

Higher Degree by Research Student Admissions and Enrolments Procedure



1 Purpose

To set out procedures for the Admission and Enrolment of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Students.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to all HDR Applicants and HDR Students at the University.

Exception: Cotutelle and Joint PhD Applicants and Students - for Admissions they should refer to the Cotutelle and Joint PhD Procedure. For Enrolments, they should refer to this procedure.

3 Procedure Overview

This procedure sets out the processes for Admission and Enrolment into the University's HDR programs.

This procedure aligns with:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021: Standard 1.1 Admission*

4 Procedures

Students seeking entry to HDR programs must satisfy the Admissions requirements outlined in Section 4.1 of this procedure and the Admissions, Enrolments and Graduation Policy (*under development*), as well as the specific entry requirements for each program. Offers of Admission are approved by the Associate Dean (Graduate Research School), after considering the recommendation of the School or Research Centre.

A Student may only enrol in HDR Courses at the University following receipt and acceptance of an offer of Admission to an HDR program.

4.1 Admissions

4.1.1 Admissions requirements

1. Admission to the programs will be determined on the basis of Academic Merit, specific program requirements and perceived probability of success. Applicants are considered on the basis of entry requirements and the ability of the University to provide an appropriate supervisor, resources for the Research and minimum levels of support, as specified in the Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedure.
2. Where demand for a program exceeds the available number of places, Admission to the program may be denied, despite the Applicant meeting the minimum entry requirements.
3. Applicants are required to submit their application, in accordance with the instructions provided on the University's website, by the advertised program closing date.
4. Domestic and International Admissions will accept legible electronic copies of supporting documents provided by the Applicant. Where the original supporting documents are not in English, a certified translation must accompany the submitted documents. Where more Information is required, further supporting documents may be requested by the University. The University reserves the right to request original copies of documents.
5. International Students wishing to study in Australia on a Student Visa must meet and satisfy eligibility requirements in accordance with the Australian Government assessment criteria.
6. International Students who do not arrive to commence their program by the start date specified in the letter of offer may have their Admission to the program cancelled.
7. The University reserves the right to cancel the offer of Admission to Students who provide false, fraudulent, incomplete or misleading Information.
8. Unless approved by the Dean (Graduate Research School), an Applicant cannot be admitted to an HDR program at the University while simultaneously admitted to any other higher degree, Bachelor (including Honours) degree or Sub-Bachelor degrees at the University or any other institution.
9. By recommending an offer of admission to be made to an Applicant for an HDR program, the Head of School, College, Institute or Centre confirms that:
 - a. it has appropriate discipline expertise to host the Research project;
 - b. it has access to the necessary resources, including required infrastructure for the Research program, consumables for lab-work or clinical tests, technical expertise and staffing for the duration of the HDR program;
 - c. it has the capacity to provide adequate supervision for the duration of the HDR program; and
 - d. the Student has demonstrated they have an appropriate academic and Research background to successfully complete the HDR program.

10. The School, Research Institute or Centre must provide appropriate discipline expertise, resources, and adequate supervision for the duration of the Student's Enrolment in the HDR program.

4.1.2 Application process

An application is to be made on the prescribed form and submitted in accordance with instructions on the University website.

To initiate the Admissions process, it is the Applicant's responsibility to contact relevant University Research supervisors and complete the prescribed form. Potential Research supervisors can be identified from the Expert Finder or lists of the available Research Thesis Topics on the University website.

Prior to submitting an application for Admission to an HDR program, Applicants must secure written confirmation from a University academic staff member who is registered as a principal supervisor that the staff member is able to supervise their Research.

Full applications must be signed off by the Head of School and/or Centre Director of the host School or Research Centre before they can be submitted to the Graduate Research School (GRS) for assessment. An Applicant's host School or Research Centre will be the school or centre to which the nominated principal supervisor is substantively aligned.

This written confirmation from the supervisor, along with the signature of the Head of School or Centre, must be submitted with the application for Admission.

