Higher Degree by Research Framework

EXCELSIA COLLEGE HDR FRAMEWORK

This HDR Framework compiles policies and procedures relevant to HDR candidates and supervisors into a single document. It draws on the Research Plan, Research Code of Practice, and considerations of best practice in the Australian higher education sector. Sections of this Framework cover Research Governance and specific policies and procedures relating to the conduct of HDR research. These sections cover Entry, Supervision, Progression and Examination.

A schematic outline of the HDR Framework is given in Table 1:

Table 1. HDR FRAMEWORK

Principles and Plan	Research Code of Practice		Research Plan	
Governance	Research Governance			
Phases of HDR in overview	Entry	Supervision	Progression	Examination
Specific Provisions for HDR phases	Entry	• Statement • Responsibilities • Appointments • Research Active Determination • Register • Supervisory Relationships	• Confirmation of Candidature • Ethical Conduct of Research • Regular Reporting • Variation of Candidature	• The Thesis • Thesis Examination • Post Examination • Transfer to PhD

CONTENTS

1. RESEARCH PRINCIPLES AND PLAN

1.1 Research Code of Practice

Research at Excelsia College is conducted according to the standards and requirements of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research[1] and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research[2]. In these documents research is defined as follows:

"The concept of research is broad and includes the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.[3]"

"'Research'… includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, 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. It excludes routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.[4]"

Both the Australian Code and National Statement espouse ethical research. The Australian Code proposes that research should be conducted responsibly and with integrity. It outlines principles and behaviours consistent with the honest, conscientious and authentic conduct of research. The National Statement articulates key ethical principles of research: "The relationship between researchers and research participants is the ground on which human research is conducted. The values set out in this section – respect

for human beings, research merit and integrity, justice, and beneficence – help to shape that relationship as one of trust, mutual responsibility and ethical equality.[5]" In its treatment of beneficence the National Statement includes benefit to participants and to the broader community: "The purpose of the National Statement is "to promote ethically good human research. Fulfilment of this purpose requires that participants be accorded the respect and protection that is due to them. It also involves the fostering of research that is of benefit to the community.[6]"

Research at Excelsia College is therefore conducted ethically, according to standards of responsibility, integrity, respect, justice and beneficence. Excelsia College Researchers recognise the relationship between researchers and research participants as the basis on which human research is conducted. Their research reflects the four values in the National Statement: respect for human beings, research merit and integrity, justice, and beneficence. They hold that human research requires critical reflection that is informed by these four values, and that the design, review and conduct of research must reflect each of these values. In summary:

- Respect is central, involving the recognition that each human being has value in and of him/herself and that this value must inform all interaction between people. It also involves providing for the protection of those with diminished or no autonomy.

- Research that has merit is justifiable by its potential benefit, designed using appropriate methods, based on thorough study, designed to ensure respect for participants, and conducted or supervised by experienced researchers with appropriate qualifications.

- Justice involves a regard for the human sameness that each person shares with every other. While benefit to humankind is an important result of research, it also matters that these benefits are achieved through just means, are distributed fairly, and involve no unjust burdens.

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1 Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018. National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

2 National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (Updated 2018). The National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian Research Council and Universities Australia. Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

3 Australian Code, 5

4 National Statement, 6, citing the British Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) definition of research.

5 National Statement, 9.

6 National Statement, 6.

• Researchers should exercise beneficence in taking account of the risks of harm and the potential benefits of research to participants and to the wider community, in being sensitive to the welfare and interests of people involved in their research, and in reflecting on the social and cultural implications of the research. Where the risks to participants are no longer justified by the potential benefits of the research, the research must be suspended to allow time to consider whether it should be discontinued or at least modified.

Research and the furtherance of human knowledge are foundational tasks of tertiary institutions and Excelsia College is committed to the highest standards of professional conduct. Researchers at, or associated with, Excelsia College, are therefore expected to conduct their work in accordance with legislative requirements, recognised national and international ethical standards and the highest expectations of their disciplines. By holding to these standards for the responsible conduct of research, Excelsia College will:

a) promote the highest possible standards of research practice;

b) protect all those associated with the research from any avoidable harm that may arise from failures to maintain high standards of research conduct;

c) encourage freedom of expression and mutual collaboration through the open exchange of ideas;

d) apply clear procedures to manage the conduct of research, including procedures for managing research misconduct;

e) protect or otherwise balance the rights of all those associated with the research, including student researchers, HDR students, staff, research participants and the public.

1.2 Research Plan.

A. Introduction

Excelsia College in its Mission Statement reaffirms the central importance of research to the fulfilment of its academic mission by: "... producing research characterised by exemplary scholarship consistent with a Christian world view, and graduates prepared to lead in a range of professions." In doing so, the College recognises that quality research and research training are integral to the character of universities, and Excelsia is committed to supporting its academic staff and students to achieve this outcome.

Through this Research Plan the College seeks to expand disciplinary, cross-disciplinary and transdisciplinary research, and to encourage collaborative research initiatives across the College and with our Research Partners. Consolidating our research strengths, while lifting the average quality of research across the College's research portfolio, are key themes of the Research Plan. Further, in executing the Research Plan, the College seeks to balance long-term strategic planning for research with the requirement and desire to be research active in the short term.

