7a), complainants may submit a formal grievance as set out in the 'Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure'. An alternative supervisor should be appointed to the candidate in the interim.

## **2.3 Review of Supervision**

- 2.3.1 AIB reviews the performance of its research supervisory staff on at least an annual basis, through the annual candidate progress reports and performance review.
- 2.3.2 Candidates and Supervisors will have the opportunity to provide individual confidential feedback about the supervisory relationship through verbal discussion with the Research Program Coordinator on an as-needs basis throughout candidature.
- 2.3.3 AIB will formally debrief all candidates and their Supervisors after completion of their award.

## **3. HDR Enrolment**

### **3.1 Letter of offer**

- 3.1.1 Where an applicant has been accepted as a candidate for a research degree, a letter of offer will be sent to the applicant with relevant information including the degree for which the applicant is a candidate, fees payable, and how the offer can be accepted.

### **3.2 Letter of acceptance**

- 3.2.1 On the applicant's acceptance of the offer, the candidate will be sent a letter of acceptance with an information pack that includes details of the HDR policies and procedures.

### **3.3 Enrolment**

- 3.3.1 A candidate must enrol 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 and the candidate will have to go through the application process again if s/he wishes to enrol subsequently.
- 3.3.2 Where an applicant applies for entry into a PhD or DBA, they will be registered provisionally as a PhD/DBA candidate as appropriate, pending satisfactory progress in terms of the conditions of their candidacy.

## **4. Variations to HDR Enrolment**

### **4.1 Candidature variation or transfer**

- 4.1.1 Where the candidate wishes to vary the following conditions of candidature, a written application must be made to the Research Program Coordinator, and must be accompanied by a recommendation from the Principal Supervisor:
  - a) Leave of absence of candidature—Candidates may apply for periods of intermission from their candidature for up to a total of twelve months. They may apply for additional periods of Leave of Absence if there are exceptional compassionate or compelling circumstances;
  - b) Change of status between full-time and part-time;
  - c) Change of status between internal and external;
  - d) Significant amendment to research topic.

4.1.2 After consultation with the candidate's Principal Supervisor, the Research Program Coordinator will notify the candidate of the outcome of an application.

#### **4.2 Extension of candidature beyond the maximum permitted duration**

4.2.1 Applications for extensions beyond the limits set in the policy (refer Section 3.5) must be submitted to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee.

4.2.2 In the event of extenuating compassionate or compelling circumstances, the Research and Higher Degrees Committee may, in its sole discretion, grant an extension of time for such period as it deems appropriate. The then current annual fees will be charged for the extended candidature.

#### **4.3 Upgrade or Transfer between Degrees**

4.3.1 The following procedures apply where candidates wish to upgrade their MMgt candidature to a DBA or a PhD, or transfer between a DBA and a PhD. A written application must be supported by a recommendation from the Principal Supervisor. The Research Program Coordinator will notify the applicant of the outcome of an application.

4.3.2 Candidates can apply for an upgrade or transfer when well advanced in the candidature for their current degree, and before they have submitted that degree's thesis/dissertation for examination.

a) Candidates must submit:

- (i) their currently completed work (i.e. chapters or partially completed chapters);
- (ii) a research proposal as specified in 10.2 of this document, that is substantively different from and more advanced than the proposal approved for the degree currently being undertaken;
- (iii) a one-page letter of support from the Principal Supervisor.

When preparing the research proposal for the proposed upgraded degree, candidates should be mindful of the differences between Masters' and doctoral level theses and the differences between DBA and PhD.

In the research proposal, candidates should clearly demonstrate that the research will meet the requirements of the proposed degree including:

- the research that has already been done and the contributions to the literature that it provides;
- what further research and writing will be done for the proposed degree's thesis/dissertation;
- a schedule for that further research and writing; and
- the contributions to the literature and/or practice that the further thesis/dissertation will provide.

b) A request for an upgrade from MMgt to a doctoral degree or from DBA to PhD will be assessed by the Research Assessment Panel.

#### **4.4 Withdrawal from Candidature**

- 4.4.1 If a candidate wishes to withdraw from their studies, they are encouraged to discuss this with their Supervisors and the Research Program Coordinator, to try to resolve any problems the candidate may have in the study environment.
- 4.4.2 If the candidate decides to withdraw, they must notify the Research Program Coordinator of the withdrawal in writing, giving the reasons for and the effective date of the withdrawal.
- 4.4.3 The Research Program Coordinator will acknowledge the notification, confirm the date on which the withdrawal is effective and take any action necessary to suspend any scholarship.
- 4.4.4 A candidate who has withdrawn and who subsequently wishes to re-enrol must apply to AIB for re-admission. AIB will determine whether the candidate will be re-admitted and whether the period of candidature will be adjusted to take account of the previous candidature.

