HDR Progression Procedures

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1. Governing Policy

Higher Degrees by Research Policy

2. Purpose

a. These procedures specify the progression Milestones which apply to all students enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidature with a time-based research component, namely Masters by Research, PhD and Professional Doctorate candidatures.

b. They also spell out the general progression requirements and the consequences of progress being unsatisfactory for all HDR students, including those enrolled in a PhD by Prior Published Work candidature.

3. Definitions

College HDR Committee | the College-level committee with responsibility for HDR matters within that College.

4. Progression Milestones: time-based research candidature

a. Milestones are structured opportunities to:
   i. enable HDR students to plan their candidature
   ii. ensure communication between student and supervisor/s is sound and focused on completion
iii. enable students to receive feedback from supervisors and College academic community
iv. identify any additional training requirements
v. encourage students to continue writing throughout candidature
vi. enable research integrity to be monitored, and
vii. enable students and the University to monitor progress towards timely completion.

b. Every HDR student enrolled in an HDR candidature with a time-based research project must complete the Milestones set out in the table below.

c. The structure and format of assessable Milestones are as prescribed by the University HDR Committee. All reviews must have an oral and a written component, with the written component submitted via Inspire to the HDR Coordinator no later than 10 business days before the Milestone date.  
*Note: Interim Milestones do not require an oral presentation, refer to Procedure 4.8.*

d. The written component must include:
   i. an electronic text-matching report on the submitted written work which is reviewed and signed off by the Principal Supervisor (except where this is explicitly precluded by the terms of a Government or third party agreement which applies to the research and an exemption application is approved by the Dean of Graduate Research)
   ii. appraisals of progress by both the student and the supervisors, and
   iii. a recommendation by the Principal Supervisor on the student’s progress.

e. At each Milestone, the progress of the student is assessed by the College HDR Coordinator (or nominee) or the College HDR Committee, taking account of recommendations from the supervisor, one of the following determinations is made:
   i. If progress is satisfactory, that the student be allowed to continue in their candidature.
   ii. If progress is unsatisfactory, that the student be:
      • allowed to continue in their candidature subject to conditions
      • asked to show cause why their candidature should not be terminated, or
      • if the student is enrolled in a PhD or Professional Doctorate candidature, asked to show cause why their candidature should not be transferred to an appropriate Masters degree candidature or designated exit award.

### 4.1. Milestones Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Milestone date: measured from date of enrolment (excluding periods of intermission)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD and Professional Doctorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Full-time student</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Induction</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face Induction</td>
<td>Held once each semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist activities (if applicable)</td>
<td>As specified in the student’s Enrolment Verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre Confirmation of Candidature Review (Interim Milestone)</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation of Candidature Review</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Pre Mid-Candidature Review (Interim Milestone)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>36 months</th>
<th>18 months</th>
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</table>

### Mid-Candidature Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>24 months</th>
<th>48 months</th>
<th>12 months</th>
<th>24 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Pre Final Thesis Review (Interim Milestone)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>60 months</th>
<th>30 months</th>
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</table>

### Final Thesis Review and expected submission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>36 months</th>
<th>72 months</th>
<th>18 months</th>
<th>36 months</th>
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</thead>
</table>

### Post-Final Thesis Review (Interim Milestone) If required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>42 months (if submission doesn’t occur beforehand)</th>
<th>84 months (if submission doesn’t occur beforehand)</th>
<th>42 months (if submission doesn’t occur beforehand)</th>
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</table>

### Maximum time for submission of thesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>48 months (or before)</th>
<th>96 months (or before)</th>
<th>24 months (or before)</th>
<th>48 months (or before)</th>
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</table>

## 4.2. Online Induction

This is a compulsory activity conducted online by the Office of Graduate Research. Completion is recorded on the student’s record.

## 4.3. Face-to-face Induction

This is presented by the Office of Graduate Research and covers University-wide and College-specific aspects of HDR candidature, and information on developing a successful research proposal. Participation in person or via technology is compulsory and completion is recorded on the student’s record.

## 4.4. Specialist activities

a. Specialist activities are prescribed by the supervisor in the student’s Enrolment Verification and are intended to provide additional preparation for research. They may include ethics, work health and safety, computer or writing skills training, statistical data analysis and techniques, language skills acquisition or particular discipline-specific components.

b. Performance in the specialist activities may be assessed, and performance taken into account as part of Milestone Reviews.