B. Partnership with Indiana Wesleyan University in the Lumen Research Institute

Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU) is a comprehensive Christian university focussing on the liberal arts and professional education. IWU is Indiana's fastest-growing and largest private university. IWU offers more than 80 degree majors, and serves an increasing number of research students, leading most recently to the formation of an Honors College specifically dedicated to graduate research.

In partnership with IWU, Excelsia College has established the Lumen Research Institute which is a global collective of Christian scholars who pursue questions of social concern through collaborative and interdisciplinary research efforts. It comprises a Research Directorate with representatives from each of the partner institutions, a Panel of Distinguished Research Fellows, and Research Fellows. The work of the Lumen Research Institute is the conduct and dissemination of targeted research. Growth of the Lumen Research Institute will occur as more Research Fellows are appointed, research grant applications are written, research is conducted and published and research is disseminated through its annual conference, held in alternate years in the USA and Australia, with conference papers published in peer-reviewed formats.

In pursuit of its mission, Excelsia College is working locally and globally through the Lumen Research Institute, drawing upon the research experience and resources of IWU partners, in order to:

a) invest in building the research infrastructure and momentum of the College;

b) establish goals, targets and strategies through which we will deliver research of high standard and immediate relevance;

c) consolidate and extend rigorous standards in research and scholarship;

d) foster and integrate our disciplinary expertise so as to address important intellectual, social and spiritual issues;

e) promote respect for, and adherence to, ethical standards in the conduct and reporting of research; and

f) positively influence our communities through our research and scholarly activities.

C. Research Vision

Our Research Vision is: "To be a recognised centre of excellence in research, possessing a unique research profile that complements and extends existing research in Australian Higher Education".

This vision assumes the need and desire to continue to foster individual interest-driven research activities, but also to build an institutional research agenda designed to deliver research outcomes that align with our mission, values and strategic directions. This outcome will be achieved not only through the generation of new knowledge, but also by building a culture that respects the intellectual heritage of Christianity and is committed to the judicious application of all forms of knowledge for the benefit of the wider world. Our research vision also means that we will marshal our research expertise, partnerships, resources and perspectives in order to support the advancement and dissemination of knowledge within and across fields and disciplines, facilitating wherever possible collaborative intra- and inter-institutional research practices.

D. Aim

The specific aim of the Research Plan is to assist the College to:

a) become a recognised centre of research in priority areas that complement existing research programs in Australian Universities and, in so doing,

b) establish a unique research profile capable of attracting substantial peer-recognition, sustained staff and student interest, and regular external funding.

This aim implies that the College will systematically facilitate and encourage research and scholarship in order to attract talented students and staff, enrich its courses and programs, contribute to the scholarly community and the wider world, and develop its research profile and reputation. Our success in these areas will depend on our ability to increase the impact of our research, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally; with this impact being measured in terms of the beneficial application of expertise, knowledge, analysis, and discovery to broad arenas of education, commercial and social enterprise activity, public policy and professional practice.

E. Core Principles

We will realise our research vision and achieve our Research Plan aim by:

a) limiting the number of research fields in which we seek to make a research impact to those most closely aligned to our Mission, Vision and Values;

b) identifying Priority Research Areas that address salient national and international challenges and complement existing research initiatives;

c) developing a collaborative and interdisciplinary framework for research and research development that attracts and retains outstanding and aspiring researchers;

d) strengthening connections between teaching, learning and research across our programs and degrees by building on our current research strengths and shared research interests; and

e) enhancing public dissemination of our research including its applications in communities, organisations and wider contexts while prioritising research intended for high-impact, peer-refereed journals.

In these ways, the Plan will result in the creation of new knowledge and original creative endeavour across our broad Fields of Education. In doing so, Excelsia College will seek to fulfil its potential as a quality provider of higher education, engaged across a spectrum of research interests, open to talent from around the world, and attuned to the needs of an interconnected world.

F. Research Profile and Activities

Excelsia College will produce research in fields associated with its learning and teaching profile, ABS Fields of Education and Fields of Research Codes, and National Strategic Research Priority Areas as follows in Table 1 Research Profile below:

Research Field	Human Well-being	Theology and Integration	Performance, Creativity and Innovation	Business, Organisational Leadership and Management	Christian Teaching and Teacher Education
ABS Field of Education	Behavioural Science (0903)	Philosophy and Religious Studies (0917)	Performing Arts (1001)	Business and Management (0803)	Teacher Education (0701) Curriculum Studies (0703)
ABS Field of Research	1701	2204	1904	1503	1301; 1302
National Strategic Research Priority	Promoting Population Health and Well-being			Lifting Productivity and Economic Growth	
	Optimise effective delivery of health care and related systems and services	Maximise social and economic participation in society	Maximise national prosperity and well-being	Maximise Australia's competitive advantage in critical sectors	Deliver skills for the new economy

Research activities will usually comprise:

- Journal Publications
- Book Chapters
- Conference Papers/ Presentations
- Staff HDR Enrolments/ Completions
- Research Units in Coursework Programs
- HDR Supervision
- External Research Grant Funding
- Editorships and Peer-Reviewing
- Student Research Projects

In addition, outputs in the Creative and Performing Arts may include practice-led outputs and creative works.