### **5. HDR Progression**

#### **5.1 Required Structured Activities**

- 5.1.1 A candidate commencing a research higher degree must satisfactorily complete an Orientation to Research module during the first month of candidature. The module addresses issues such as code of conduct, ethics, occupational health and safety, intellectual property and any additional issues necessary for the type of research undertaken (including rights and responsibilities of research candidates and the role of Supervisors).
- 5.1.2 Candidates will receive an appropriate induction orienting them to study with AIB that will include information about: support services for general or personal support; English language programs; relevant legal services; emergency and health services; AIB's facilities and resources, complaints and appeals processes; and requirements for course attendance and progress
- 5.1.3 The designated official point of contact for candidates is the Research Program Coordinator.
- 5.1.4 Where coursework subjects must be completed as part of the course, these have to be successfully completed before the candidate can commence on the research component of the course. All the assessments will be marked by AIB academic staff (including adjunct staff) and the terms of the Assessment Policy and Procedures will apply.
- 5.1.5 Under certain circumstances, the requirement for successful completion of the required course of structured activities, or parts of the course, may be waived according to the AIB Credit Transfer Policy and Procedure and/or Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedure.

## **5.2 Preparation of the Research Proposal**

- 5.2.1 Candidates must prepare a research proposal as part of their Research Proposal subject with the guidance of their Supervisors.
- 5.2.2 The proposal should be developed according to the specifications in the Research Proposal subject. It should define the area to which the research project will relate and should contain: a clear description of the work that the candidate intends to undertake; the research strategies intended to be used; a summary of the relevant literature; research questions; the research schedule; and the research participants and/or organisation that will be the focus of the research project.
- 5.2.3 In the proposal, the candidate should note whether there are intellectual property implications of the proposed research as regards the organisation in which the research will take place (if industry-based), and whether these implications have been appropriately dealt with. The candidate should produce a letter of consent from the organisation in which the research will take place.
- 5.2.4 The proposal should also specify the ethical issues and the level of risk arising from the research and how the candidate intends to address them.
- 5.2.5 The proposal must be approved by the Principal Supervisor prior to submission to AIB for approval by the Research Assessment Panel. A candidate may submit a research proposal for assessment against the advice of the Supervisor only after adequate advice to resolve the matter is provided in a three-way discussion between the candidate, Supervisor and Research Program Coordinator (or the Director of Research and Research Higher Degrees).

## **5.3 Approval of the Research Proposal**

- 5.3.1 The research proposal must be submitted to a specially-convened Research Assessment Panel for approval. Candidates are also required to submit an oral presentation on their proposal to the Research Assessment Panel (in person or by video).
- 5.3.2 The Research Assessment Panel will comprise at least three persons, one of whom is the Principal Supervisor, and the others being specialists in areas that would be of benefit to the candidate. One of the members of the Research Assessment Panel must be external to AIB. The Research Assessment Panel will be nominated by the Supervisor in consultation with the Research Program Coordinator and approved by the Director of Research and Research Higher Degrees.
- 5.3.3 If the Panel is of the view that the intellectual property implications have not been appropriately dealt with, the candidate will be advised to obtain independent legal advice to resolve the matter.
- 5.3.4 The Panel may require the candidate to re-present their research proposal if it finds that the scope of the project is inappropriate to the course in question, or if it determines that the research proposal, as drafted, contains serious methodological or ethical issues that need resolving.

5.3.5 If there is disagreement between the members of the Panel, the Chair of the Research and Higher Degrees Committee will make a determination.

5.3.6 When the research proposal has been approved by the Panel, an application will be made by the candidate for consideration by AIB's Ethics Committee.

#### **5.4 Ethics Approvals**

5.4.1 It is the Principal Supervisor's responsibility to provide appropriate guidance for the candidate to develop an ethics proposal for their research.

5.4.2 Candidates must apply for Ethics Approval using the required Ethics Approval Application Form and guidelines.

5.4.3 If a candidate's research proposal does not receive ethics approval, the candidate has the option of resubmitting the research proposal for ethics approval after the deficiencies have been rectified or of choosing another research approach or topic, failing which, their candidature will be terminated.