The Associate Dean (Graduate Research School) considers the application and the host School or Research Centre's recommendation and approves or rejects Admission of the Applicant. Applicants are advised in writing of the outcome of their application.

Following notification of an offer of Admission, successful Applicants will be advised of any other requirements in order to finalise acceptance of the offer into the HDR program.

To accept an offer, an Applicant must comply with any and all specified instructions and deadlines, as outlined in their letter of offer.

In the case of Applicants from a country listed under the sanctions requirements, a sanctions form must be completed by the proposed supervisor and attached to the Student application form. Applicants should refer to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Consolidated list to determine if there are any sanctions imposed on the proposed parties.

4.1.3 English language proficiency

Domestic and International Applicants are required to satisfy English language requirements as specified in the English Language Proficiency Requirements Procedure.

Applicants who do not satisfy these requirements may apply to undertake a University-approved

English language program. Upon successful completion of the English language program, Applicants may apply and be admitted to their requested University Program where all other Admission requirements are satisfied.

4.1.4 Duration of Program

The target duration date for the Doctor of Philosophy (DPHD) is 3 years Full Time Equivalent (FTE) (24 units). Students can apply to submit early at 2 years FTE (16 units) and have a maximum of 4 years FTE (32 units) to complete their program.

The target duration date for the Master of Research (MRES) is 2 years FTE (16 units). Students can apply to submit early at 1.5 years FTE (12 units) and have a maximum of 2.5 years FTE (20 units).

4.1.5 International Students

International Students should refer to the Admissions procedure for further requirements (such as visas) on applying for Admission to the University.

4.1.6 Program Transfer

Applicants wishing to transfer their HDR Enrolment from another institution to a University HDR Program must meet the Admissions requirements in the Program Handbook and must provide a formal release letter, full Academic Transcripts and documentation showing the equivalent Full-Time Study load (EFTSL) consumed at their current institution.

In cases where an Applicant applies to transfer HDR Enrolment but does not meet University Admissions requirements, the Associate Dean (Graduate Research School) may provide a written justification substantiating the capacity of the Applicant to undertake Research which will be assessed by the Dean (Graduate Research School).

4.1.7 Credit Transfer

Prior Research undertaken at the University or another recognized institution may be credited towards the HDR program provided that it has not been recognised for another Award and has been completed at the same Australian Qualification Framework level. Although prior Research may be recognised towards the Research component of the HDR program, candidates will be expected to complete any Coursework requirements relevant to the degree, as specified in the program requirements, unless Credit is granted. Refer to the Credit and Exemption Procedure for more details.

4.1.7.1 Domestic Students

Periods of study towards the Research degree within three years prior to commencement in the HDR program will be deducted from both the period of the Research Training Program (RTP) Domestic Fee Offset support and the minimum and maximum Thesis submission dates.

4.1.7.2 International Students

Recognition of prior Research is approved at the discretion of the Associate Dean (Graduate Research School). Recognition may result in a reduction in the minimum and maximum Thesis submission dates.

4.1.8 Deferment

Applicants are eligible to apply for Deferment of the commencement date of the program to which they are admitted. Applications to defer commencement are approved by the Associate Dean (Graduate Research School).

The standard program duration is not inclusive of the period of Deferment.

4.1.9 Return to study after Leave of Absence or Deferment

HDR Students returning to study in a program after an approved Leave of Absence will be reactivated in the system on the last date of the approved Leave of Absence. Domestic HDR Students returning from a period of Deferment must submit a request to return to study directly to the GRS. International HDR Students returning from a period of Deferment must submit a request to return to study to the International Office.

4.1.10 Exclusion

HDR Students who are currently Excluded or suspended from the University, or Applicants who are Excluded or suspended from another tertiary institution, will only be eligible for either Admission or re-admission to their program provided they meet the following requirements:

- Applicants must satisfy the normal entry requirements for the program at the time of Admission or re-admission; and
- The Exclusion or Suspension period has expired.

