Purpose: These Research Degree Regulations apply to all students enrolled in a Research Degree at the University of Notre Dame Australia.

Responsible Executive: Pro Vice Chancellor - Research

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1. Introduction and Interpretation

1.1 Introduction

These Research Degree Regulations (Regulations) apply to all students enrolled in a Research Degree at The University of Notre Dame Australia (University).

These Regulations should be read in conjunction with the General Regulations and relevant course regulations.

1.2 Definitions

“Academic Progress Committee” – will comprise of a Dean of a School (chair) and three senior members of the academic staff of the University (one of whom may be from the student’s School).

“Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee” – will comprise of the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate and senior academic staff of the University.

“Candidate” – shall mean a student admitted to full candidacy in the research component of a Research Degree.

“Examiner Report” – shall mean a report undertaken by the examiner of a thesis detailing the strengths and weaknesses of the work and accompanied by an examiner report form upon which a recommendation of the academic status of the thesis is made.

“Progress Report” – shall mean one of two yearly reports on academic progress undertaken by the Candidate, Supervisor/s, Dean of the School and the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research.

“Pro Vice Chancellor – Research” – shall mean the person appointed as Pro Vice Chancellor – Research under the University Statutes from time to time.

“Reader” – shall mean the person appointed to provide formal feedback on the Research Proposal and report on the readiness of the Candidate to proceed to full candidacy.

“Research Degree” – shall mean a degree in which an original research investigation is undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. The degree shall entail a minimum two-thirds research component. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce and industry, as well as to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances and artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction.

“Research Proposal” – shall mean a formal written research proposal of a student, written under the supervision of a Supervisor.

“Review Panel” – shall comprise of a Dean of a School (chair) and three senior members of the academic staff of the University (one of whom may be from the student’s School). No members of the original Academic Progress Committee may be members of the review panel.

“Satisfactory Progress” – shall mean academic progress, on the advice of the Supervisor/s and the Dean, understood to be of a standard expected in the context of enrolment load and time consumed in the degree.

“School Research Committee” – shall mean a sub-committee of the School Committee that advises the Dean on strategies and management issues relevant to research in a School.

“Student” – shall mean a student enrolled in unit(s) of study at the University in a Research Degree.

“Study Program” – shall mean a formally developed program of research progress, including timelines for major milestones, formulated in consultation with the Candidate’s Supervisor/s.

“Supervisor” – shall mean the person(s) appointed by the University to act as a supervisor to a Student and/or Candidate enrolled in a Research Degree.
“Thesis” – shall mean a substantial report that:
A represents at least two thirds of the requirements of a degree program; and
B is underpinned by the research that comprises at least one year of full-time equivalent study.

“Unsatisfactory Progress” – shall mean a failure to maintain a level of academic progress, on the advice of the Supervisor/s and the Dean, as would normally be expected in the context of time consumed in the degree.

1.3 Alterations made to Research Degree Regulations
1.3.1 Unless otherwise specified, when amendments are made to the structure, content or academic requirements of a Research Degree, the amendments will automatically apply to all students enrolled in the degree.
1.3.2 Where the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate considers that a Student has, since first enrolling for a degree, been adversely affected by any changes in these Regulations, the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate may permit the Student to qualify for the degree under the regulations in force at the time of admission to the Research Degree, provided the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate is satisfied that the work so required to be completed is equivalent in standard to that currently required to complete the relevant study program.

2. Authority to Admit Research Students
2.1 The Pro Vice-Chancellor - Research, or delegate determines admissions into Research Degrees of the University, on the recommendation of the relevant Dean.
2.2 The University reserves the right to refuse an application based on an assessment of the suitability of the applicant to work at a level appropriate for the degree and/or the ability of the School to provide adequate supervision and/or facilities.

3. Provisional Enrolment
3.1 A student in a Research Degree is a provisional student until such time as the student has submitted a Research proposal and it has been approved by the University.
3.2 A provisional student who:
3.2.1 Satisfactorily submits and formally presents their research proposal will be awarded full candidature and permitted to continue in the Research Degree; or
3.2.2 Fails to satisfactorily complete the period of provisional enrolment, the provision of Regulation 13.9 notwithstanding, must withdraw from the course unless the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate otherwise determines.

4. Full-time and Part-time Enrolment
4.1 A student may be enrolled as a full-time or a part-time student.
4.2 A student may transfer between part-time and full-time enrolment during the duration of their course, but not during a semester period.
4.3 If either prior to, or at any time during the enrolment period, the University encounters staffing or resource difficulties beyond its control which impact on the availability of resources or supervision for a student's research, it will make all reasonable efforts, within budget and staffing constraints, to provide satisfactory arrangements so as not to disadvantage any affected student. Because of the specialist nature of research and supervision at this level, however, the University cannot guarantee that under such circumstances, a student’s conditions of enrolment will not be subject to change.

