

Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL REVIEW GUIDELINES

Date approved:	August 2014	Date procedure will take effect:	August 2014	Date of Next Review:	July 2017
Approved by:	Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts				
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Responsible Faculty/ Division & Unit:	Faculty Research Unit Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts				
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this procedure:	General Course Rules <a href="http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058680.html">http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058680.html</a> \ Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervision and Resources Policy <a href="http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058665.html">http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW058665.html</a>				
References & Legislation:					
Audience:	Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates, HDR Supervisors, Heads of Postgraduate Studies (HPS), Heads and Deans of School (HOS) and FRU administration staff				
Expiry date of procedure:	July 2017				

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## 1 Introduction / Background

Faculties are expected to establish guidelines and processes for the formal review of a Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidate's research proposal, as part of their responsibilities outlined in the Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervision and Resources Policy.

The research proposal review (RPR) process provides an opportunity for HDR candidates to develop a coherent research plan, clear methodology and receive constructive academic criticism. The RPR process also enables the Faculty to determine that adequate resources and appropriate supervision are available to support the HDR candidature.

## 2 Scope / Purpose

The first year RPR is a formal process for monitoring the progress of all HDR candidates. RPRs ensure that the aims and objectives of the research, outlined in the original research proposal, are being met satisfactorily. Continuation of enrolment in the research degree is subject to the satisfactory completion of an RPR.

These Faculty guidelines should be read in conjunction with the General Course Rules and the Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervision and Resources Policy.

## 3 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
APR	Annual Progress Report
EFTSL	Equivalent Full Time Study Load
HDR	A Higher Degree Research candidate including candidates undertaking the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated) (PhD(I)), Doctor of Creative Arts (DCA) or Master of Philosophy (MPhil)
HPS	Head of Postgraduate Studies
HSI	School of Humanities and Social Inquiry
LAW	School of Law
LHA	Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts
Review Panel	The academic staff members and student representative from within the Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts (and occasionally external to the Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts) which takes part in the proposal review oral presentation.
RPR	Research Proposal Review
RSC	Research Student Centre
TAEM	School of the Arts, English and Media

## 4 Instructions

### 4.1 Timeframes and scheduling of the RPR

- The RPR should be completed within the first year to allow candidates the opportunity to address any problems with their proposal and make adjustments if necessary.
- Part-time candidates are also obliged to complete their RPR within their first year of enrolment.
- The Faculty Research Unit or the relevant School academic staff will contact candidates, in regards to the scheduling of their RPR, via their UOW email address.
- In the event that a candidate has issues or concerns relating to their supervision, they should contact the Head of Postgraduate Studies (HPS) for their school prior to the RPR.

RPR Timeframes by program of study:

MPhil	RPR finalised within half a year of enrolment (4-6 months full-time or part-time) or the accrual of 0.5 EFTSL
PhD / DCA	RPR finalised within one year of enrolment (6-12 months full-time or part-time) or the accrual of 1.0 EFTSL
PhD(I)	RPR finalised within one and one half years of enrolment (12-18 months full-time or part-time) or the or accrual of 1.5 EFTSL

RPR Scheduling by School:

HSI / TAEM	The RPR is scheduled by the Head of Postgraduate Studies with the support of the Faculty Research Unit (FRU). The FRU advises the candidate of the dates and location.
LAW	The RPR is scheduled by the primary supervisor in consultation with the candidate and the HPS. The primary supervisor advises the candidate of the dates and location.

### 4.2 RPR Components

The RPR has two components: (1) a research plan submission; and (2) an oral presentation.

#### 4.2.1 The research plan submission

- Candidates must consult with their primary supervisor and may also consult with their co-supervisor in preparing for their RPR.
- The supervisor will give feedback on the research plan and any issues that should be raised during the oral presentation.
- The research plan paperwork must be submitted to the primary supervisor at least three weeks before the oral presentation for feedback.
- Candidates must submit their research plan to the LHA Research Unit at least two weeks prior to their oral presentation.
- The research plan should be emailed as a Microsoft Word document or PDF document to Administration Officer, Research via the LHA Research Unit [lha-research@uow.edu.au](mailto:lha-research@uow.edu.au)
- The presentation and review may be postponed if the research plan and paperwork is not submitted.
- The research plan will be distributed to all panel members two weeks prior to the oral presentation.