## 4.5. Confirmation of Candidature Review

a. This Milestone requires the student to deliver:

   i. a written component, including a comprehensive research proposal, together with any requirements specified in Procedure 4.c., and
   ii. an oral presentation to supervisors and the College academic community.

b. All components of the Milestone will be:

   i. assessed by the HDR Coordinator, after such advice as the HDR Coordinator considers appropriate is obtained, or
   ii. assessed by the College HDR Committee, following referral by the HDR Coordinator.

c. The HDR Coordinator will:

   i. assess the submitted material, after obtaining such advice as the HDR Coordinator considers appropriate, or
   ii. refer it to the College HDR Committee for assessment.
d. The assessor will provide a written assessment and determination, via Inspire, on whether the candidature should continue or whether the student should be asked to show cause under Procedure 6.2.

e. The purpose of the confirmation of candidature is to:
   i. assess whether the HDR student has a viable research project that is achievable for the degree in which the student is enrolled. In some cases, the assessment may include a recommendation to upgrade from Masters by Research to PhD candidature
   ii. provide constructive feedback to the student on the oral presentation and written report
   iii. assess whether additional specialist activities are required to ensure timely completion
   iv. assess whether additional resources will be required by the student to undertake the research
   v. ensure there has been agreement about the attribution of any papers which may be published and presented by the student as a result of their research, as specified in the Research Publication, Authorship and Peer Review Policy
   vi. identify any problems or issues to address, and
   vii. assess whether the candidature should continue.

4.6. Mid-Candidature Review

a. This Milestone requires the student to deliver:
   i. a written report, including draft thesis chapters or equivalent written evidence of thesis progression, together with the requirements specified in Procedure 4.c., and
   ii. an oral presentation to supervisors and the College academic community.

b. The HDR Coordinator will:
   i. assess, via Inspire, the submitted material, after obtaining such advice as the HDR Coordinator considers appropriate, or
   ii. refer it to the College HDR Committee for assessment.

c. The assessor will provide a written assessment and determination on whether the candidature should continue or whether the student should be asked to show cause under Procedure 6.2.

d. The purpose of the mid-candidature review is to:
   i. assess whether the HDR student’s progress since Confirmation of Candidature remains satisfactory and that progression goals have been met
   ii. provide constructive feedback to the student on the written submission and oral presentation
   iii. assess whether the student is on track to submit their thesis by the due date
   iv. assess whether the student’s professional skills are developing appropriately
   v. assess whether the resources available to the student, including supervision and facilities, are satisfactory
   vi. identify any problems or issues to address, and
   vii. assess whether the candidature should continue.

4.7. Final Thesis Review

a. This activity requires the student to deliver:
   i. a draft of their thesis, together with the requirements specified in Procedure 4.c., and
   ii. an oral presentation to supervisors and the College academic community.

b. The HDR Coordinator will:
   i. assess, via Inspire, the submitted material, after obtaining such advice as the HDR Coordinator considers appropriate, or
ii. refer it to the College HDR Committee for assessment.

c. The assessor will provide a determination on:
   i. whether the thesis is ready for submission for examination, and/or what further work is required for it to get to examination standard, and
   ii. whether the candidature should continue or whether the student should be asked to show cause under Procedure 6.2.

d. The purpose of the Final Thesis Review is to:
   i. assess whether the HDR student’s progress since the Mid-Candidature Review remains satisfactory and that those milestone requirements have been met
   ii. assess whether the student’s thesis is at an advanced stage and is on track to submit by the due date or before
   iii. provide feedback to the student about the readiness for submission of their thesis
   iv. discuss which examiners the student does not wish to examine their thesis
   v. determine whether the student should continue, and
   vi. ensure that students for all higher degrees by research have demonstrated the criteria used by examiners (see the Course Rules).

4.8. Interim Milestones

a. Interim Milestones apply to part-time students, and to students who have not submitted their thesis within six months of their Final Thesis Review Milestone, to enable regular monitoring between the Milestones described above.

b. Interim Milestones require a written report from the student, together with the requirements specified in Procedure 4.c., but not an oral presentation.

c. The HDR Coordinator will:
   i. assess, via Inspire, the submitted material, after obtaining such advice as the HDR Coordinator considers appropriate, or
   ii. refer it to the College HDR Committee for assessment.

d. The assessor will provide a written assessment and determination on whether the candidature should continue or whether the student should be asked to show cause under Procedure 6.2.

e. The purpose of an Interim Milestone is to:
   i. assess whether the HDR student’s progress since the last Milestone assessment remains satisfactory and that those Milestone requirements have been met, or will be achieved before the next Milestone
   ii. assess whether the student is on track to submit their thesis by the due date
   iii. identify any problems or issues to address
   iv. assess whether the student’s professional skills are developing appropriately
   v. assess whether the resources available to the student, including supervision and facilities, are satisfactory
   vi. provide feedback to the student, and
   vii. assess whether the student should continue.
5. **Progression – PhD by Prior Published Work candidature**

a. The monitoring of progression of a student enrolled in a PhD by Prior Published Work candidature will be as determined by the student’s Principal Supervisor.

b. The supervisor may require evidence of progress in a variety of forms, including written reports and oral presentations.

c. All written work presented by the student for review by the student’s supervisor must include an electronic text-matching report on the submitted written work.