5. Concurrent Enrolment
Unless authorised by the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate, a student for a Research Degree may not be concurrently enrolled in a course of study or a unit for any other degree or diploma of the University or any other Higher Education Provider.
6. **Transfer from another Institution**
An applicant who has been or is currently enrolled in a Research Degree at another institution may apply for transfer of admission to the University. Prior to the application being accepted, due diligence will be carried out by the Research Office to ascertain the reason for the proposed transfer.

7. **Transfer from a Master to a Doctoral Degree**
7.1 The Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate has the discretion to admit to a doctoral degree a student for a Master degree by research or Master of Philosophy, on the recommendation of the Supervisor and the Dean of the School.
7.2 Transfer may take place only when a Master student has submitted and received approval from The University for her/his research proposal.
7.3 Transfer will normally be approved no later than 18 months after initial enrolment in the Master degree.

8. **Maximum and Minimum Duration**
8.1 The minimum and maximum periods of enrolment permitted for a Research Degree will be specified in the course regulations.
8.2 In exceptional circumstances, the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate may approve an extension of the maximum time.
8.3 For a student who has transferred from enrolment in one Research Degree to another, the maximum period includes the period the student was enrolled in the earlier degree.

9. **Leave from Enrolment**
9.1 Where circumstances and events may require a student to temporarily suspend their study, the student is not penalised by such suspensions of enrolment.
9.2 A period of absence of normally no more than 12 months will be regarded as a suspension from study.
9.3 A student must apply in writing to the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate for permission to suspend their enrolment.
9.4 During a suspension period, a student will cease to have rights of access to University resources related to the thesis project and will not engage in any research and/or communication with supervisors during this period.
9.5 In exceptional circumstances only, the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate may grant a student suspension(s) of enrolment of a maximum of two years in total.

10. **Enrolment in a School**
10.1 Upon admission to the Research Degree, a student will be assigned to one of the Schools of the University.
10.2 The Dean of the School (or delegate) will assume responsibility for managing the enrolment of the student and will recommend to the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate a Supervisor(s).
10.3 A student who is enrolled in a Research Degree may have conditions imposed on their enrolment by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate, in consultation with the Dean of the School, during a particular semester or over a period of time whilst enrolled in the course.

11. **Study Program**
11.1 On admission to a degree, a student shall develop, in conjunction with the appointed Supervisor, a Study Program satisfying the requirements of the degree and specifying the timetable for its completion.
11.2 The Dean of the School must approve the Study Program.
11.3 A student must follow their approved Study Program.
11.4 Changes to a student's approved Study Program may be made at any time, subject to the approval of the Dean of the School and the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate.

12. **Supervision**
12.1 The Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate, after consultation with the Dean of the School, in respect to each student:
12.1.1 Must appoint a Supervisor to the student who is a member of the academic staff of the School or a person holding an adjunct appointment or emeritus title at the University at the time the student is enrolled in the Research Degree.

12.1.2 May appoint one or more co-Supervisors, being persons of recognised standing in the field concerned, whether or not members of the academic staff.

12.1.3 Must ensure that the Supervisor completes a Study Program for the student at the commencement of the student’s enrolment.

12.1.4 Must ensure that, where the degree involves coursework, the supervision becomes active at the time the student commences work on the research proposal.

12.1.5 Where a Supervisor is to be absent from the University for more than six consecutive weeks, the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate must, unless satisfied that adequate supervision can be maintained during the period of the absence, appoint an acting Supervisor in consultation with the Dean.

12.2 A student, showing good cause, may request a change of Supervisor. Such request must be made in writing to the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate.

13. The Research Proposal

13.1 A student must submit a formal Research Proposal, written under the supervision of the appointed Supervisor(s).

13.2 The submission of the Research Proposal will normally be required within the first fulltime equivalent semester of the time approved for the preparation and submission of the Thesis as recorded in the Study Program, unless otherwise provided for in course regulations.

13.3 When submitted to the School Research Committee, the Research Proposal must be accompanied by a letter from the Principal Supervisor stating her/his assessment of the readiness of the Research Proposal for formal review.

13.4 Two Readers of the Research Proposal, nominated by the School Research Committee, one of whom will be external to the University, will report on the readiness of the student to move to full candidacy.