The research plan should include:

- Title page (with full name, current thesis title, names of supervisors and date of the review)
- Abstract
- Table of contents
- Research proposal (research question/s, the aims and significance of the project, research methodology, including the theoretical framework and ethics requirements)
- Literature review
- Chapter outline and project timeline (factoring in planned fieldwork or scholarly activities up to the submission of the thesis) - can be represented session-by-session, quarter-by-quarter, or month-by-month.
- Appropriate referencing following relevant School or discipline style
- Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts HDR Candidate Research Proposal Review (RPR) Summary Form including a summary of any required resources or support required for activities (such as planned fieldwork, conference presentations, exhibitions, performances or any training that will need to be undertaken as part of the candidate's research).

Length of the research plan:

- As a guide, the overall research plan will be a maximum length of 8000 words. The literature review component of the research plan varies for each school, from approximately 2000 words (TAEM/HSI) to approximately 5000 words (Law). Candidates should always seek the guidance of their supervisor in the development of the written research plan, including the appropriate length.

Identifying required resources:

- All HDR candidates are eligible to apply for limited funding to support their research activity towards timely completion of their thesis and thesis related research outcomes. Please refer to the Faculty HDR Support Scheme web page for information on eligibility, criteria, closing dates and application forms via: <http://lha.uow.edu.au/research/students/UOW168758>

#### **4.2.2 The oral presentation**

- The oral presentation is scheduled for one hour of which the candidate will speak for approximately 20 minutes about their research with reference to the written research proposal.
- Candidates are encouraged to prepare visual presentation tools such as a PowerPoint presentation or handouts, however this is not compulsory.
- The Chair will conduct a question and answer session, following the oral presentation, where the panel members will provide constructive criticism and feedback to the candidate.
- Following the conclusion of questions and feedback by the panel, the candidate and HDR Student Representative will be asked to leave the room for the panel discussion.
- Once the discussion has concluded the candidate and the HDR Student Representative will be asked to re-join the panel in order to receive feedback and the panel's recommendation.

The RPR oral presentation review panel will consist of:

- A review panel chair;
  - For HSI and TAEM - the Head of Postgraduate Studies
  - For Law - the Principal Supervisor
- Head of Postgraduate Studies (HPS) for the relevant school;
- Principal supervisor or the supervisory team;
- An academic staff member with an understanding of the candidates area of research; and
- An HDR student representative who plays the role of support person (not present in the assessment of the presentation)

### 4.3 Outcome of the Review

The outcome of the Review will be one of the following:

Acceptable	Progress is deemed to be satisfactory, with comments and feedback from the panel members.
Unacceptable	Progress is deemed to be unsatisfactory, and the candidate will be given a second opportunity to present within three months of the initial review.
	If the second review is also deemed unsatisfactory, the panel can recommend a degree downgrade/transfer, probation, termination of candidature or other remedial action in line with UOW Policy and Procedures.

The LHA Research Unit will send written notification of the RPR outcome, including the completed report form, via email to the candidate and the review panel. The original of the report form is sent to the Research Student Centre for their records. School of Law candidates will receive their written notification from the Head of Postgraduate Studies when it is sent to the Research Student Centre.

### 4.4 Upgrade Review

If the candidate wishes to upgrade from an MPhil to a PhD degree they can do this either as part of the RPR process or, if they have successfully completed their RPR, as a separate presentation. If candidates are planning to apply for an upgrade as part of the RPR they will need to inform the LHA Research Unit immediately when they are contacted about scheduling the RPR. The process is similar to a normal RPR, except for the following:

- In the written material, the candidate will need to include 1-2 chapters of their thesis as it stands at the time of the review.

If a candidate combines their application to upgrade with their RPR, then the review determines both assessment of progress in the research degree and the outcome of the upgrade.

## 5 Roles & Responsibilities

- LHA Research Unit – manages the administrative support to the Heads of Postgraduate Studies, the Research Proposal Review panels and the HDR candidates, for the School of Humanities and Social Inquiry and the School of the Arts, English and Media.
- Head of Postgraduate Studies/Primary Supervisor – facilitates the review presentation and is Chair of the Research Proposal Review Committee.
- Research Proposal Review panel – assists the Head of Postgraduate Studies/Primary Supervisor by participating in the Research Proposal Review oral presentations.

## 6 Version Control Table

Version Control	Release Date	Author/Reviewer	Approved By	Amendment
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1	04/04/2014	Susanne Sindevski, Administrative Assistant - Research		First Draft Version
2	07/08/2014	Kirsty Greatz, Administrative Officer – Research		Updated links and more specific School related information added to the processes Reformatted document.

**Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts**  
**HDR Candidate Research Proposal Review (RPR) Summary Form**

Name:		Student No.:	
First Session & year of Enrolment:		Date of RPR:	
Enrolment Status (Full or Part-Time):			
Supervisors:			
Thesis Title:			
100-word Summary of Research:			
Statement of Resources (include separate page if needed):			