5.4.4 Candidates must ensure that their proposed research project complies with the following guidelines, which are a summary of the more detailed applicable research ethics standards as expressed in the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct of Human Research 2007 (Updated July 2018), in order to gain the approval of the Ethics Committee. The research may gain approval at either 'low risk' or beyond 'low risk' levels, and each level of risk will be assessed and approved by a distinct AIB Research Ethics Committee constituted to deal with Level 1 (low risk) or Level 2 (greater than low risk) research ethics applications.

- a) The research must conform to scientific and community standards.
- b) In the conduct of the research, the candidate must always respect the rights, wishes, beliefs, personality, freedom and consent of the individual research participants.
- c) Before research is undertaken, the candidate must show that he or she understands that the consent of the research participants should be obtained. To this end, the candidate is responsible for providing the research participants with sufficient information, at an appropriate level of comprehension, about the purposes, methods, demands, risks, time involved and inconveniences of the study. Unless there are good reasons to the contrary, consent to participate in the study should be obtained in writing. If consent is not obtained in writing, the candidate should record the conditions under which consent is given.
- d) The research participants must be free to withdraw consent to further participation at any time. They are free to decline to provide information on any issue.
- e) Special care must be taken in relation to consent and to safeguarding individual rights where the research involves those in dependant relationships or comparable situations.
- f) Procedures for data collection, analysis and storage shall ensure that the information contributed by individual research participants remains confidential and that no participants can be individually identified unless written authorisation by them has been obtained.
- g) Where the research procedures involve or include the administration of questionnaires or the conducting of interviews, consent requirements may



be considered satisfied by the inclusion of a covering letter or statement identifying the candidate administering the questionnaire or interview and their Principal Supervisor, indicating the nature and general purposes of the project, the participant's right to withdraw consent to further participation at any time and to decline to answer any specific questions, and the procedures to maintain confidentiality of data.

- h) In the case of recorded interviews and group interactions, the candidate must provide the research participants with an indication of the purpose for which the recording may be used and conditions proposed for safeguarding confidentiality and governing its subsequent retention.
- i) Recording of interviews and/or group interactions may take place only with the written consent of the research participants.

5.4.5 Upon approval of the proposed research project by the Ethics Committee, the candidate may commence the fieldwork under the guidance of the Principal Supervisor.

## **5.5 Provisional Candidature of DBA and PhD Candidates**

5.5.1 In respect of the DBA and PhD only, at the end of the first year of full-time study or second year of part-time study, the Research and Higher Degrees Committee shall consider the reports or statements furnished by the candidate and the reports of the Supervisors regarding the candidate and shall determine on one of the following outcomes, with details provided below:

- a) to confirm the candidature; or
- b) to extend provisional candidature to a specified date; or
- c) to terminate the candidature.

### **a) Confirmation of Candidature – Research Proposal Completion and Obtaining Human Research Ethics Committee Approval**

For candidature to be confirmed, the candidate should demonstrate a capacity to undertake research at a doctoral level, by submitting a Research Proposal developed according to the specifications in the Research Proposal subject, outlining the conceptual framework and research design of the candidate's thesis.

The candidate must then obtain the approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee to undertake this research.

### **b) Extension of Provisional Candidature**

Provisional candidature may be extended for a specified period to give the candidate a further opportunity to meet the conditions for confirmation of candidature.

### **c) Termination of Candidature**

Candidature will be terminated if the candidate has failed to comply with the conditions of candidature after having been advised in writing that failure to comply within the required time will result in termination of candidature.

5.5.2 The Supervisors are expected to monitor the performance of the candidate relative to the standard for the degree throughout the period of provisional candidature, and to ensure that the candidate is made aware if the candidate's

progress is unsatisfactory or if the work is below the standard generally expected.

- 5.5.3 Where the Principal Supervisor perceives that it may become necessary to recommend that a candidature be terminated because of unsatisfactory progress, the Supervisor must give the candidate a preliminary warning in writing to that effect, stating the reasons why the candidate's progress is unsatisfactory. The Supervisor should inform the candidate's other Supervisor(s) of the preliminary warning and work with the candidate to improve the candidates' progress.

