



# Procedure: Higher degree by research - candidature

## Purpose

This document outlines typical processes undertaken during HDR candidature including:

- Change of study intensity;
- Change between external (off-campus / outside the University) / internal (on-campus) candidature;
- Change of research topic;
- Leave;
- Degree transfers;
- Change of Chair of Panel, Primary Supervisor or Associate Supervisor;
- Fieldwork and travel approval;
- Ethics approvals;
- Application of credit and modification of the submission date
- Extension of candidature;
- Concurrent studies; and
- Conclusion of Candidature

## Procedure

1. This procedure is read in conjunction with the Research Awards Rule, the Higher Degree Research Candidature policy procedures.

## Candidature

2. Unless the Registrar approves otherwise, revisions to a candidate's record are completed only where there are no fees outstanding for that candidate.

3. Where an action under this procedure results in a revision to a candidate's record, the University notifies the candidate in writing of the outcome of their request.

## **Full-time and part-time study intensity**

4. Before considering a change of program intensity International candidates studying on a student visa should be aware of government legislation restrictions, and to check individual visa conditions. All candidates on scholarship should check the relevant Conditions of Award.
5. Candidates pursue their program for 48 weeks of the year.
6. A full-time load for a week is 40 hours, with a week being equivalent to 1 unit. A full-time load for a year is 48 units.
7. A part-time load for a week is 20 hours, with a week being equivalent to 1 unit. A part-time load for a year is 24 units.
8. The number of units for any given year may be reduced based on commencement date, submission date, or program leave.
9. Where candidates undertake coursework, the thesis component of their enrolment is adjusted to reflect the full-time or part-time unit requirements.
10. To change intensity between full-time and part-time, candidates complete an ISIS Manage My Degree – HDR eForm to apply for a change of program intensity
11. The application is endorsed by the Chair of Panel.
12. The application is approved by the Delegated Authority.

## **Attendance**

13. A candidate not approved to study outside the University normally must attend the ANU campus for a minimum of:
  - a. For a PhD: For 72 units (1.5 years as a full-time candidate and 3 years as a part-time candidate); or
  - b. For an MPhil: For 48 units (1 year as a full-time candidate or 2 years as a part-time candidate).

## **Completing all or part of a program outside the University**

14. The following periods away from the University are not classified as completing all or part of a program outside the University:
  - a. Fieldwork;
  - b. Conference attendance;
  - c. Short-term exchange visits to another institution;

- d. Work undertaken outside the ANU campus following an extension of program;
  - e. Studying at a partner institution under a joint or dual degree; and
  - f. Revisions completed elsewhere after a thesis examination.
15. Approval to complete all or part of a program outside the University requires:
- a. If the study is to be completed at another tertiary education institution, any coursework is substantially comparable in quality to ANU coursework, and satisfactory research facilities are available; or
  - b. If the study is not to be completed at a tertiary education institution, supervision arrangements are comparable in quality to the supervision arrangements available to internal candidates and access to satisfactory resources are available to the candidate. Candidates must complete progression indicators as required by the Delegated Authority, as detailed in the *Higher Degree by Research – candidature progression procedure*.
16. Unless the Delegated Authority approves otherwise, a candidate approved to complete all or part of a program outside the University attends the ANU campus for 4 weeks in every 12 months studying off-campus, whether full-time or part-time. If an alternative is approved this is updated on the candidate's record by the University.
17. A candidate applies on the approved form to the Delegated Authority if they wish to complete all or part of their program outside the University. The application includes the dates that the candidate will attend the ANU campus.
18. The application is endorsed by the Chair of Panel.
19. The application is approved by the Delegated Authority in accordance with the requirements in Clause 37 the *Research Awards Rule*.
20. A candidate completing all or part of a program outside the University remains subject to all progression indicators. A failure to complete progression indicators may lead to a revocation of the external candidature, in addition to other consequences listed in the *HDR Candidature Progression Procedure*.