Students returning from a period of Exclusion may also be required to satisfy specific conditions imposed by the University, in accordance with the Student Academic Progress Procedure and the Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure. Where the original program has been discontinued, Students will be required to apply for Admission to a relevant alternative program.

4.1.11 Readmission following voluntary withdrawal

Applicants who have previously withdrawn from an HDR program at the University will need to seek readmission to their program. Applicants will be subject to the Admission requirements

applicable at the time of readmission and may be required to resubmit a research proposal and seek confirmation of appropriate supervision.

Where the original program has been discontinued, Students will be required to apply for Admission to a relevant alternative program.

4.1.12 Incarcerated Applicants

Incarcerated Applicants seeking Admission into an HDR program will be required to sign an Incarcerated Student Consent Form which allows the University to apply an indicator to their record so that additional support can be provided. Additionally, the Incarcerated Student Consent Form facilitates the automatic acknowledgement of an Authorised Representative from the Correctional Centre in accordance with the Student Authority to Act Procedure. Incarcerated Students may also nominate an alternative Representative to act on their behalf in accordance with the Student Authority to Act Procedure.

4.1.13 Grievances

Where an Applicant is unsuccessful for Admission to a University program, they may submit a request to have the Decision reviewed, in accordance with the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure.

4.2 Enrolment

Except during periods of approved Leave of Absence, an HDR Student must be enrolled in the relevant Courses for the whole Academic Year, until the date when the Thesis has been submitted for examination. After that time and until examination is completed, the Student's Enrolment status will be 'Under examination'. Failure to enrol by an HDR Student may lead to them being cancelled from the program as per the Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure.

Master by Research students are responsible for enrolling themselves into the correct courses.

DPHD students will be automatically enrolled each year into either a full-time or part-time enrolment pattern. Requests for changes to the enrolment load must be provided in writing to the GRS. Changes to enrollment for DPHD students will be managed by the GRS.

4.2.1 Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for the following:

- planning their pattern of study to meet all Course and program requirements;
- ensuring their Enrolment details, including all contact Information, are correct;

- correctly enrolling themselves in Courses, if a Master by Research student, in accordance with the recommended Enrolment pattern for their program;
- contacting the GRS to modify their Enrolment when their circumstances make it unlikely that they can successfully complete a Course;
- ensuring that their Enrolment, including load requirements, comply with Australian Student Visa requirements, if applicable;
- being aware of their fee liability (if any), and to pay their fees in full by the relevant published payment due date. Failure to do so will result in restrictions and cancellations, in accordance with the Student Debt Management Procedure; and
- completing the objectives and Assessment Items of the enrolled Course by the due date and applying for relevant support where Special Circumstances apply.

4.2.2 Contact by the University

All Student communication in relation to Enrolment will occur by Notice to the Student's University-issued email account.

4.2.3 Adding and dropping Courses

Students should refer to the Enrolment Procedure for Information on how to add and drop Courses. HDR Students should note that those who drop Courses after the Census Date will incur financial penalty, unless Special Circumstances apply, and may incur academic penalty. For HDR Students in a RTP place, this will consume part of their RTP allocation. Therefore, to drop Courses after the Census Date:

- without academic penalty and with tuition fee reversal, refer to the Refund of Student Fees Policy and Procedure;
- without academic penalty only, providing the drop occurs prior to the date specified in the Important Dates, refer to the conditions set out in the Enrolment Procedure.

4.2.4 Change of personal details

Students and Graduates who wish to correct or change personal details recorded on the University's Student system may request to do so by completing a Change of Name and Personal Details Form. Please refer the Enrolment procedure for further details.

4.2.5 Leave of Absence

HDR Students may apply for a Leave of Absence from their studies for a minimum of 4 weeks, and up to a maximum of 12 months. Leave of Absence may be taken as blocks of leave within

the duration of the Academic Program accumulating to a total of no more than 12 months. Requests for Leave of Absence will be considered for approval by the Associate Dean (GRS). A Leave of Absence taken after Census Date will consume a non-refundable RTP Credit. Such Leave will not be counted as part of the prescribed period of candidature.