## **5.6 Review of Progress**

- 5.6.1 A regular review of higher degree candidates is undertaken to formally monitor progress where both the candidate and Principal Supervisor complete a Quarterly Progress Report and submit it to the Research Program Coordinator.
- 5.6.2 The quarterly review requires the candidate and the Principal Supervisor to separately report on the progress made by the candidate over the last period and it is used by AIB to assess whether the candidature is progressing satisfactorily, and whether the candidature should continue.
- 5.6.3 Candidates are required to give an oral presentation (in person or by video) of their Research-in-Progress at least once a year for the duration of their candidature.
- 5.6.4 The final review each year includes a requirement for the candidate to independently discuss their progress with the Research Program Coordinator and identify any issues impacting on their progress.
- 5.6.5 Candidates and Supervisors may provide confidential feedback about the supervisory relationship to the Research Program Coordinator or the Director of Research and Research Higher Degrees either through the quarterly or final review or, in case of urgency, at any other time.
- 5.6.6 Upon receipt of the Quarterly Progress Report, or at any other time, the Research Program Coordinator will review the progress of a candidate and consider the recommendations from the Supervisors. The Research Program Coordinator will make a recommendation to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee who will decide on a course of action as follows:
- a) If the progress is satisfactory, the candidate be allowed to continue as a candidate for the degree; or
  - b) If the progress is unsatisfactory, the candidate be allowed to continue as a candidate subject to such conditions as the Research Program Coordinator may impose; or
  - c) If the progress is unsatisfactory and the candidate is a PhD or DBA candidate, the candidate be given a preliminary warning in writing by the Principal Supervisor and if the progress continues to be unsatisfactory, the candidate be asked to show cause why their candidature should not be transferred to a Master's degree candidature or be terminated; or

- d) If the progress is unsatisfactory and the candidate is a Master's candidate, the candidate be asked to show cause why their candidature should not be terminated.

5.6.7 Where a 'show cause' decision has been made, the following procedures will apply:

- a) The Research Program Coordinator will write to the candidate:
  - (i) explaining why the candidate's progress has been found to be unsatisfactory;
  - (ii) asking the candidate to show cause why the candidature should not be terminated or transferred;
  - (iii) describing the procedures for the termination of candidature; and
  - (iv) notifying the candidate that if a response is not received within the specified period the candidature will be terminated or transferred.
- b) If the candidate requests an interview with the Research Program Coordinator to discuss his or her response to the letter, the interview will be granted.
- c) The candidate will be invited to attend a meeting with the Research Program Coordinator at which time their case is to be considered or, in the case of a candidate who is not a resident of Adelaide, to send a representative or to participate by means of video conference. If attending in person, the candidate may be accompanied by a student or staff member or a support person to present the facts of the present situation, but the candidate will not be permitted to have legal representation at the meeting.
- d) The candidate and/or representative must be present throughout discussion of the case and must be allowed to participate in the discussion. The candidate and/or representative must be absent when the case is decided.
- e) If a candidate required to show cause fails to respond to the request, the Research Program Coordinator will recommend to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee that the candidature be terminated.

5.6.8 After the formal meeting between the Research Program Coordinator and the candidate, the Research Program Coordinator will recommend one of the following actions to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee:

- a) take no further action; or
- b) permit the candidate to continue under specified conditions; or
- c) transfer candidate from DBA or PhD to MMgt candidature; or
- d) terminate the candidate's enrolment.

5.6.9 The Research Program Coordinator must immediately inform the candidate of the decision, the reasons for the decision and the procedures for appeal.

5.6.10 The appeal procedures are set out in the Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy.

## 6. HDR Examination

### 6.1 Appointment of Examiners

6.1.1 When the Principal Supervisor is satisfied that the thesis will be ready for examination within the next three months, the candidate and their Principal Supervisor shall:

- a) complete and sign an 'Intention to Lodge' form including a summary of the thesis; and
- b) shortlist the names of potential external examiners in consultation with the candidate.

6.1.2 The criteria for the appointment of examiners depends on the degree. Irrespective of the degree, examiners will be independent from AIB.

- a) PhD—two external examiners who have research PhD's or equivalent doctoral degrees, at least one has international standing in the candidate's field of research, and who have empathy with the theoretical framework used by the candidate. The Supervisors will not act as examiners.
- b) DBA or MMgt (Research)—two external examiners who have research PhD's or professional doctorates or equivalent doctoral degrees, at least one has international standing in the candidate's field of research, and who have empathy with the theoretical framework used by the candidate. The Supervisors will not act as examiners.
  - a) MMgt or MMgt (WAL)—two external examiners who have research PhD or professional doctorate or equivalent doctoral degrees, at least one has nationally-recognised standing in the discipline being examined, and are active in the field of research pertaining to the thesis.
- c) All examiners must have previously supervised RHD students and, preferably, have previous examination experience.