6. **Unsatisfactory progress**

6.1. **At Risk Warnings**

a. If, at any time outside the Milestones (for students with time-based candidature) or at any time (for students with PhD by Prior Published Work candidature), a Principal Supervisor, Associate Supervisor, College HDR Coordinator or Dean of Graduate Research perceives that it may become necessary to recommend that a candidature be terminated because of unsatisfactory progress, the supervisor must:

i. request the Office of Graduate Research to provide the student with a written At Risk Warning, stating the reasons why the student’s progress is considered to be unsatisfactory

ii. inform the student’s other supervisor(s) of the At Risk Warning, and

iii. arrange a meeting with the student and Supervisor(s) to discuss actions that must be completed by the student within a specified timeframe to rectify the unsatisfactory progress, which may take the form of an Interim Milestone.

b. If the actions agreed above are not met by the specified timeframe, the College HDR Coordinator may determine on their own or on the recommendation of the Principal Supervisor, Associate Supervisor, College HDR Committee or Dean of Graduate Research that the student show cause as to why their candidature should not be terminated or transferred; and the College HDR Coordinator must decide whether to proceed with the Show Cause process, or take alternative action.

6.2. **Show Cause process**

A student may be asked to show cause why their candidature should not be terminated or transferred, on the recommendation of the assessor following a Milestone under Procedure 4, or on the recommendation of their Principal Supervisor under Procedure 6.1. The following process applies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office of Graduate Research</th>
<th>a. Write to the student, at their University email address, with a copy to the student’s Principal Supervisor, asking the student to show cause why their candidature should not be terminated or transferred.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Include in the letter:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. a copy of these procedures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ii. a description of why the student’s progress has been found to be unsatisfactory</td>
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<td></td>
<td>iii. the date of the meeting of the College HDR Committee which will consider the student’s</td>
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<td></td>
<td>response. The meeting may be held in person, or using any technology which enables all</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the persons participating to communicate concurrently with each other and to participate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>effectively.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>iv. an invitation for the student to respond to the show cause in writing, or by attendance</td>
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<td>at the meeting (either in person or via technology) or both</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v. an invitation for the student to be accompanied at the meeting (either in person or via</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>technology) by:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a Flinders University student or staff member, or</td>
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</table>
- an HDR Contact Officer, or
- a representative of the Flinders University Student Association Student Assist team.

[Legal representation is not permitted, but this does not prevent a legally qualified student or representative from attending the meeting provided they are not acting in a professional legal capacity.]

vi. a statement that the supervisor will be invited to attend the meeting
vii. a statement that, if the student does not reply within the specified period, the candidature may be terminated.

c. Write to the supervisor, inviting them to be present at the College HDR Committee meeting which will consider the student’s response.

| Student | d. If desired, request an interview (in person or via technology) with the Office of Graduate Research to discuss the letter and the student’s proposed response.
e. If providing a written response, ensure it is submitted in time for the meeting’s consideration. |
| College HDR Committee Chair | f. Chair the meeting at the scheduled time, whether the student has responded to the show cause letter or not.
g. If the student and anyone accompanying them under b.v. above are present at the meeting, ensure they are given an opportunity to present the student’s response to the show cause, to answer questions on it, and to respond to any new information that is elicited during the meeting.
h. When satisfied that the student has been given adequate opportunity to respond to the show cause, request that the student, any accompanying person and the supervisor (if present) leave the meeting. |
| College HDR Committee | i. Consider the original show cause recommendation and supporting material, and the student’s response.
j. On the basis of all the evidence before the committee, make a decision to:
i. take no further action thus allowing the student to continue in their candidature
   ii. permit the student to continue in their candidature subject to completing Milestones or such other conditions as the committee may impose
   iii. transfer the candidature from PhD or Professional Doctorate to an appropriate Masters degree candidature or designated exit award, or
   iv. terminate the student’s candidature. |
| Office of Graduate Research | k. Notify the student of the decision immediately, via their University email address.
l. If the decision is for termination or transfer, provide the reasons for the decision and the process for appealing it.
m. Notify the student’s supervisors and take the necessary administrative steps to effect the decision. |
7. Reviews and appeals

a. A student whose candidature is terminated or transferred under Procedure 6. should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the student’s supervisor and/or one of the following: the Chair of the College HDR Committee, College HDR Coordinator, an HDR Contact Officer, the Dean of Graduate Research or the Office of Graduate Research.

b. A student who is dissatisfied with the decision to terminate or transfer candidature may request a review of this decision in accordance with Student Review and Appeal Policy and procedures.

c. A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review may appeal to the Student Appeals Committee, if specified grounds are met, in accordance with the Student Review and Appeal Policy and procedures.

d. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, the student may lodge a complaint or appeal with a relevant external agency.

8. Authorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delegate</th>
<th>Authority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College HDR Committees</td>
<td>Approve the termination or transfer of a student’s candidature for unsatisfactory progression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval Authority</th>
<th>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Officer</td>
<td>Dean of Graduate Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval Date</td>
<td>4 April 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Date</td>
<td>4 April 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date*</td>
<td>April 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPRM file number</td>
<td>CF18/303</td>
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</table>

* Unless otherwise indicated, this procedure will still apply beyond the review date.

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