### **Change of research topic**

21. A change in research topic constitutes a potential change in research direction, and candidates must apply in writing to their Chair of Panel for endorsement using the appropriate *Details of Candidature* application form available from the GRO team.
22. The *Details of Candidature* application is endorsed by the Delegated Authority.
23. The *Details of Candidature* application is approved by the Associate Dean (HDR), or appropriate delegate.

24. Approval is subject to any requirements under sanctions legislation as detailed in the *Student Sanctions Procedure*.
25. The duration of candidature should be taken into consideration when changing the research topic, in accordance with the requirements in Clause 32 & 33 of the *Research Awards Rule*.
26. The Associate Dean (HDR), or appropriate delegate notifies the candidate in writing of the outcome of the request.
27. The University revises the candidate's record.

## **Leave**

28. Before considering any leave of absence International candidates studying on a student visa should be aware of government legislation restrictions, and to check individual visa conditions. All candidates on scholarship should check the relevant Conditions of Award.
29. Candidates are required to study 48 weeks of the year. Candidates have 4 weeks recreational leave each year.
30. Recreational leave should be discussed in writing with the Chair of Panel and Supervisor, and the local HDR Administrator informed, prior to being taken.
31. Candidates who need to take other types of leave of a minimum of one week (full-time) or two weeks (part-time) complete an *Apply for Leave* eForm through the ISIS Manage My Degree – HDR system. Leave may be taken on grounds of:
  - a. Personal Leave
  - b. Medical Leave (supporting documentation required)
  - c. Maternity Leave (supporting documentation required)
32. If candidates are travelling overseas during recreational leave they are encouraged to register with Smart Traveller.
33. Where possible program leave must be applied for before taking the leave. Retrospective leave will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
  - a. Candidates on scholarships submit an application for leave prior to taking that leave to prevent the overpayment of scholarships.
  - b. International candidates apply for leave at the time of or before taking leave as retrospective leave is not compliant with the legislated reporting requirements under the Education Services for Overseas Students Act (ESOS).

34. Periods of program leave may be dependent on Conditions of Award limitations for candidates receiving a scholarship or sponsorship and ESOS requirements for international candidates.
35. The application is endorsed by the Chair of Panel.
36. The application is approved by the Delegated Authority.
37. Candidates in receipt of a scholarship or sponsorship complete the relevant form on the day they return to their studies to reinstate their payments.
38. Periods of approved program leave do not count towards the maximum program time-limits as specified in the *Research Awards Rule*.

### **Degree Transfer**

39. Candidates apply for a transfer between an MPhil and PhD, or PhD and MPhil using the ISIS Manage My Degree – HDR eForm '*Change of Program level*';
40. Candidates may apply for a transfer between academic organisational units using an *Application for Change of Research Program* form.
41. Approval is subject to any requirements under sanctions legislation as detailed in the *Student Sanctions Procedure*.
42. The form is endorsed by:
  - a. The Chair of Panel for the current program;
  - b. The Head of School for the current program;
  - c. The Delegated Authority for the current program;
  - d. The Chair of Panel for the proposed program; and
  - e. The Head of School for the proposed program.
  - f. The form is approved by the Delegated Authority for the proposed program. A Delegated Authority may still approve a change of program if the Chair of Panel for the current program does not endorse the request

### **Change of Chair of Panel, Primary Supervisor or Associate Supervisor**

43. A candidate or member of a candidate's supervisory panel may apply for a change to a member of a supervisory panel for a candidate, or the entire panel.
44. The change request is endorsed by the Chair of Panel.
45. The change request is approved by the Delegated Authority

46. However, a Delegated Authority may still approve a change of panel if the Chair of Panel does not endorse the request.

47. The College notifies the candidate in writing of the outcome of the request.

48. Other changes to the panel, such as in cases of temporary absence of the Primary Supervisor, or Chair of Panel from the University, are conducted in accordance with the *Research Awards Rule*.