6.1.3 The 'Intention to Lodge' form will include the names of at least three possible examiners, including reserve examiners (in the event that a preferred nominee is unable to act as examiner), and provide a justification and CV for each possible examiner. The information provided on each potential examiner should include his or her academic qualifications (and/or professional qualifications if appropriate), institutional affiliation and rank, details of any relevant published work in the field of the thesis, and a statement of their independence from AIB. The Principal Supervisor should ensure that, inter alia, the potential examiners are free from bias about the candidate, the Principal Supervisor or the research method adopted, and that they are still active in the field of research pertaining to the thesis.

6.1.4 The Research Program Coordinator presents the 'Intention to Lodge' form with the names of the proposed examiners, CVs and justification to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee of the proposed examiners for approval.

6.1.5 Provided approval of the proposed examiners is received from all members of the Research and Higher Degrees Committee, the Research Program Coordinator will officially write to the examiners to advise the name of the candidate, the title of the thesis/dissertation and invite them to act as examiners. Should there be any disagreement about one or more of the

proposed examiners, this process of the Principal Supervisor nominating proposed examiners will be repeated until such approval is obtained.

6.1.6 If an examiner is unable to accept an invitation or fails to respond to an invitation within six weeks including being sent reminder notifications, an invitation will be sent to a person approved as a reserve examiner.

6.1.7 Submission without Principal Supervisor support:

- a) Where, the Principal Supervisor may not support submission of the thesis:
  - (i) The Principal Supervisor must inform the candidate in writing of their concerns.
  - (ii) The Research Program Coordinator must then facilitate a three-way discussion involving the candidate, the Principal Supervisor and the Research Program Coordinator to reach mutual agreement.
- b) If the student still wishes to submit without the support of the Principal Supervisor, then:
  - (i) The Principal Supervisor must provide a written statement outlining why the thesis is not supported.
  - (ii) The candidate must provide a written statement outlining the reasons for submitting without Principal Supervisor support.
- c) The Research Program Coordinator will then organise the thesis to be reviewed by an independent member of AIB's academic staff (including adjunct staff).
- d) On receipt of this review, the Research Program Coordinator will discuss the review report with the candidate and provide to the candidate (in writing) the statement provided by the Principal Supervisor and the review report provided by the independent staff member.
- e) If the candidate still wishes to proceed without Principal Supervisor support, the candidate can submit the thesis for examination.
- f) The submission and examination process will follow standard procedures.
- g) Examiners must not be informed that the thesis has been submitted without the support of the Principal Supervisor.

## **6.2 Submission of thesis**

6.2.1 The candidate must lodge an electronic copy of the final thesis with the Research Program Coordinator. The candidate must sign a declaration that the thesis does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text or footnotes.

6.2.2 On receipt of the thesis, the Research Program Coordinator will forward one copy of the thesis to each examiner together with the following:

- a) Examiner's Report and Guidelines for Examination;
- b) information on the examination processes including matters in relation to the disclosure of the examiner's report to the candidate;
- c) timelines for the completion of the assessment process (turnaround period on receipt of the thesis is normally eight weeks); and
- d) information in relation to payment for examination.

6.2.3 The identity of examiners will not be revealed to candidates until the examination process has been completed and then not if an examiner has expressed a desire to remain anonymous.

### **6.3 Examination process**

6.3.1 From the time of the submission of the thesis, a candidate must not initiate contact with their examiners on any matter concerning the thesis.

6.3.2 From the time of the appointment of examiners, there must not be any direct contact between an examiner and a Supervisor in relation to the thesis. If an examiner has a query, it must be directed to the Research Program Coordinator who will refer it to the candidate or the Supervisors.

6.3.3 Consultation between examiners will not be permitted prior to submission of the initial report.

6.3.4 The examination criteria for each course will reflect the learning outcomes of the course.

6.3.5 The examination process of the thesis/project depends on the degree.

6.3.6 Examiners must assign one of the available examination outcomes with relevant approval authority listed in Schedule 1.

6.3.7 If revisions are required, the candidate will be asked to undertake the revisions in the following timeframes:

- a) Minor revisions – 2 months
- b) Major revisions – 4 months
- c) Resubmit for examination – 6 months.

Candidates may apply in writing for an extension on these timelines to the Academic Dean and Director of Research and Higher Degrees at least 7 business days prior to the due date. Applications for extension must be accompanied by a letter of endorsement from the Principal Supervisor.