G. Structure

Table 2 outlines the key components of our Research Plan including our overall aims, goals and strategies. The goals of the plan are to:

a) develop a culture of research and scholarship;

b) consolidate the research curriculum and research in the broader curriculum;

c) enhance research skills;

d) support research infrastructure;

e) build partnerships around research and scholarship; and

f) drive publication and dissemination of research and scholarship.

Achieving these goals will, over time, enable the college to attract and retain outstanding scholars and researchers; recruit graduate students and post-doctoral fellows; lead undergraduate and postgraduate studies through the dissemination and application of research; provide opportunities for individuals and research teams to develop advanced skills in pure and applied research; and capitalise on our research successes and achievements for the benefit the College and the community.

H. Changing Profile of Research and Scholarship

In response to the implementation of the Research Plan, the College's research profile is expected to change over time. This transition represents a shift in the College's research/scholarship focus from the largely unplanned research activities of individual academics to the establishment of an intentional

College-wide approach to research and scholarship that systematically supports the pursuit of Excelsia's research goals and aspirations.

I. Indicators of Success (Metrics)

Indicators of the success of our Research Plan include increasing:

a) number of staff holding PhDs;

b) number of research active staff;

c) student HDR enrolments and completions;

d) peer-refereed publications;

e) number of external grant application successes;

f) resources and infrastructure available for research (including physical, technological and virtual resources); and

g) media and community recognition of our research impacts and contributions.

Our specific Year 2023 targets in each of these areas are:

a) 100% of full-time academic staff, and 66% of part-time academic staff hold doctorates in their field of teaching or a related area.

b) 66% of full-time academic staff, and 33% of part-time academic staff are research active according to the stipulations of the College's Research Active policy.

c) 100 active HDR enrolments, and 5 cohorts of graduating HDR students.

d) An average of:
   • 2 peer-refereed publications per year over five years for senior academics, principal researchers and discipline leaders, with at least (on average) one per year in a listed ERA journal;
   • 1.5 peer-refereed publications per year over five years for Heads of Schools/ Programs not included in (a), with at least 3 (in total) being in listed ERA journals; and
   • 1 peer-refereed publication per year over five years for other full-time academic staff, with a least one (in total) being in a listed ERA journal.

e) Three external research grant applications, with at least one external research grant success to the value of not less than $20,000.

f) One industry research grant to the value of not less than $20,000.

g) On time delivery of research resources according to Business Plan projections.

h) An average of 2 media releases per year over five years concerning the College's research profile, activities and outcomes.

Table 2: Research Plan – Aims, Goals and Supporting Strategies

Overall Aims of the Research Plan

a) To become a recognised centre of research in priority areas that complement existing research programs in Australian Universities and, in so doing, to attract substantial peer-recognition, sustained staff and student interest, and regular external funding.

b) Establish a unique research profile capable of attracting substantial peer-recognition, sustained staff and student interest, and regular external funding.

Supporting Research Goals and Strategies

Develop a Culture of Research and Scholarship	Consolidate the Research Curriculum and Research in the Broader Curriculum	Enhance Research Skills	Support Research Infrastructure	Build Partnerships Around Research and Scholarship	Drive Publication and Dissemination of Research and Scholarship
All full-time academic staff are expected to: • have, or be enrolled in, a HDR • publish at least one academic paper per year (if not enrolled in a HDR) • attend one academic conference/ seminar/ workshop per year • supervise student research if research active (for Principal Supervisors) or be working towards research active status (for Associate Supervisors) • account for research activities in Performance Reviews • support colleagues' and students' research aspirations • engage in the ongoing Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and the integration of research into teaching practice	• Continue to monitor undergraduate and postgraduate research units, projects and assignments to ensure adequate acquisition and demonstration of research skills • Formalise research pathways for talented students • Ensure that: - CUOs in all courses contain up-to-date peer-refereed readings and other research-based materials - all academic staff refer to research and scholarship (including their own research and scholarship) in their teaching - students are expected to engage with recent research and scholarship in their course activities and assessments	• Centrally oversee all Research Methods and Research Project course units to ensure a high-level of research training for students • Invite staff to attend Research Methods and Research Project course units and monthly research seminars • Offer extra-curricular in-house research training for staff and students • Sponsor annual writing workshops and retreats • Extend and formalise current staff mentoring arrangements • Launch a biennial interdisciplinary academic conference • Publicise external research training events and workshops (eg., ACSPRI)	• Provide full or part competitive funding for: - HDR fees and expenses - conference attendance - research training events • Formalise extended TOR for Research and Research Ethics Committees • Extend data capture procedures for research publications • Maintain and further populate the College's Research Web Page • Purchase data analysis software as required • Allocate designated research spaces on campus • Continue to develop research policies, procedures and templates as required • Extend library support for research, including provision for a reference librarian	• Invite staff and external academics to share SoTL and research activities at formal and informal events (including internally organised seminars and conferences) in order to build collegial interest in research and scholarship • Coalesce staff teams around shared research agendas • Consolidate/ formalise current research partnerships with various universities • Extend participation in joint research applications, projects and publications • Continue to develop school-university and business-university partnerships with a research agenda	• Establish minimum expected annual research/scholarship outputs for each staff classification level • Apply for external research grants • Provide training in journal submission and response formats and strategies • Identify a range of journals suitable for the publication of staff research in and for the community – regularly briefing the wider community on these applications and impacts through various media and technological platforms

2. RESEARCH GOVERNANCE

This document specifies the structures and operations of the Research Committee which is established to ensure ethical and effective governance of research at Excelsia College.

