

# Common Course Rules - Masters by Research

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## INTRODUCTION

In Higher Education, all courses offered by the University must comply with national regulatory requirements, for example, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), and many courses are also accredited through professional organisations. The University as a self-accrediting institution has a Council that determines course rules, which provide course structures and rules for HE awards. These course rules apply to HE AQF Levels 5 to 10.

For each category of award, there is a common set of rules applicable to all courses leading to an award in that category. In addition, each course may have associated with it specific rules that apply only to that course in addition to the common rules; specific rules are described in the course curriculum documentation.

## STATEMENT OF AUTHORITY

The authority behind this policy is the [Charles Darwin University Act 2003](#) section 47 under the authority of the Council.

## COMPLIANCE

This is a compliance requirement under the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#).

## RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

In the context of this document

**Associate Supervisor** means a person listed in the [Register of Supervisors](#) as an Associate Supervisor;

**Award** means a recognised certification of achievement or competence, which may be granted to a student after successful completion of all the requirements of a course;

**Candidate** means a student enrolled in a course leading to a qualification of Masters by Research;

**Candidature** means the period starting on the date of commencement and ending on the date of completion of all requirements of the course, or when the Candidate withdraws or is excluded from the course;

**College** means a College of the University or Menzies School of Health Research;

**Confirmation of Candidature** means a staged process by which the candidate and supervisor provide evidence that the enrolment is likely to result in the successful completion of a research qualification;

**Course** means a formally approved/accredited program of learning that leads to the award of a qualification;

**Dean** means the Dean (or delegate) of a College or the Director (or delegate) of Menzies School of Health Research;

**Dissertation** means a written thesis based on original research;

**Exceptional circumstances** means extended and serious illness of the candidate or an immediate family member; extreme financial hardship; long-term cultural obligations; or other circumstances such that failure to recognise them would result in an unfair or unreasonable outcome;

**Exegesis** means a critical interpretation or explication of text, a project or creative work;

**Higher Degree by Research (HDR)** means courses leading to the award of Doctor of Philosophy, Masters by Research and Research Professional Doctorates;

**Principal Supervisor** means a person listed in the [Register of Supervisors](#) as a Principal Supervisor;

**Qualification** means the result of a completed accredited program of learning that leads to formal certification that a graduate has achieved learning outcomes as described in the AQF;

**Research** comprises systematic experimental and theoretical work, application and/or development that results in an increase in the dimensions of knowledge;

**Student** means the definition contained in the [Charles Darwin University \(Student of the University\) By-laws](#);

**Supervisory Panel** means the Principal and Associate Supervisors as approved by the Board of Graduate Studies. The Supervisory Panel's role is to provide academic and administrative support to the candidate in order to facilitate timely submission of a high quality thesis; and

**Thesis** means the presentation of results of a research project, whether by written or other means. A Masters by Research thesis may take many forms and can include a production or performance component, a dissertation and/or exegesis.

## **RULES**

### **Courses Leading to the Qualification of Masters by Research**

These Rules apply to all courses of study leading to the qualification of Masters by Research.

These Rules may be cited as the "Research Masters Rules".

### **Preliminary**

All Candidates must undertake their program wholly under the control of the University.

### **Admission**

Admission to the Masters by Research will be in accordance with the [Admissions Policy](#), *HDR Policy and the HDR – Admissions and Enrolment Procedures*.

### **Course Requirements**

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Courses leading to the qualification of Masters by Research must meet the requirements for AQF Level 9 Masters Degree (Research).

Unless otherwise specified in the course curriculum documentation, a course leading to the qualification of Masters by Research will comprise a program of advanced study and research, which has been approved by the Board of Graduate Studies and which will include:

- Meeting a series of progress milestones as described in the *HDR Policy* and the *HDR – Progression Procedures*;
- An individual program of supervised study that applies an advanced and integrated understanding of a complex body of knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice; and
- The presentation of a thesis and/or other approved work, embodying the results of the candidate’s study and research.

### **Provision of Resources**

The University will allocate a home College to provide support for and exercise control over the Candidature. The home College may be changed according to the *HDR Policy*.

The Dean (or delegate) will specify to the Board of Graduate Studies what resources in addition to those specified in the [HDR - Minimum Resources for Candidates Guidelines](#), will be available for the research program.

### **Provision of Supervision**

Selection of a supervisory panel will be in accordance with the *HDR – Admission and Enrolment Procedures* and the [HDR - Supervision and Mentoring Procedures](#).

### **Conditions of Candidature**

Candidates are required to adhere to the conditions specified in the *HDR Policy* and associated procedures

### **Periods of Candidature**

Periods of candidature will apply as follows:

- The minimum period of candidature for a full-time candidate is one (1) year from the date of commencement, and two (2) years for a part-time candidate;
- The maximum period of candidature for a full-time candidate is two (2) years from the date of commencement and four (4) years for a part-time candidate;

In exceptional circumstances, the period of candidature may be extended in accordance with the *HDR Policy*.

### **Examination**

The thesis will be submitted as a requirement for the qualification of Masters by Research in the manner prescribed in the *HDR – Submission and Examination Procedures*.

The thesis will be examined in accordance with the *HDR – Submission and Examination Procedures*.

Examiners for a Masters by Research will have international standing in the field of research, be independent of the conduct of the research and the University, be competent to undertake the assessment and not have a conflict of interest.

### **Award of the Qualification**

The qualification of Masters by Research will be awarded once the candidate completes the requirements of the course leading to that qualification.