13.5 The reports of the Readers shall be considered by the School Research Committee which shall recommend to the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate whether or not a student’s Research Proposal meets the requirements specified in Regulation 13.2 and is of a standard that warrants a move to full candidacy.

13.6 Where there is a difference of substance between the recommendations of the Readers, the School Research Committee will adjudicate the differences. If consensus cannot be reached by the School Research Committee, the final decision on whether a student has achieved a satisfactory standard shall reside with the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate.

13.7 Where the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate determines that a student has satisfactorily met the conditions and standards for a Research Proposal, the student will be awarded full candidacy and advised that research can commence.

13.8 Where the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate determines that the student has not satisfactorily completed the requirements of the Research Proposal, the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate may determine to give the student leave to re-submit, subject to any conditions specified, or may advise that the enrolment be terminated or that the student be permitted to transfer into a coursework degree.

14. Ethics Clearance

14.1 A student must make an Application for ethics clearance to the School Research Committee prior to the submission of the research proposal.

14.2 Applications for low risk ethics clearance shall be considered by the School Research Committee and recommended to the Human Research Ethics Committee [HREC].

14.3 Applications for full ethics clearance shall be forwarded directly to the HREC.

14.4 The process for the review of the Application for ethics clearance will be in accordance with procedures approved by the University.

15. Confirmation of Candidacy

15.1 Confirmation of candidacy is dependent upon having an approved Research Proposal and ethics approval.
15.2 Doctoral candidates in research professional doctorate degrees need to complete the coursework component before their candidature is confirmed.

16. **Satisfactory Progress and Progress Reports**

16.1 A Student admitted to full Candidacy is expected to make Satisfactory Progress during each enrolled semester.

16.2 The Candidate and Supervisor are jointly responsible for holding regular discussions on the progress of the research.

16.3 The Candidate and the Supervisor must provide a detailed Progress Report by the published date to the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate at the end of each semester.

16.4 A Candidate who does not submit a Progress Report by the published due date may be placed on Conditional status by the Pro Vice Chancellor or delegate.

16.5 A Candidate who fails to maintain Satisfactory Progress may:

   (a) be placed on Conditional status by the Pro Vice Chancellor or delegate; or

   (b) where evidence of this persists over the duration of the degree and/or a preceding semester, may have her/his candidacy terminated.

16.6 A Candidate whose academic progress remains Unsatisfactory for more than six months may have their enrolment terminated.

17. **Research Students and Absence Without Leave (AWOL)**

17.1 A Candidate who does not re-enrol by the published date will be placed on Absent Without Leave (AWOL) status.

17.2 During the AWOL period, a Candidate will cease to have rights of access to University resources related to the thesis project.

17.3 A Candidate who remains on AWOL for more than six months may have their file closed.

18. **Termination of Candidature**

18.1 Where a student’s status is Conditional and the Dean is of the opinion that the academic progress of the Candidate remains Unsatisfactory and/or that the Candidate has failed to comply with University regulations or any conditions imposed by the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or Dean of the School, the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research will be advised of the Unsatisfactory Progress and the progression to termination.

18.2 An Academic Progress Committee¹ to review the Candidate’s progress and determine if the candidate is liable for termination.

18.3 The Academic Progress Committee, after due consideration, may uphold or dismiss the proceedings and recommend to the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate to:

   (a) authorise the Candidate in exceptional circumstances to continue for one additional semester on Conditional status and subject to any terms and conditions specified by the academic progress committee; or

   (b) terminate the candidature.

18.4 When a candidate has been identified as liable for termination, the Academic Progress Committee reviews the Candidate's record, documents provided by the School and Research Office and any previous documents (including but not limited to academic progress annual reports, correspondence of conditions placed on a student’s enrolment and so on) on the candidate’s file.

18.5 If, after completing the review, the Academic Progress Committee determines that the conditions for termination of candidature have been met, the Candidate will be terminated from the University.

18.6 The University shall advise the Candidate in writing that their enrolment has been terminated and the reason(s) why.

18.7 Notice of the final decision of the Academic Progress Committee must be sent to the Candidate within 10 working days of the Committee meeting.

18.8 Where the Academic Progress Committee recommends termination of a Candidate, the Candidate may appeal the decision by giving written notice to the Pro Vice Chancellor -

¹ The Academic Progress Committee will comprise of a Dean of a School (Chair) and three senior members of the academic staff of the University (one of whom may be from the student’s School.)
Research or delegate within 20 working days and in accordance with the General Regulations.

18.9 Upon receipt of a notice of appeal, the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate must convene a Review Panel to hear the appeal.