The Research Committee operates under delegated authority from the Academic Board to: oversee all research and research training, including research training within higher degree by research awards, undertaken within the auspices of Excelsia College; administer all policies and procedures relating to research matters; and provide advice to the Board of Directors on matters relating to research income and expenditure.

Membership of the Research Committee

The Research Committee comprises nine members, namely: Excelsia Director of Research (Chair), one external Senior Researcher, one Senior Academic from Excelsia College, five Excelsia active researchers, one to be nominated by each Head of School, and one student representative.

Appointment of the Research Committee

Members of the Research Committee will be appointed by the Academic Board upon recommendation by the Director of Research in consultation with the Chief Academic Officer and other senior members of Excelsia College. Members will normally be appointed for a period of two years, with renewal of term possible by the Academic Board.

Functions of the Research Committee

The functions of the Research Committee are to:

- Monitor all research and research-related activities conducted under the auspices of Excelsia College to ensure that research and related activities are conducted in accordance with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and the National Statement.
- Facilitate and monitor research training and dissemination of research findings amongst staff and HDR candidates.
- Conduct reviews of policies and procedures relating to research matters on a regular basis and bring recommendations for changes to the Academic Board.
- Ensure that members of the Committee and its sub-Committee are provided with relevant training and professional development activities in order to carry out their roles.
- Oversee the ethical conduct of all research conducted at Excelsia, and/or by Excelsia staff and students, through the functioning of the HREC.
- Oversee the effective operation of all programs of Higher Degrees by Research (HDRs) at Excelsia College.
- Oversee all internal and external grant and grant-related activity of the College.

3. PHASES OF HDR IN OVERVIEW

3.1 Entry

With regard to admissions, Excelsia College does not discriminate on the grounds of race, religion, sex, disability, or any other basis, other than the candidate's academic record and demonstrated academic ability, as relevant to the requirements of the course with which they are applying.

The Schools are responsible for interviews, auditions or interactive workshops where applicable, for determining whether all admissions criteria have been satisfied, and for making decisions about suitability for admission.

Staff involved in student selection will not discriminate on the grounds of race, gender, age, physical condition or denomination. The basis of admission decisions is academic and/or artistic merit measured against published admissions criteria. The College reserves the right to refuse the offer of a place to those applicants who have not fulfilled the published admissions requirements, and may limit the number of places offered in any one course in accordance with capacity.

3.2 Supervision

All research students, upon admission to the active research candidature phase of a Doctor of Philosophy or a Master by Research must have an appointed supervisory panel comprising at least two supervisors, one of whom is designated as Principal Supervisor, the other(s) as Co-Supervisor(s). The active research candidature phase begins when a candidate enrols in the Research Thesis unit having completed preparatory research units and developed a satisfactory initial research proposal.

The Principal Supervisor:

a) advises and assists the candidate to complete an original and feasible research program ;

b) monitors the quality of the research being conducted;

c) advises the candidate on any additional skills training they may require; and

d) supports the candidate in timely completion of the research.

The role of the Co-Supervisor (or member of the Supervisory Panel) is to:

a) be available as an advisor to the candidate during the course of the candidature; and

b) assist the Principal Supervisor in the monitoring and furtherance of the candidate's research.

3.3 Progression

Candidates must progress through milestones of the candidature in order to submit a thesis for examination. These milestones comprise: Confirmation of Candidature; ethical approval for human research; and quarterly or biannual reporting.

A candidate who fails to maintain satisfactory progress may be placed on conditional status by the Research Committee or delegate; or where evidence of this persists over the duration of the degree and/or a preceding semester, may have her/his candidacy terminated. Supervisors should discuss with candidates any circumstances that might require the candidate to take leave of absence or sick leave or change the conditions of their enrolment.

Confirmation of Candidature

The Confirmation of Candidature is a formal and comprehensive process that reviews the candidate's progress and plan for research from commencement of the research active phase to thesis submission. The Confirmation of Candidature tests the proposal or question to be explored; its intellectual context; research objectives and research procedures according to the expectations of the degree and the available time frame. Confirmation of Candidature requires a written document, a verbal presentation to a panel and formal written feedback on the presentations and document for PhD candidates. Master of Research candidates provide a written document only and receive written feedback.

Ethical Conduct of Research

If the research approved by the Confirmation of Candidature process involves human participants, candidates must submit an ethics application to the Excelsia College Ethics Committee.

In assessing an application, the Ethics Committee will consider the academic merit of the research as an indicator of beneficence, potential risks or burdens placed on research participants, and implementation of the values of respect, integrity and justice in the proposed conduct of research.

Candidates must maintain the privacy of research participants and ensure confidentiality of research data through its careful and secure storage. Data underpinning research conducted at Excelsia College

(including electronic data) must be recorded in a protected, durable and appropriately referenced form. Unless there are compelling reasons, research findings should be publicly accessible, especially to research participants.

Regular Reporting

A student admitted to candidacy is expected to make satisfactory progress during each enrolled semester. The candidate and supervisor are jointly responsible for holding regular discussions on the progress of the research and for providing a detailed Progress Report at least annually or more frequently as specified by the Head of School. Reports will cover achievements, obstacles to progress, and future needs.