### **Termination of the Course**

When a course is approved for termination or is superseded:

- Transition/completion arrangements for existing students must be clearly documented and disseminated to all existing students;
- As far as possible, students will not be disadvantaged by the transition/completion;
- The course will be offered for re-enrolment only until all existing students have completed/transitioned or for a period not to exceed twice the period required for a student undertaking a standard load to complete the course, whichever is less; and
- At the conclusion of the period for which the course is offered for re-enrolment only, the course will be closed.

## **ESSENTIAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **Internal**

[Admissions Policy](#)

[Authorship of Research Output Procedures](#)

[Charles Darwin University \(Student of the University\) By-laws](#)

HDR – Admission and Enrolment Procedures

[HDR – Minimum Resources for Candidates Guidelines](#)

HDR Policy

HDR – Progression Procedures

HDR – Submission and Examination Procedures

[HDR - Supervision and Mentoring Procedures](#)

### **External**

[Australian Qualifications Framework](#)

## Document History and Version Control

<b>Last amendment:</b>	26 Apr 2018	<b>Next Review:</b>	Apr 2021
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Vice-Chancellor		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Director of Research		

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description
1.00	12 Dec 2005	Council	Creation of original document and upload to CDU website.
1.01	5 Mar 2006	Chancellor	<p><b>Editorial Changes</b></p> <p>Remove the inactive govt link</p> <p>Insert the word Grievance where the Student Grievance, Academic Complaints and Appeals Process is mentioned.</p> <p>4.3 (2) (b)</p> <p>4.7 (10) (b)</p> <p>4.9 (2) (b)</p> <p>4.13 (5) (b)</p> <p>(4) Definitions “the Panel” add the Research Panel and/or the Chair of the Research Panel who is</p> <p>4.8 (2) add - This does not apply to part time students.</p>
2.00	15 Jun 2007	Council	<p>Updated in line with AUQA requirements for panel supervision for example, Changed</p> <p>“4.4 Provision of Supervision and Resources</p> <p>(1) At the time of admitting, in accordance with the Policy on Postgraduate Research</p> <p>Supervision, the Dean/ Director will nominate:</p> <p>(a) a supervisor with relevant expertise, who is a full-time academic staff member at the</p> <p>University and who holds a degree and/or experience deemed by the Panel to be</p> <p>equivalent to a degree of Doctor of Philosophy;</p> <p>(b) any associate supervisors as deemed fit.”</p> <p><b>To</b></p> <p>“(1)At the time of admitting, in accordance with the Policy on Postgraduate Research Supervision, the Dean/ Director will nominate a supervisory panel consisting of:</p> <p>(a) a <b>primary</b> supervisor with relevant expertise, who is a full-time academic staff member at the University and who holds a degree and/or experience deemed by the Panel to be equivalent to a degree of Doctor of Philosophy; and</p> <p>(b) <b>at least</b> two associate supervisors as deemed fit.”</p>
3.00	20 Jun 2008	Council	A new process for confirmation of candidature has been inserted at 4.6.
4.00	7 Dec 2012	Council	Major review of document to remove procedural details and ensure compliance with AQF.
4.01	6 Mar 2013	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assigned document number</li> <li>• Updated and added hyperlinks</li> <li>• Minor changes to formatting, wording and grammar</li> </ul>

4.02	15 Dec 2017	Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversion to new Governance template due to new University branding</li> <li>• Sponsor added, Vice-Chancellor</li> <li>• Updated definitions</li> <li>• Updated hyperlinks</li> <li>• List of Essential Supporting Information -</li> <li>• HDR – Determining Honours Equivalence for Alternative Qualifications Guidelines (under development) Removed.</li> </ul>
5.00	26 Apr 2018	Council	<p>Major review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amended ‘committee’ to Board of Graduate Studies (to replace Research and Research Training Committee) throughout</li> <li>• Amended definitions for Associate Supervisor, Higher Degree by Research, Principal Supervisor, and Supervisory Panel</li> <li>• Added definitions for Candidature, College, Dean and Student</li> <li>• Removed definitions for Faculty, PVC</li> <li>• Added Preliminary and Provision of Resources paragraphs</li> <li>• Removed admission criteria as moved to new Admissions Policy (hyperlinked) and referenced HDR Policy and HDR-Admissions and Enrolment Procedures (under development)</li> <li>• Removed Confirmation of Candidature and Lodgement of Thesis paragraphs</li> <li>• Amended Course Requirements to remove reference to <i>Participation in at least five (5) approved, generic research skills training workshops/seminars....</i> and replace with Meet progress milestones as described in the HDR Policy and the HDR - Progression Procedures (under development)</li> <li>• Amended Provision of Supervision and Resources – removing resources and replacing HDR - Candidate Recruitment, Admission and Enrolment Procedures with HDR - Admission and Enrolment Procedures (under development)</li> <li>• Amended Conditions of Candidature removing reference to HDR - Conditions of Candidature and replacing with HDR Policy (under development) and associated procedures</li> <li>• Amended Periods of Candidature from a minimum of 6 months to 1 year full-time and 1 year to 2 years part-time and added reference to HDR Policy (under development)</li> <li>• Amended Examination to include reference to HDR - Submission and Examination Procedures (under development) and removed reference to HDR - Presentation of Thesis Procedures</li> <li>• Amended Award of the Qualification by removing the first paragraph about meeting the minimum requirement as duplicated in Periods of Candidature</li> </ul>