A Student who has never enrolled in a Course, is not enrolled in the current Teaching Period, and is not enrolled in a future Teaching Period, and does not have an approved Leave of Absence or Deferment, will have their Admission in the program cancelled after Census Date. Where Admission has been cancelled and the Student wishes to recommence studies at the University, they must apply for re-admission as per 4.1.11 of this procedure.

In accordance with Australian Government regulations, International Students studying in Australia under an Australian Student Visa are permitted to defer or temporarily suspend their studies, including taking Leave of Absence, for a period of up to 12 months in any one period of leave on the grounds of Special Circumstances. Once the Leave of Absence has been approved, the University will notify the relevant government body that the Student's Enrolment is deferred or suspended.

4.2.6 Other Leave

HDR Scholarship Students should refer to the HDR Student Scholarship Procedure (*under development*) for Information on other types of leave available to them.

4.2.7 Variation to Period of Candidature

In exceptional circumstances, the Dean (GRS) may approve an extension to the maximum period of candidature of up to six (6) months full-time equivalent (FTE). The candidate will be required to continue their Enrolment in the program and pay the required fees, where applicable. Where a candidate does not submit within the maximum period of candidature or an application to extend the maximum period of candidature is not approved, the candidature will be discontinued.

On the recommendation of the supervisor, the Dean (GRS) may approve a request to submit a Thesis prior to the minimum submission date. Such candidates are required to complete the specified number of Credit points for both the Coursework and Research components prior to submission of the Research component, as specified in the program requirements.

4.2.8 Changes to HDR program

Students who wish to change their mode of Enrolment (Full-Time Study to Part-Time Study or vice versa) are required to discuss this change with their supervisory team and advise the GRS in writing via their University-issued email account.

Students who wish to make a major change to their Thesis topic must have the support of their principal supervisor and request their Thesis topic change in writing to the GRS. This will then be reviewed by the Associate Dean (GRS).

Students who wish to extend their candidature time must apply for an extension request online, for consideration by the Associate Dean (GRS). The application must have the support of the principal HDR Supervisor.

4.2.9 Review of Progress

All Students are required to meet the Academic Progress milestones as outlined in the Higher Degree by Research Progress Procedure.

4.2.10 Student-initiated withdrawal of candidature

Candidates may request to withdraw from their program at any time by writing to the GRS via their University-issues email account requesting a voluntary withdrawal.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
Responsible Officer	Dean (Graduate Research School)
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Higher Degree by Research Student Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	25/11/2022
Effective Date	25/11/2022
Review Date	25/11/2027
Relevant Legislation	Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 Higher Education Support Act 2003 Information Privacy Act 2009

	National Code of Practice for Providers of education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	<p>AEG Policy (under development)</p> <p>Code of Conduct Policy</p> <p>Harassment and Discrimination Complaint Resolution for Students Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Refund of Student Fees Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Student Academic Integrity Policy</p> <p>Student General Conduct Policy</p> <p>Student Communication Policy</p> <p>Student Grievance Resolution Policy</p>
Related Procedures	<p>Admissions Procedure</p> <p>Assessment Procedure</p> <p>Credit and Exemption Procedure</p> <p>English Language Proficiency Requirements Procedure</p> <p>Enrolment Procedure</p> <p>Grades Procedure</p> <p>Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure</p> <p>Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedure</p> <p>Joint PhD Proposal Procedure</p> <p>Research Code of Conduct: Management of Potential Breaches Procedure</p> <p>Sanctions and Exports Controls Procedure (under development)</p> <p>Student Academic Misconduct Procedure</p> <p>Student Academic Progress Procedure</p>