A candidate who fails to maintain satisfactory progress may be placed on conditional status by the Research Committee or delegate; or where evidence of this persists over the duration of the degree and/or a preceding semester, may have her/his candidacy terminated. Supervisors should discuss with candidates any circumstances that might require the candidate to take leave of absence or sick leave or change the conditions of their enrolment.

3.4 Examination

All HDR candidates are required to prepare a thesis in partial or complete fulfilment of their degree. The thesis is assessed by independent examiners who have expertise in the relevant fields of research. The Research Committee monitors the examination process.

The thesis must be prepared under supervision; be the sole work of the candidate, except where due reference is made to other sources; demonstrate a thorough understanding of the subject matter of the thesis; contribute to knowledge (theoretical or practical) and understanding in the field of study concerned; and demonstrate the capacity of the candidate to carry out research.

A PhD may be presented as a single research narrative or as a series of publications with a synthesis.

The thesis must be of a nature and length prescribed in the relevant course regulations. Excelsia College does not prescribe a word limit and candidates should seek the advice of their supervisory panel. However, 100,000 words are considered to be the upper limit for doctorates. Most disciplines have a general expectation of a minimum of 60,000 words for a doctorate.

The language of the thesis must be English.

A candidate may not submit as the main content of the thesis any work or material which has been previously submitted for any degree. However, the thesis may incorporate such work or material if the candidate identifies the work or material which has been so incorporated and if it does not form part of the main content of the thesis. Any component(s) of the thesis in media other than text will be submitted in a form approved by the Research Committee.

Examiners are proposed by the School and appointed by the Research Committee. The examiners will be asked to assess the work to determine if:

- the thesis as a whole makes an original contribution to the knowledge of the subject with which it deals;

- the thesis provides a sufficiently comprehensive study of the topic appropriate to the degree in the discipline area/s;

- the methods adopted are appropriate to the subject matter and are appropriately applied;

- the research findings are suitably set out, accompanied by adequate exposition and are discussed critically in the context of the discipline; and

- the quality of English and general presentation are satisfactory.

4. SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR HDR PHASES

4.1 Entry

An initial appraisal of a potential HDR candidate will consider: whether the applicant fits Excelsia's minimum entry standards and requirements; the applicant's preparation for academic tasks; the match between potential supervisors and students in terms of disciplinary orientation and research interests; evidence of the applicant's commitment to a research degree; and the applicant's management of life issues that might affect the candidature.

Entry to the research active phase of candidature will depend upon the satisfactory completion of an initial research proposal which normally comprises a critical literature review, research questions and research methodology. In awards that have a formal coursework component the initial proposal may be developed as an assessment task.

4.2. Supervision

4.2.1 Statement on Supervisory Panels

- Excelsia College uses a panel system of supervision. Each research candidate has a panel of at least two supervisors, one of whom is designated as Principal Supervisor, the other(s) as Co- Supervisor(s).

- The purpose of the panels is to provide expertise and impart skills across a range of knowledge and research methods.

- The operation of the panel is determined by the Principal Supervisor in consultation with the candidate and other panel members.

- The Director of Research is responsible for ensuring the quality of supervision of HDR candidates in the College.

- The Director of Research or Head of School approves the initial thesis topic and nominates the supervisory panel and any changes to the composition of the supervisory panel over the period of candidature.

- The appointment of a supervisory panel, and any changes to the composition of the panel, is approved by the Research Committee.

4.2.2 Responsibilities of Supervisors

a) Ensure the candidate is aware of the relevant policies, procedures and guidelines for their candidature, and the rights and obligations of HDR candidates.

b) Ensure the candidate is able to access resources and information necessary to pursue the research project.

c) Ensure the candidate is aware of important milestones (such as Confirmation of Candidature, and regular reports) and is prepared to complete such milestones.

d) Recommend action with respect to proposed changes to the candidature, including changes to:
   a. the thesis title;
   b. supervisory panel membership;
   c. mode of enrolment;
   d. leave of absence;
   e. early submission for examination;
   f. extension of scholarship;
   g. extension of candidature; or
   h. an application to upgrade to doctoral candidature from research masters.

e) Ensure regular contact and communication are maintained with the candidate via a mutually agreed, documented mechanism that is reviewed annually by the candidate and supervisor.

f) Ensure that appropriate applications for ethics approval are prepared and submitted by the candidate.

g) Recommend relevant courses of study (pertaining to important theory and research methodology) as required for successful completion of the research.

h) Provide constructive, critical, and (where requested) written assessments of the candidate's work to the candidate within one month of the submission of the work.

i) Provide immediate advice to the Head of School or Director of Research if the candidate is likely to fail to attempt or complete a milestone satisfactorily.

j) Provide formal advice on progress of the candidature to the Head of School or Director of Research via the review process.

k) Negotiate agreement between the candidate and members of the supervisory panel concerning authorship of publications and ensure that contributions are acknowledged during and after candidature.

l) Provide advice to the Director of Research on the appointment of thesis examiners as soon as possible after the student has declared in writing their intention to submit.

m) Certify that the thesis is in the correct format for examination.

n) Discuss potential examiners with the candidate.

o) Comment on examiners' reports and make recommendations to the Research Committee on the examination outcome.

p) Endorse completion of amendments.

q) All other relevant administrative actions concerning the candidate's progress.

