

# Higher Degree by Research Handbook

Prepared by: Research Services

# Contents

	1
<b>About This Handbook .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Support Structures .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Graduate Centre .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>International Student Support.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Committees .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Ethics Committee .....	4
<b>Library, Information &amp; Communication Services.....</b>	<b>4</b>
The Federation University Australia Library .....	4
Electronic Resources .....	5
<b>Scholarships .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Scholarships for Australian Citizens, Permanent Residents and International Applicants .....	5
<b>Employment &amp; Financial Support .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Employment during full-time candidature .....	6
Financial Support .....	6
Travel Policy and Insurance Cover for Higher Degree Research Candidates.....	6
<b>Higher Degree by Research Administration .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Interim and Annual Progress Reports .....	6
Annual Review .....	6
Interim Reports.....	7
<b>Candidature .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Supervision .....	7
Candidature Agreement .....	7
Enrolment and Induction .....	7
Changing Supervisor.....	8
Extension of Time .....	8
Withdrawal from Studies .....	8
Lapse of candidature.....	8
Termination .....	9
Student Evaluation of the Postgraduate Program (SEPP) .....	9
Grievances and Problems during Candidature.....	9
<b>Conduct of Research .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Health and Safety.....	9
Intellectual Property .....	9
Appointment of Examiners .....	9
Examination .....	10
After the Examination.....	10
Graduation .....	10
<b>Further Assistance .....</b>	<b>10</b>

## About This Handbook

This handbook is designed as an introductory guide to the administrative support and governing policies concerning your research candidature at Federation University Australia. The purpose is to assist in guiding you with information about the relevant staff, structure and aspects of University operations which will affect you directly.

The period of study ahead of you will be challenging, but at the same time we expect that you will also find it rewarding and enjoyable.

## Support Structures

### Research Services

Research Services provides the central administrative support for research and research training for the University. The office is involved in research planning, policy development, the administration of higher degrees by research, research scholarships, grants, fellowships and research ethics. Research Services provides a link between candidates, schools and the research committees described later in this section. You are encouraged to contact staff on any matter relating to your candidature or supervision.

Contact details for staff within Research Services are available on the following web page: <http://federation.edu.au/research-and-innovation/research-degrees/contact-us/staff-profiles>

## The Graduate Centre

The Graduate Centre Program has been developed following, broad consultation with postgraduate students and supervisors. The structure and sequence of the program is tailored to the various stages of candidature. The program commences with discussions about the transition to, and nature of, postgraduate research and concludes with sessions on the submission of the thesis/portfolio and career planning. The program provides many opportunities to develop skills and knowledge, and contributes significantly to the development of a community of research scholars.

Information about the Graduate Centre Program can be found on the following web page: <http://federation.edu.au/research-and-innovation/research-support>

## International Student Support

The International Student Support (ISS) Office provides assistance to international students for the transition to life at University in Victoria, Australia. Support services provided during the admission process and the early stages of candidature include:

- pre-departure / pre-arrival information;
- assistance with finding accommodation;
- and an orientation program

The contact details for the International Office are available on the following web page:  
<https://federation.edu.au/international/study-at-feduni/international-student-support>

## Committees

### **Research Higher Degrees Sub Committee**

The Research Higher Degrees Sub Committee (RHDSC) is a committee of the Academic Board with responsibility for all matters relating to higher degree research candidature. It approves admission to candidature, the appointment of supervisors, monitors the progress of all candidates, approves the appointment of examiners, recommends to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) on research scholarships awarded by the University and recommends the awarding of degrees.

### **Research Committee**

The Research Committee is a committee of the Academic Board and is chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research). The Committee is responsible for the development of research management policy across the University and provides advice to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the allocation of research resources, including some scholarships and all research grants.

### **Ethics Committee**

It is important that research projects and practices conform to accepted community standards and to this end certain research projects must be approved by the appropriate ethics committee, which includes community representatives. Any research project involving human subjects must be approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee.

Any work involving animals must be approved by the Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee. The ethics officers in Research Services can advise which projects require approval and should always be consulted if there is any doubt. It is the formal responsibility of the supervisor to obtain any required ethical clearance for each higher degree project, but you will be involved in preparing applications for approval. This may involve interaction with the appropriate ethics officer.