	Student Appeals Procedure Student Authority to Act Procedure Student Communication Procedure Student Debt Management Procedure Student General Misconduct Procedure Student Grievance Resolution Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Academic Appeal Form Autonomous Sanctions Compliance Form Consolidated List - Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Exclude Internal Form (under review) Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Graduate Research School Student Progress Reports Higher Education Administrative Information for Providers UniSQ website (Graduate Research School) Research Training Program Scholarship Schedule Student General Misconduct Procedure Penalty Schedule UniSQ Scholarship website
Definitions	Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary Academic Merit <p>Academic Merit is based on an Applicant's level of academic achievement during their prior studies. It is generally assessed on an applicant's OP score, International Baccalaureate (IB) score, Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank, or equivalent rank based on the applicants qualifications and/or work experience.</p> Academic Program <p>An approved Higher Education Award of the University, consisting of a combination of Courses the successful completion of an offering of</p>

which, together with any credit transfers and Exemptions in accordance with the relevant requirements, will fulfil the prescribed requirements for that particular Award.

[Academic Progress](#)

Describes the status of a Student's progress towards successful completion of their coursework for each Study Period and towards completion of their program within the maximum given timeframe. Students who are successfully progressing through their studies would not be assigned to any of the Academic Progress stages outlined in the Student Academic Progress Procedure.

[Academic Transcript](#)

The document that provides an accurate statement of the information about the Student's academic and academic related activities at the University. This document satisfies the University's responsibilities to the Student and other third parties (including other universities) for adequate and appropriate representation of relevant information about the student's academic and academic related activities.

[Academic Year](#)

A period of time consisting of Semesters and Study Periods that all commence in the same calendar year.

[Admission](#)

The process of submission and assessment of applications for entry to study at the University.

[Applicant](#)

A person who applies for any program or Course of study offered by the University whether the application is made through the Queensland Tertiary Admission Centre (QTAC) or directly to the University.

[Assessment Item](#)

An individual Assessment task as outlined in the Assessment schedule for a Course. Assessment Items may be formal, informal, Formative or Summative in nature.

[Authorised Representative](#)

A representative who has been authorised to represent or act on

behalf of a Student and acknowledged as such by the University in writing and in compliance with relevant University policy.

[Authority to Act](#)

An Authority to Act is an official permission given by a person to another person and/or entity to act on certain matters, or granted to a person or entity to act on behalf of another person through an existing legal instrument for a certain period of time. An Authority to Act can be given in relation to all business transactions with the University, or extended in relation to certain matters only.

[Award](#)

The qualification conferred upon a Student following the successful completion of an Academic Program. The categories of Award are listed in the Program Nomenclature Schedule.

[Census Date](#)

The date on which the Student's enrolment related requirements must be finalised in line with the University's important dates. A Higher Education Provider must, for each unit of study it provides or proposes to provide during a year, determine for that year, a particular date to be the Census Date for the unit. Students are responsible for meeting the University's Census Date deadline and must check that all enrolment and payment details are correct on or before the Census Date.

[Course](#)

A discrete element of a program, normally undertaken over a single Study Period, in which the Student enrolls, and on completion of which the Student is awarded a grade.

[Coursework](#)

A method of teaching and learning that leads to the acquisition of skills and knowledge and does not include a major research component.

[Credit](#)

The number of units, up to a specified limit, granted towards a University Award on the basis of either previous Formal, Informal or Non-formal Learning. Credit reduces the number of Courses required to complete an Award Program.

[Credit Point](#)

The term used prior to 2002 to describe a Unit.

[Decision](#)

A determination made by an Employee, contractor or other authorised delegate in the course of their duties on behalf of the University.

[Deferment](#)

Approval granted to Students who have accepted an offer of Admission to a program for the first time to delay the commencement of Enrolment for up to two calendar years.

[Domestic Student](#)

A Student who is an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, an Australian Permanent Resident or the holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa.

[EFTSL](#)

An Equivalent Full-Time Student Unit (EFTSL) is a measure of the workload for students undertaking a full year of study in a particular year. At this University, one EFTSL is equal to eight Units.

[Enrolment](#)

The process of admitting Students to one or more Courses for the current Academic Year.

[Exclusion](#)

Prohibition from enrolling in a Course or program for a specified period due to unsatisfactory academic progress.