Responsibilities of Co-Supervisors (or other members of the Supervisory Panel) include the following:

t) Ensure regular contact and communication are maintained with the candidate via a mutually agreed, documented mechanism that is reviewed annually by the candidate and supervisor.

u) Act in place of the Principal Supervisor when the Principal Supervisor is briefly absent from Excelsia College.

v) provide feedback to the candidate at regular times of review and at other times when specifically requested to do so.

4.2.3. Supervisory Appointments

• The Head of School or Director of Research recommends the appointment of a supervisory panel to the Research Committee.

• The Head of School or Director of Research will establish that proposed members of the supervisory panel are

- listed on the Excelsia Register of Supervisors;

- qualified to undertake HDR supervision by holding a doctoral degree in a field relevant to the candidate's proposed research, or having equivalent research experience;

- able to provide relevant expertise in areas of theory or methodology of direct relevance to the candidate's proposal;

- required to undertake the task of supervision;

- normally supervising no more than six PhD candidates or ten M.Res candidates; however, a greater supervision load may be permitted where additional supervision is recognized within the Supervisor's research allocation in their workload or in contractual arrangements where the Supervisor has capacity to undertake the supervisory load.

- research active, as defined by the Research Active Statement below;

- listed as having attended an Excelsia Research Supervision Forum within the preceding three years or

- required to complete an induction process in the case of first appointment as supervisor and, in the case of Principal Supervisors,

- a full-time, part-time, contract or honorary staff member of Excelsia College.

• At the time of recommending a supervisory panel the Head of School or Director or Research will certify that appropriate resources of space, materials and expertise will be available to the candidate.

• The Research Committee will accept the recommended supervisory panel, request further information, or reject the panel in part or in full based on the qualifications, expertise and capacity of the panel to supervise the candidate. Full reasons will be given in the case that any proposed panel member is rejected.

4.2.4 Research Active Determination

1. To be deemed research active, academic staff must satisfy at least one of the criteria in the Research Active Definition below. Research outputs, publications, research income, and HDR completions from the previous five calendar years will be considered when applying the definition.

2. Part-time staff, new staff and staff who have been on leave, or had other career interruptions, may be considered for a pro-rata application of the criteria.

3. Early career researchers may satisfy a modified definition of research active developed in consultation with the Head of School (or allocated supervisor) to reflect their early career status and to enable them to meet the definition once they are no longer deemed an ECR.

4. Academic staff members undertaking a HDR degree are not required to meet the criteria but are required to make satisfactory progress on their HDR degree.

Implementation

1. Multi-authored research publications count as a full publication for each author.

2. Principal Supervisors and Co-Supervisors receive full credit for a HDR completion.

3. Multiple named recipients on competitive grants each receive full credit for the total grant amount.

4. The Head of School will report levels of research activity across that school to the Chief Academic Officer and use the previous five calendar years to assess staff. The Chief Academic Officer has discretion in determining if a staff member will meet the Research Active definition. Some of the circumstances that may be taken into account in applying discretion are:

a. Part-time staff, new staff and staff who have been on leave, or had other career interruptions, may be considered for a pro-rata application of the criteria.

b. Early career researchers may satisfy a modified definition of research active developed in consultation with the Head of School (or allocated supervisor) to reflect their early career status and to enable them to meet the definition once they are no longer deemed an ECR.

c. Academic staff members undertaking a HDR degree at Excelsia College are not required to meet the criteria but are required to make satisfactory progress on their HDR degree.

Research Active Definition

1. Publish at least four journal publications or four book chapters or one book based on original research; and/or

2. Produce an equivalent body of non-traditional research outputs such as original creative works and curated public exhibitions/events; and/or

3. Be a named recipient awarded at least $100,000 of HERDC Categories 1, 2 or 3 research income; and/or

4. Be the Principal Supervisor or Co-Supervisor of at least two PhD students who have successfully completed.

5. Where the research output over five years is a combination of journal publications, book chapters or books and/or PhD student completions and/or external research grants, points will be allocated to individual outputs as specified below. A total of four points over five years will be required to qualify for research active status. Staff members who accrue points based on successful PhD supervision must also accrue points over five years based on research outputs and/or external grants in order to maintain research active status.

Type of research output	Points
Book	5
Book chapter (including chapter in published conference proceedings)	1
External research funding of more than $10,000 but less than $33,000	1
External research funding of more than $33,000 but less than $66,000	2
External research funding of more than $66,000 but less than $100,000	3
External research funding of more than $100,000	4
Journal publication	1
Performance or showing of a creative work as recognized and peer-reviewed within the field of study/discipline	1
Published translation with commentary of a scholarly text	3
Supervision to successful completion of a doctoral research degree candidate	3

4.2.5 Register of Supervisors

Excelsia College maintains a Register of Supervisors listing people willing and qualified to supervise HDR students of the College. In order to be registered on the Supervisors' Register a person must:

a) complete the relevant application form, and

b) attach evidence of their qualifications and research activity over the past five years.

Applications are assessed by the Research Committee.