Guidelines for seeking approval from the ethics committee and application forms are available on the Research Services Web page:

<http://federation.edu.au/research-and-innovation/research-support/ethics>

## Library, Information & Communication Services

### **The Federation University Australia Library**

The Library's primary role is to provide collections, services and facilities across seven campuses to support the learning, teaching and research programs of the University. You are encouraged to make contact with your University Librarian.

Contact details are provided on the following web page:

<http://federation.edu.au/library>

## Researching Tips from the Library

Research is a process of learning to seek, find and use information effectively and independently, which requires both creative and critical thinking. Research is not a mechanical or static process; therefore, you need to be prepared to continually modify, expand and refine your approach.

Researching tips from the library are available on the following web page:

<http://federation.edu.au/library/assignment-and-research-help/researching-tips>

## Electronic Resources

The Library has online databases to help you locate journal articles, conference papers, reports and other information resources which can be accessed at the following web page:

<http://federation.edu.au/library/access-library-resources/online-journals-and-databases>

## Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Services team is responsible for the provision of electronic based information systems across the University. It is also responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the computers and computer networks. ICT is responsible for several key databases and the underlying electronic information infrastructure. ICT play a proactive role in planning for the future electronic information and communication needs of the University in an environment that is both dynamic and rapidly expanding.

Please ensure that you have your Federation University Australia Student ID number at hand before contacting the ICT Service Desk at the following web page:

<http://federation.edu.au/students/assistance-support-and-services/ict-services>

## Scholarships

### Scholarships for Australian Citizens, Permanent Residents and International Applicants

Federation University Australia offers a range of scholarships for higher degree by research candidates, including Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA), International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS), Fed Uni Postgraduate Research Scholarships (FedUniPRS), and Special Overseas Student Scholarships (SOSS).

These are advertised each year with a **closing date of 31 October**, to be taken up in the following year.

Further information about these scholarships can be obtained from Research Services at the following web page:

<http://federation.edu.au/research-and-innovation/research-degrees/scholarships>

Application forms are also available to download from the following web page:

<http://federation.edu.au/research-and-innovation/research-degrees/apply>

### JASON Web Site:

JASON (Joint Academic Scholarships On-line Network) is the first and only Australian information database for postgraduate scholarships. This database provides a unique service to both students looking for scholarships and to organisations and foundations who are awarding them.

Feel free to peruse available scholarships by accessing the following web page:  
<http://www.jason.edu.au>

## Employment & Financial Support

### Employment during full-time candidature

Full-time candidates are expected to devote the majority of their time to their study program. It is possible to undertake a limited amount of paid work provided that it does not interfere with the progress of your research program. Approval must be obtained from your Principal Supervisor and Head of School before undertaking employment. The usual paid work limit for a full time enrolled candidate is a maximum of eight hours per week.

### Financial Support

Schools can provide a small amount of financial support to their higher degree by research candidates. This support may include project costs and assistance to attend conferences. You are encouraged to contact your School for information regarding any assistance available.

The Graduate Centre also provides financial assistance for students to attend the annual Federation University Australia HDR Research Conference which is run **by** HDR students **for** HDR students and the wider FedUni community. It gives all HDR students an opportunity to present their work in a formal conference environment.

### Travel Policy and Insurance Cover for Higher Degree Research Candidates

Please refer to the following web page for information on the University travel policy, paying particular attention to any insurance cover that might apply to your candidature:  
<http://policy.federation.edu.au/finance/travel/travel/ch01.php>

## Higher Degree by Research Administration

### Interim and Annual Progress Reports

Candidates are required to complete Annual and Interim Progress Reports. These reports are compulsory with the policy found at the following web page:

[http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate\\_research\\_programs/hdr\\_progress\\_reports/ch01.php](http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate_research_programs/hdr_progress_reports/ch01.php)

### Annual Review

A formal annual review of the progress of your candidature is conducted each year, in the form of the Annual Progress Report. An interview is conducted by the Head of School, or nominee, during June as a part of the reporting process.

The Annual Progress interview provides an opportunity for candidates and supervisors to review the progress of your program and identify and resolve any issues that might have arisen.

It is important that the review is conducted with frankness and honesty. It is only when problems are identified that solutions can be found. If you are reluctant to discuss any sensitive matters, then you should contact Research Services or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). A matter raised in this way will remain strictly confidential unless you agree that it can be taken further.