6.3.8 In the event that an allegation of academic dishonesty has been made during the examination process, the Research and Higher Degrees Committee will refer the candidate to the Academic Integrity Policy and the Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy of AIB.

### **6.4 Outcome of the Examination**

6.4.1 When the examination result, including approved revisions, has been determined, the following procedures will apply:

- a) the Research Program Coordinator will advise the Research and Higher Degrees Committee to recommend approval of the issue of the award, and then forward the minutes to the Academic Board for formal approval of the issue of the award.
- b) The Academic Board will then certify that the candidate has qualified for the award of the degree.

## 7. HDR Award Requirements, Conferral and Thesis Lodgement

### 7.6 Certification of the Award

7.6.1 When the award is certified by the Academic Board, the Research Program Coordinator will provide a letter to the candidate advising them they may now start using their post nominal, notify the candidate of the degree conferral procedures, and provide the candidate with a copy of the examiners' reports.

### 7.7 Lodging of Theses

7.7.1 The Research Program Coordinator will arrange copies of the final form thesis/dissertation to be lodged in the Library as a bound hard copy and an electronic copy and for copies to be sent to the Research Supervisors.

## 8. Student Appeals and Complaints

Appeals against an AIB decision related to HDR candidature or examination, or complaints about the implementation of this policy or related procedures, may be made in accordance with the Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure.

### Related Forms/Registers:

Application form  
Intention to Lodge Form  
Quarterly Progress Report  
Examiner's report  
Guidelines for Examinations  
Supervisor Guidelines  
Research Candidate Handbook

### Responsibility:

Academic Dean  
Director of Research and Research Higher Degrees

<b>Current Status:</b>	<b>Version 1</b>
<b>Approved By:</b>	Academic Board
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	21 February 2019
<b>Effective From:</b>	21 February 2019
<b>Previous Version:</b>	9 December 2016 ( <i>Research Degree Administration Policy and Procedure, Version 7</i> ) and 20 December 2017 ( <i>Research and Research Degrees Policy, Version 5</i> )
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	21 February 2022

## **SCHEDULE 1 – Examination Determinations**

### **Examination outcomes for PhD, DBA and MMgt (Research)**

The examiners will be asked to recommend one of the following results:

- (A) that the thesis be accepted without revision; or
- (B) that the thesis be accepted subject to minor amendments as specified, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor (where minor amendments refer to corrections involving typographical or other spelling errors, errors in grammar and/or syntax, etc. and not require additional data collection or analysis); or
- (C) that the candidate be required to undertake more substantial revisions to the thesis, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor, and Chair of Research and Higher Degrees Committee or their nominee; or
- (D) that the candidate be required to undertake substantial revisions to the thesis and that the thesis be re-submitted for examination; or
- (E) that the thesis be rejected, but in the case of a candidate who has submitted a thesis for the degree of PhD or DBA, an appropriate Master's degree should be awarded; or
- (F) that the thesis be rejected and the candidate not be permitted to re-submit it for examination.

In the case of a disagreement between examiners:

- (A) In the event that examiners are not unanimous in making any one of the recommendations above, and their recommendations are at least two levels apart, the Supervisor and the candidate are provided with copies of the examiners' reports and are invited to comment. In this process the examiners' identities are not revealed to the candidate.
- (B) The Research and Higher Degrees Committee will then consider all the documentation presented and recommend an examination outcome or recommend that a third examiner be appointed.
- (C) Where a third examiner is appointed, the examiner will independently examine the thesis and provide a recommended result. The Research and Higher Degrees Committee will consider all three examiners' reports, together with the candidate and Supervisor response to the initial examiners and recommend an examination outcome.

### **Examination outcomes for MMgt and MMgt (WAL)**

The examiner will be asked to recommend one of the following results:

- (A) that the project/thesis be accepted without revision; or
- (B) that the project/thesis be accepted subject to minor amendments as specified, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor (where minor amendments refer to corrections involving typographical or other spelling errors, errors in grammar and/or syntax, etc. and not require additional data collection or analysis); or
- (C) that the candidate be required to undertake more substantial revisions to the project/thesis, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor, and Chair of the Research and Higher Degrees Committee or his or her nominee; or
- (D) that the candidate be required to undertake substantial revisions to the project/thesis and that the project/thesis be re-submitted for examination; or
- (E) that the project/thesis be rejected and the candidate not be permitted to resubmit it for examination.