4.2.6. The Supervisory Relationship

Replacement of Supervisor/s during Candidature

- If a breakdown of the supervisory relationship occurs, appropriate attempts at mediation should be made by the Head of School or delegate. The Director of Research must be advised of the issues that have arisen and be involved in mediation if the issue is not able to be resolved by the School. Independent mediators may also be used.

- If appointment of a new Principal Supervisor is required then either the Co-Supervisor or an alternate eligible supervisor shall be appointed. Such appointments will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the candidate is not disadvantaged. The suitability of the Co-Supervisor or other proposed supervisors to be appointed as supervisor must be discussed with the candidate.

Conflicts of Interest

Supervisors must declare any conflicts of interest at the time of appointment or if they arise during the period of supervision. A conflict of interest in research exists where an individual may preference, or be perceived to preference, their own interests or obligations over their duties and responsibilities as a researcher. Conflicts of interest may be actual, potential or perceived and involve financial and non-financial benefits. The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) requires researchers to identify, manage and declare circumstances and associations that may give rise to a conflict of interest.

A conflict of interest may exist where a supervisor has a personal relationship with a candidate (eg., a spouse, partner, close friend or family member), or a financial relationship with a candidate (eg., a business or employment relationship, including employment of the candidate as a research assistant).

In all cases where a real or perceived conflict of interest in HDR supervision exists or develops, the academic member of staff involved should declare this at the earliest opportunity to the relevant Head of School or Director of Research. If a conflict of interest is deemed to exist, the member of staff should withdraw from supervising that student and every effort should be made to find an alternative supervisor.

SASH Matters

Respect, trust and professionalism are very crucial when it comes to providing a safe learning environment. Sexual or romantic relationships between supervisors and their students are never appropriate; they harm the learning and research environment of that student and the academic integrity of all parties, including the College. A student's academic progress must never depend on consenting to a sexual relationship with their supervisor or a member of staff. The College encourages the prevention and reporting of incidents involving sexual assault and sexual harassment from all members. The College will be notified of these incidents when a SASH Incident form located on our website has been submitted and will act and provide immediate support. If such events occur, consequences will arise and there will be steps to rearrange a new supervisor for the student/s involved. The policy and procedure regarding sexual assault or sexual harassment provides more information of the College's response and management to the situation and includes counselling and support options for those impacted.

Mentoring candidates

Supervisors will support and guide HDR candidates in all aspects of their research. Supervisors will discuss timelines and milestones with candidates, and give practical advice about managing workloads. They will monitor the quality of the candidate's work, providing both oral and written feedback in a timely manner. Feedback should also be effective through affirming positive aspects of the work but also clearly indicating where improvements could be made.

Early in the candidature supervisors should encourage the student to develop their writing skills and discuss resources such as writing workshops that might be useful. A helpful principle for HDR candidates is to 'write early and write often'. Candidates will be encouraged to participate in writing groups that provide peer review as well as academic mentoring.

Where difficulties arise, due to personal or academic issues, the primary supervisor should seek advice from relevant academic leaders such as the Chief Academic

Officer or the Director of Research. Throughout the candidature, but particularly towards the end of the research process, supervisors should also discuss career goals and future academic or research activities with the candidate.

Managing the supervisory relationship

There are many models of supervisory practice, and further variations according to teaching and learning styles. However, the supervisory relationship is of highest importance. The supervisor acts as mentor and guide, whilst allowing the candidate sufficient autonomy to take responsibility for the products of the research. It is helpful to think of the candidate as a trainee who has ability but needs support in developing skills. According to the ECU Graduate Supervisors Workbook, 2013 (p.151):

"One important aspect of the supervisor's role is nurturing and supporting the HDR candidate during the research process. In this area, the supervisor can:

• stimulate and maintain student motivation
• reaffirm the significance of the work
• encourage attendance and presentation at seminars and conferences
• involve with the school/faculty community
• be aware of personal and financial issues
• take an interest in their future careers!
• promote research culture and community.

The supervisor should also provide feedback and help the candidate develop positive self-esteem. Candidature is full of doubt – make students feel positive every time they leave a meeting. This is often done through management of advice and criticism. However, there needs to be a balance of praise and criticism - any sub-standard work should be pointed out to the candidate and should not be blindly approved."

Building a research culture

Supervisors and candidates are part of an academic research culture, characterised by positive expectations, values and behaviours related to the conduct and use of research within teaching and learning, and in the broader community. The mentoring relationship should also promote the research culture and good research practice. Supervisors should encourage their candidates to participate regularly in research-based seminars, conferences and other activities that constitute the local Institute research culture. In addition, candidates should be encouraged to attend at least one selected national or international research-based conference in order to participate in the broader research community. Supervisors should discuss with candidates the value of publishing their work in peer-reviewed publications, and give strategic advice about relevant journals and suitable times to work on publications.

Authorship and publishing

Publication is the ultimate goal of academic research since publication shares knowledge more widely than a single thesis, invites critical review from referees, and tests the standard of the research and writing. At Excelsia College, doctoral programs may be undertaken by thesis or by publication (see Policy). However, supervisors will strongly encourage all HDR candidates to prepare research papers based on their research for submission during or after their period of candidature.

The authorship of research papers or scholarly materials is an important issue for HDR candidates, especially since the candidate is likely to be working in collaboration with supervisors and possibly other members of a research team. Candidates should be advised of usual authorship arrangements and supervisors should discuss joint authorship with students before developing each paper to be submitted for publication. Supervisors should also ensure they make a significant and active contribution to the development and writing of any paper submitted for publication.