[Exemption](#)

The release from the requirement to complete a specific required Course but without reducing the overall number of Units required to complete the program.

[Full-Time Study](#)

A Student will be deemed to be in Full-time Study where they are enrolled in at least 75% of the equivalent full-time load (8 Units) during an Academic Year. These Units can be taken in any Study Period

during the year.

[Graduate](#)

A Student upon whom Council has conferred an Award.

[Grievance](#)

Typically defined as a concern or Complaint raised by an Employee against a process, action, omission or Decision within the responsibility and control of the University which relates to employment or related internal People Portfolio matters, which has or is likely to have an unreasonable negative impact on the ability of an Employee to undertake their duties, or similar impact on their career.

[Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\)](#)

A Research Doctorate or Research Masters program for which at least two-thirds of the Student load for the program is required as research work.

[Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Student](#)

A Student enrolled in an HDR program.

[Information](#)

Any collection of data that is processed, analysed, interpreted, organised, classified or communicated in order to serve a useful purpose, present facts or represent knowledge in any medium or form. This includes presentation in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, graphical, cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical form.

[International Student](#)

A Student who is not an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, an Australian Permanent Resident or the holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa.

[Leave of Absence](#)

An approval granted to a Student to cease formal study as an enrolled Student for a specified period of time.

[Notice](#)

A Notice from the University is a document, whether physical or

electronic. A Notice may be: given by hand to the addressee or delivered to the address provided by the addressee to the University; or sent by registered or pre-paid mail to the address provided by the addressee to the University; or sent by electronic communication to the University-issued email account provided by the University to a Student during the period of Enrolment until the completion of their program; or sent by electronic communication to the email address provided to the University by an addressee not enrolled at the University. A Notice is taken to be received if: given by hand to the addressee or delivered to the address provided to the University by the addressee; or sent by registered or pre-paid mail - three University Business Days after the date of posting; or sent by electronic communication - at the time that would be the time of receipt under the Electronic Transactions Act 1999 or its succeeding legislation. A Notice that would be deemed to have been received out of business hours or on a non-University Business Day will instead be deemed received on the next University Business Day.

[Part-Time Study](#)

Enrolment in less than .75 EFTSL in any year shall be deemed to be Part-Time Study.

[Research](#)

Research is the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include the synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.

[Research Training](#)

A formal course of postgraduate study that leads to the acquisition of advanced skills, techniques and knowledge in the conduct of Research, and requires the production of a substantial original Research Output.

[Scholarship](#)

A Scholarship is Student recognition, typically based on Academic Merit, which provides a financial grant to a Student to undertake or complete a program of study at the University over a nominated period of time, in accordance with the selection criteria. A Scholarship may take the form of periodic payments to the Student or a reduction in specified costs, such as tuition fees for the duration of the Scholarship.

[Special Circumstances](#)

Matters which are, in most cases, beyond the control of the Student and which will impact their capacity to progress with their planned program of study or meet a submission deadline. In some legislation, Special Circumstances are referred to as “compassionate and compelling circumstances”.

[Student](#)

A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

[Student Grievance](#)

A problem or concern raised by a Student who considers they have been negatively impacted because of an action, determination or omission within the control or responsibility of the University. Student Grievances are resolved in accordance with the Student Grievance Resolution Procedure and must be related directly to a Student's studies at the University and the outcome must directly impact the Student.

[Study Period](#)

The period during which a Course or study unit is offered. Examples of Study Period include, but are not limited to, semesters, trimesters, blocks, intensives and sessions.

[Sub-Bachelor](#)

Includes diploma, undergraduate certificate, advanced diploma and associate degree level programs.

[Suspension](#)

Prohibition from enrolling in a Course or program for a specified period due to misconduct.

[Thesis](#)

Also known as a Standard Thesis, is the material outcomes of a program of research. It is also referred to as a 'dissertation'.

[University](#)

	The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.
	Definitions that relate to this procedure only
	Host School or Centre The School or Centre to which the Principal supervisor is aligned with.
Keywords	
Record No	21/637PL