18.10 At a hearing of an Academic Progress Review Panel\(^2\), a Candidate may be heard personally or by way of a written submission or, where authorised by the chair of the sub-committee by a third party representative.

18.11 After hearing the appeal, the Review Panel must recommend to the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate whether or not to uphold the decision to terminate. The Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate, after considering the recommendations of the Review Panel, may allow or dismiss the appeal or make any other determination deemed appropriate.

18.12 The determination of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate is final and is not open to further internal appeal.

19. Thesis and dissertation

19.1 A Thesis and Dissertation must:

19.1.1 Be prepared under supervision;

19.1.2 Be the sole work of the Candidate, except where due reference is made to the Thesis and Dissertation;

19.1.3 Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the subject matter of the Thesis or Dissertation;

19.1.4 Contribute to knowledge (theoretical or practical) and understanding in the field of study concerned; and

19.1.5 Demonstrate the capacity of the Candidate to carry out research.

19.2 The Thesis or Dissertation must be of a nature and length prescribed in the relevant course regulations.

20. Submission of Thesis for Examination

20.1 After completing the Study Program, a Candidate must submit a Thesis embodying the results of the Candidate’s work to the School Research Committee.

20.2 A Candidate’s Thesis will not be accepted for examination until the School via the Dean has recommended such action to the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate.

20.3 The Supervisor will provide the School Research Committee with a statement certifying:

20.3.1 Whether, to the best of the Supervisor’s knowledge, the Thesis is the original work of the Candidate; and

20.3.2 Whether, in the Supervisor’s opinion, the Thesis is properly presented and worthy of examination.

20.4 The Supervisor’s statement will be considered by the School Research Committee, along with the thesis put forward for examination.

20.5 If the School Research Committee expresses reservations about the suitability of the Thesis for examination, the Thesis will be referred to the Dean who will determine (after consultation with the Candidate and the Supervisor and with reference to any other person(s) or sources deemed appropriate) whether the Thesis should be sent to the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate for examination or returned to the Candidate for further work.

20.6 A Candidate for a doctoral degree must submit in temporary binding three copies; a Candidate for a Masters degree must submit two copies.

20.7 The Thesis will be in the double-spaced typescript and must conform to the physical specifications approved by Academic Council.

20.8 A Candidate must submit with the Thesis a signed statement affirming that, the Thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the Thesis and that it contains no work which the student has previously presented for an award of the University or any other educational institution.

\(^2\) The Review Panel will comprise of a Dean of a School (Chair) and three senior members of the academic staff of the University (one of whom may be from the student’s School). No members of the original Academic Progress Committee may be members of the Review Panel.
20.9 After submitting a thesis, a Candidate may not withdraw it from examination unless authorised to do so by the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate on the advice of the Dean.

21. **Thesis Examination**

21.1 Where the School Research Committee and Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate have decided that a Thesis is to be examined, the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate, on advice of the Dean, shall appoint examiners of thesis.

21.1.1 For Masters degrees, there shall be two examiners at least one of who must be from outside the University.

21.1.2 For Professional Doctorates, there shall be three examiners all of whom shall normally be from outside the University and at least one of whom is normally resident overseas.

21.1.3 For the Doctor of Philosophy, there shall be three examiners, all of whom shall normally be from outside the University and at least one of whom is normally resident overseas.

21.2 A Student who has any outstanding fees and/or charges owing to the University is not entitled to have their Thesis formally examined until the outstanding monies are paid in full or where in exceptional circumstances, the Campus Registrar, or delegate has permitted a payment plan agreed to by both the Student and the Campus Registrar, or delegate.


21.4 The Report will include a recommendation on one of the following actions:

21.4.1 That the degree be awarded:

   (i) unconditionally; or
   
   (ii) subject to corrections identified in the examiner’s report being made to the satisfaction of the Supervisor/s.; or
   
   (iii) subject to amendments as outlined in the examiner’s report being made to the satisfaction of the Pro-Vice Chancellor – Research.

21.4.2 That the degree not be awarded but that:

   (i) the Candidate be permitted to resubmit a revised Thesis for the same degree (this recommendation is not permitted for a resubmitted thesis); or
   
   (ii) in the case of a Thesis submitted for the PhD or professional doctorate, the Candidate be permitted to revise and re-submit the thesis for examination for the degree of Masters by Research and Thesis; or
   
   (iii) the thesis be re-examined at the discretion of the Research Degrees & Scholarships Sub-Committee if there is reason to believe that a further opinion is warranted. In such cases the same members (where possible) of the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee may be requested to meet following the re-examination.