## Interim Reports

The Interim Progress Reports are forwarded to the Schools. All Principal Supervisors have to arrange a meeting with their students to complete the Report. The completion of the Interim Progress Report is compulsory. Forms are distributed towards the end of June by Research Services. All forms must be completed.

## Candidature

The period of candidature is prescribed by Regulation 5.1. Please refer to the appropriate part for your particular degree:

[http://federation.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/44976/r5\\_1doctorates.pdf](http://federation.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/44976/r5_1doctorates.pdf)

## Supervision

At Federation University Australia, all students are allocated a Principal Supervisor and an Associate Supervisor(s). All Supervisors must be approved and be on the University Register of Supervisors. Further information about the registration and responsibility of research supervisors can be found at the following web site:

[http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate\\_research\\_programs/register\\_of\\_research\\_hd\\_supervisors/ch01.php#Ch1324Se202840](http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate_research_programs/register_of_research_hd_supervisors/ch01.php#Ch1324Se202840)

## Candidature Agreement

When admitted to candidature all students are required to sign an acceptance of offer letter which sets out the terms and conditions of their candidature. This is an 'agreement' between the candidate and the University regarding the topic of research, supervision arrangements, the outline or plan of the research program and the timetable for completion. The following matters are covered in the agreement:

- the details of candidature approved by the Committee;
- the supervision arrangements;
- confirmation of candidature and progress report information;
- any coursework required together with any advanced standing granted;
- if specialist resources and facilities are required then these will be stated in the application process. Please ensure that these are detailed in your offer letter;
- any special conditions which apply to the candidature, including restrictions on intellectual property and requirements for ethical approval;
- ethics approval details;
- attendance at the Graduate Centre Program;
- scholarship conditions; and
- any additional requirements.

The intention of the agreement is to set out the expectations of all parties regarding your candidature. It is accepted that circumstances change and that it may be necessary for amendments during candidature. Changes can be made at any time, but must be approved by the Research Higher Degrees Sub Committee which meets on a regular basis. Applications for any changes should be made through the Mid Year and Annual Progress reviews.

## Enrolment and Induction

In the early stages of your candidature, an induction program will be conducted by Research Services. This will include a guide to the nature of research in your field and a description of the facilities available at the University.

The Induction Program includes:

- your responsibilities and rights as a candidate;
- the nature and process of supervised research in the discipline, and the characteristic stages towards completion of your thesis/portfolio;
- the role of the Principal Supervisor and others involved in your supervision;
- ethical matters regarding research;
- intellectual property, and authorship of publications;
- the grievance procedures under which you may make representation if significant difficulties arise during your candidature;
- safety procedures appropriate to the discipline; and
- any special conditions which apply, such as restrictions on disclosure of research outcomes associated with sponsorship of the candidature or the research project.

It is your responsibility to complete the formal requirements for enrolment, re-enrolment and all other conditions of candidature.

### **Changing Supervisor**

An application for a change of supervisor should be discussed with your supervisor and/or Associate Dean (Research)/HDR Coordinator in the first instance. You can also discuss these changes with Research Services if you need guidance during the process. Requests for changes to your supervisory team should be made in writing to Research Services and must be supported by your Principal Supervisor and Head of School.

### **Extension of Time**

An application for an extension of time will only be approved if a suitable case is made and a detailed timetable for the completion of the program is provided. Requests for changes to the period of candidature should be made in writing to Research Services and must be supported by your Principal Supervisor and Head of School.

### **Withdrawal from Studies**

If you are considering withdrawing from your degree program you should first discuss the matter with your Principal Supervisor and the Head of School. Formal withdrawal requires written advice to Research Services.

Readmission after withdrawal may be possible provided that the application is supported by the Head of School and approved by the RHDSC. A request to resume the original research topic or to be given credit for work done during the earlier candidature will be considered on its merits.

### **Lapse of candidature**

Your candidature will lapse if you do not comply with the formal requirements of candidature including enrolment procedures. Following a lapse of candidature, re-instatement is possible under certain circumstances. Applications must be made in writing through your Head of School to Research Services.

### **Unsatisfactory progress**

If you have any problem, which impedes the progress of the research program, such as access to facilities or equipment, or with research methodology, you should discuss it with your Principal Supervisor as soon as possible. Personal or health problems, which affect the progress of the degree program, should also be discussed so that arrangements for 'Leave from Study' can be made if necessary.