### **Fieldwork and travel approval**

49. Fieldwork applications are compliant with both this procedure and the [Fieldwork health and off-campus safety procedure](#):

- a. The Chair of Panel for a candidate is the Fieldwork Supervisor under the *Fieldwork health and off-campus safety procedure*.

50. The consideration of required training for fieldwork is proportional to the risk forecast in the travel.

51. Written applications for fieldwork and travel are submitted no later than four weeks prior to the expected activity.

52. Candidates are required to complete an *Approval to Travel* eForm and inform the Chair of Panel.

53. Applications are approved by the Delegated Authority.

54. The Delegated Authority notifies the candidate and the University in writing of the outcome of the request.

55. Candidates remain enrolled at the University during fieldwork and travel arrangements.

56. Candidates must ensure they complete post travel reports upon return from approved travel via the ANU eForm.

### **Ethics approvals**

57. Appropriate ethics approvals are obtained prior to undertaking research. These are obtained in accordance with the requirements published on the Research Services [website](#).

### **Application of credit and modification of the submission date**

58. Candidates who are awarded credit on the basis of prior studies or experience have a new submission date calculated.

## Extension of candidature

59. Candidates who are not able to complete by their submission date but wish to continue as a candidate for their degree should complete an *Apply for an extension of program* eForm through ISIS Manage My Degree-HDR, prior to their program end date.

60. An application for an extension of candidature is for a maximum of 24 units for a PhD or professional doctorate, and a maximum of 12 units for an MPhil, unless an alternative is approved by the Delegated Authority.

61. A request will be considered only if:

- a. An applicant has completed the milestones that the Delegated Authority considers appropriate; and
- b. The Delegated Authority is satisfied that the candidate's ability to complete and submit the thesis was adversely affected by illness or other extenuating circumstances.

62. The application is endorsed by the Chair of Panel.

63. The application is approved by the Delegated Authority where it does not exceed the maximum degree completion time-limits specified in the *Research Awards Rule*.

64. Where an application for extension of candidature exceeds the maximum degree completion time-limits specified in the *Research Awards Rule*, the application must be approved by the Associate Dean who specifies a new maximum time-limit for the candidate.

65. Personal program leave taken while on an extension of program does not extend the submission date.

66. Candidates in receipt of a scholarship must also apply to the scholarship provider for an extension of that scholarship, if eligible, as detailed in the Conditions of Award for the scholarship.

## Concurrent studies

67. A candidate wishing to undertake studies in a program at AQF Level 5 or higher, at ANU or elsewhere, whilst studying their higher degree by research applies in writing to the Delegated Authority for approval.

68. The Delegated Authority notifies the candidate in writing of the outcome of the request.

69. The University notes this on the candidate's record.

70. If a candidate undertakes studies outside of the program in which they are enrolled, whether at ANU or elsewhere, and without the approval of the Delegated Authority, they are in breach of the *Research Awards Rule* and may face an investigation under the *Discipline Rules*.

### **Conclusion of candidature**

71. Submission and examination processes are covered under the *Higher Degree by Research Examinations Policy* and associated procedures.

### **Expiry of candidature**

72. Candidates who are past their maximum submission date and either have not applied for an extension, or have applied for an extension but not been approved, are notified by the Delegated Authority that their candidature has expired.

### **Withdrawal**

73. Candidates notify the University in writing if they wish to withdraw from their program by completing a *Program Withdrawal / Voluntary Discontinuation* eForm through ISIS Manage My Degree - HDR.

74. Prior to withdrawing candidates are encouraged to discuss their options with their Supervisor, Chair of Panel, Delegated Authority, Associate Dean or the Dean of Students.

75. The Registrar notifies the relevant parties of the request to withdraw.

76. The Registrar organises the update of the student system following a withdrawal, effective from the date the advice is provided.

77. The candidate is offered the opportunity of an exit interview with the Associate Dean.

### **Termination of candidature**

78. Processes to terminate candidature are conducted in accordance with the *Research Awards Rule*.

79. If a candidate is terminated they may be required to declare the termination on any future applications for study at a tertiary institution.



## Document information

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