21.4.3 That the degree not be awarded without the right to resubmit the thesis.

21.5 If an examiner does not provide a report on the Thesis within a reasonable time, the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate may appoint a new examiner in that person's place.

21.6 The Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee, constituted by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate and composed of senior academic staff of the University, reviews the examiners’ Reports.

21.7 The Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee may require a candidate to undergo such oral, written or practical examinations as it specifies.

21.8 Where there is a difference of substance between the recommendations of the Thesis examiners, the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee will adjudicate the differences.

21.9 Having received the recommendation of the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee and the examiners’ reports, the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate must recommend to the Vice Chancellor that the degree:

   (i) be awarded; or
   
   (ii) not be awarded but that one of the alternatives in Regulation 21.4 occur; or
   
   (iii) not be awarded (before any such decision is made, the candidate must be provided the opportunity to comment on the examiners’ reports).
21.10 Where the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate gives the candidate permission to re-submit the thesis after revision, the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee will specify the changes and conditions of the revision(s) required.

21.11 Any amendments to the Thesis must be completed to the satisfaction of the Student’s supervisor and the Dean of the relevant School within the specified timeframe. The results of the revisions must be communicated by the supervisor and Dean of the School to the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate.

22. Resubmission

22.1 The Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee must not classify a thesis as resubmit unless, having considered the examiner’s reports and any other relevant information, it agrees that the thesis shows some merit and may, by a specified amount of further work under approved supervision, be sufficiently improved for re-submission.

22.2 If the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee classifies a thesis as resubmit, it must inform the student and supervisor in writing of the further work required prior to a re-submission.

22.3 A student whose thesis is classified as resubmit must:
   (i) resubmit within the timeframe advised by the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee and from the date of notification that they must resubmit; and
   (ii) submit with the thesis a detailed report, signed by the supervisor and the Dean; and
   (iii) re-enrol and remain enrolled until the thesis is re-submitted for re-examination.

22.4 At the discretion of the Pro Vice Chancellor – Research or delegate on advice from the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee the re-submitted thesis and the report on the revisions are submitted to:
   (i) one or more of the original examiners who have indicated that they are willing to re-examine the thesis; or
   (ii) one or more of the original examiners and a new examiner; or
   (iii) at least two new examiners.

22.5 The Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate, on advice from the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee may determine that the thesis and the report on the revisions be submitted to a single examiner provided that examiner is one of the original examiners of the thesis.

22.6 Examiners of a re-submitted master’s thesis shall recommend one of the following to the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee:
   (i) Pass with no requirement for further correction; or
   (ii) Pass after minor typographical errors have been corrected; or
   (iii) Fail.

22.7 Examiners of a re-submitted PhD or professional doctorate thesis shall recommend one of the following to the Research Degrees & Scholarships Committee:
   (i) Unconditional Pass; or
   (ii) Pass after minor typographical errors have been corrected; or
   (iii) Fail.

22.8 A resubmitted master’s thesis must, after re-examination, be classified as Passed or Failed.

22.9 A resubmitted PhD thesis or professional doctorate must, after re-examination, be classified as Passed, Passed for the award of Master, or Failed.

23. Binding and Distribution of Theses

23.1 Where the decision is made that the degree be awarded, the Candidate will be responsible for ensuring that four bound copies of the final work and one electronic copy are deposited with the Research Office.

23.2 The binding must comply with University requirements.

23.3 One bound copy together with the electronic copy is placed in the University Library and one copy is provided to each Supervisor.

23.4 The copy of the thesis held in the University Library may be made available to any person for consultation or copying, subject to any written conditions restricting the usage of the thesis, including an embargo on any usage.

23.5 The Candidate is required to sign a Library Release Form prior to graduation which waives the Candidate’s right of consent after three years.
24. **Graduation and Degree Conferral**
   24.1 A candidate must apply to graduate using the appropriate form prior to the published due date for applications.
   24.2 The Candidate will be eligible for graduation and degree conferral only after the Thesis has been endorsed by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate.
   24.3 The Pro Vice Chancellor - Research or delegate will only make such recommendation if the Research Office has:
       23.2.1 Received sufficient bound copies of the thesis;
       23.2.2 Received an electronic copy of the thesis;
       23.2.3 A signed Library Release Form has been submitted.

25. **Appeals**
   25.1 Procedural appeals against thesis examination may be made in writing to the Vice Chancellor (or delegate), who will review the appeal.
   25.2 Grounds for procedural appeal will normally be restricted to irregularities in the conduct of an examination.
   25.3 In all appeals, the decision of the Vice Chancellor (or delegate) shall be final.

*End of Regulations*