



Policy: Higher degree by research - examinations

Purpose

To outline the standards for Higher Degree by Research theses submitted for examination.

Overview

This policy covers Higher Degree by Research theses submitted for examination by ANU candidates.

Scope

Theses submitted for the award of a Master of Philosophy, Professional Doctorate, or Doctor of Philosophy.

Policy statement

1. This document is to be read in conjunction with the [*Research Awards Rule*](#).
2. The University ensures that processes are in place to ensure that Higher Degree by Research theses:
 - a. Uphold the fundamental principles of quality and integrity in scholarly work;
 - b. Align with the University reputation and principles of integrity and academic freedom;
 - c. Make an original contribution to the knowledge of a subject area;
 - d. Are a coherent and integrated body of work; and
 - e. Are at the appropriate standard for the AQF level of the qualification.
3. The award of a Higher Degree by Research is granted only following an independent assessment of the quality of the research thesis. The assessment is undertaken by expert examiners with international standing in disciplines relevant to the thesis.
4. Appropriate conflict of interest declarations and, if appropriate, actions, are undertaken to ensure that professional and personal relationships between examiners and either a candidate or their supervisors, or relationships between examiners and the University, do not impact on the independence of the assessment.

5. Conflicts between recommendations by examiners are resolved appropriately with a focus on equitable practice between individual cases.
6. The final decision on the award of a degree rests with the appropriate Associate Dean of the relevant College, subject to any appeal rights detailed in the *Research Awards Rule*.
7. Theses are submitted in a format appropriate to the type of thesis.
8. Where the submission of a thesis for examination is not supported by the primary supervisor, appropriate educative advice is given to a candidate prior to the submission.
9. Except in cases involving confidential information, patent applications, and copyright material, research undertaken within the University including research theses is publicly and freely available in accordance with the Open Access Policy and Open Access Research Procedure.
10. The administration of thesis examinations ensures the integrity of the assessment process between the candidate, the examiners and the academic College.

Document information

Title	Higher degree by research - examinations
Document Type	Policy
Document Number	ANUP_012811
Version	2
Purpose	To outline the standards for Higher Degree by Research theses submitted for examination.
Audience	Students-Graduate-Research, Staff-Academic-Research
Category	Academic
Topic	Students
Subtopic	Higher Research Degrees
Effective Date	13 Jan 2021
Review Date	13 Jan 2024
Responsible Officer	Dean, Higher Degree Research (dean.hdr@anu.edu.au)
Approved By	Vice-Chancellor (vc@anu.edu.au)
Contact Area	Office of the Dean, Higher Degree Research (dean.hdr@anu.edu.au)
Authority	Research Awards Rule 2017
Printed On	18 Oct 2021

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