A Show Cause hearing will be scheduled by the RHDSC to review all student cases that have been reported by the School as unsatisfactory progress.



## Termination

Under Regulation 5.1: Progression; it states:

“If the Academic Board, after giving the Candidate an opportunity to be heard and after considering all the evidence before it, believes the Candidate is not making satisfactory progress or is not complying with regulations, it may terminate the Candidate's enrolment for the degree...”

The following web page contains the relevant policies and procedures:

Regulation 5.1 - The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, and Masters Degrees by Research:  
[http://federation.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/44976/r5\\_1doctorates.pdf](http://federation.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/44976/r5_1doctorates.pdf)

## Student Evaluation of the Postgraduate Program (SEPP)

A SEPP questionnaire will be forwarded directly to all enrolled students during June each year. Students are encouraged to complete the questionnaire and return it to Research Services. The questionnaire is confidential and the only identifier on the form is the name of the School.

To review the 'SEPP questionnaires' please refer to the following web page:

[http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate\\_research\\_programs/student\\_evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_postgraduate\\_program\\_survey/ch01.php](http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate_research_programs/student_evaluation_of_the_postgraduate_program_survey/ch01.php)

## Grievances and Problems during Candidature

If you experience problems during your candidature, it is important that they are tackled without delay so that progress is not unduly impeded. In general, problems are best solved without recourse to formal complaint. The first contact is normally your Principal Supervisor.

The policy on student grievance can be found at the following web page:

[http://policy.federation.edu.au/university/student\\_grievance/ch02.php](http://policy.federation.edu.au/university/student_grievance/ch02.php)

## Conduct of Research

The Responsible Conduct of Research Policy and Procedure can be found at the following web page:

[http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/general/code\\_of\\_good\\_practice\\_for\\_the\\_conduct\\_of\\_research/ch03.php](http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/general/code_of_good_practice_for_the_conduct_of_research/ch03.php)

## Health and Safety

Federation University Australia is committed to establishing best practice in providing a workplace and environment that are, as far as practicable, safe and without risk to health.

All policies and procedures are available on the following web page:

[http://policy.federation.edu.au/category\\_list.php?catalogue\\_id=216](http://policy.federation.edu.au/category_list.php?catalogue_id=216)

## Intellectual Property

Please refer to the following web page Statute and Regulation 8.2:

<http://federation.edu.au/staff/governance/legal/feduni-legislation/feduni-statutes-and-regulations>

## Appointment of Examiners

Students are permitted to discuss prospective examiners' names with their Principal Supervisors', however, the final selection remains confidential. Please refer to the following web page for the Examination Guidelines provided to examiners:

[http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate\\_research\\_programs/doctor\\_examination\\_philosophy/ch01.php](http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate_research_programs/doctor_examination_philosophy/ch01.php)

### **Examination**

Please refer to the following web page which outlines the examination for higher degree by research candidate procedure:

[http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate\\_research\\_programs/examination\\_and\\_grades\\_for\\_hdr/ch01.php](http://policy.federation.edu.au/research/postgraduate_research_programs/examination_and_grades_for_hdr/ch01.php)

### **After the Examination**

The RHDSC Examinations Officer will notify the Principal Supervisor and you of the outcome of the examination when it has been determined, and will provide copies of the examiners' reports. You will be given the names of the examiners unless an examiner has asked that his or her name be kept confidential.

### **Graduation**

Candidates are eligible to graduate after the University Council approves the award of the degree. Graduation ceremonies are held in May and December each year.

Students are advised by Research Services of the Graduation forms that are required to be completed. These are available on the following web page:

<http://federation.edu.au/faculties-and-schools/faculty-of-business/the-business-school/current-students/graduation>

## **Further Assistance**

### **Research Services**

#### **Federation University Australia**

Email : [research.degrees@federation.edu.au](mailto:research.degrees@federation.edu.au)

Web : <http://federation.edu.au/research-and-innovation/research-degrees/contact-us>

### **Ballarat Campus**

F Building  
University Drive  
Mt Helen VIC 3350

Telephone: +61 03 5327 9123

### **Gippsland Campus**

2W Building, Room 290  
Northways Road  
Churchill VIC 3842

Telephone: +61 03 5122 6591