4.3 Progression

4.3.1 Initial stage of researching under supervision

Candidates will begin to meet regularly with allocated supervisors upon enrolment in the Thesis Unit or otherwise at the commencement of the research active phase of their degree.

Initial issues for discussion by supervisors and candidates include meeting arrangements, communication and support. These include:

• How often supervisors and candidates will meet and for how long,
• Whether meetings will involve the whole panel or one supervisor,
• How meetings will be called and arranged,
• Whether meetings will be face to face or via electronic means,

- How notes from meetings will be shared, how communication between meetings will be managed,
- How supervision will take place at times when a Principal Supervisor is on leave.

Supervisors will also discuss the candidate's learning needs, expectations during candidature, understanding of responsibilities of supervisors and candidates. They will ensure candidates are aware of the overall framework for their higher degree to ensure they are aware of relevant policies, procedures, resources, and milestones for the award. In particular, candidates should know how to access the:

- Excelsia College Research Code of Practice;
- Requirements of the Ethics Committee;
- Intellectual Property policies;
- Occupational Health and Safety policies and procedures, including research safety;
- Plagiarism policies;
- Grievance resolution processes;
- School-specific support information;
- Counselling and human support services available to all Excelsia College students;
- Online resources and general academic support (including library); and
- Resources available to candidates including desk space and access to computers.

The supervisory panel will discuss milestones of candidature (confirmation of candidature, ethics submission if relevant, progress reporting and thesis submission – see also below) and check that candidates have a plan for achieving such milestones. They will also discuss when candidates should submit drafts, what feedback to expect from supervisors, how long it will take to receive comments on drafts, who will receive and comment on drafts, and if candidates should consult anyone in addition to members of their supervisory panel.

With PhD candidates the supervisory panel should discuss whether they should prepare a single thesis document or a series of publications together with an overarching justification of their topic and discussion of findings in light of the overarching research question.

Candidates and supervisors will then sign a formal agreement for supervision. This agreement indicates that they have discussed the HDR Student Handbook with their supervisors, come to an agreement about mutual expectations, and that the candidate and supervisors are willing to undertake the responsibilities of their roles.

4.3.2 Confirmation of Candidature

Confirmation of Candidature normally should occur within three months of enrolment in the Research Thesis unit (i.e., the commencement of supervision). The Confirmation of Candidature Panel for PhD candidates will comprise their Head of School or delegate (Chair), a research active staff member external to the School, and their supervisory panel. External persons may also be invited to assess the proposal as required for specialist input. The date of the Panel will be proposed by the Principal Supervisor when the candidate and their supervisor agree that the candidate is ready. The Panel for M.Res. candidates will comprise their Head of School or delegate (Chair) and their supervisory panel.

All candidates must submit a written proposal and plan of approximately 5,000–15,000 words. Length is determined in part by the level of the degree, the focus of the work and the discipline area. Candidates should discuss a suitable length with their Principal Supervisor. The Confirmation of Candidature Proposal must include the following:

- Thesis title (working title);
- Abstract (overview of the proposal);
- The research case (summary of aims and objectives);
- Intellectual context (literature review linked to aims or hypotheses);
- Research significance (proposed outcomes, contribution to the field);
- Research method (design, tools, analyses);
- Draft ethics application if relevant;
- Project costs, infrastructure requirements and timeline; and
- References.

Candidates should submit their written proposal and plan one week before the scheduled Panel meeting.

At the Confirmation of Candidature Panel Meeting PhD candidates only will present a 30-minute oral summary of the proposal using relevant visual and/or auditory

tools, after which the Panel may ask further questions about what has been presented.

The written proposal will be assessed according to whether it demonstrates a standard of English language sufficient for preparing the HDR thesis, a format and style consistent with the discipline, and a level of academic rigour consistent with the award being undertaken.

The oral presentation will be assessed for evidence of spoken English competence, presentation skills and ability to respond to questions about the research project.

After assessing the written, or written and verbal, presentation of Masters level and PhD candidates respectively, the Confirmation of Candidature Panel will make its recommendation (confirm, confirm with minor amendments, resubmit in writing after substantial amendments/ rewriting, or not confirmed and a new proposal is required) and give formal comments. Where there is a difference of substance between the recommendations of the Panel Members, the Research Committee will adjudicate the differences. The Chair of the Panel will forward the recommendation and comments of the Panel to the Research Committee, the candidate and their Principal Supervisor.

If candidates satisfactorily meet the conditions and standards for a research proposal under the Confirmation of Candidature procedure, they will be advised that research can commence subject to approval as needed by the Ethics Committee. If candidates have not satisfactorily completed the requirements of the Confirmation of Candidature procedure, the Chief Academic Officer may advise that their enrolment be terminated or that they transfer into another degree.

4.3.3. Ethical Conduct of Research

An initial Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) comprising five members is appointed to conduct ethical reviews at Excelsia during its transition to a University. This initial HREC will be a sub-committee of the Research Committee.

Scrutiny of ethics applications

There are three stages and related ethical processes of ethical scrutiny at Excelsia depending on the nature of the research and category of risk.

Stage 1 is the assessment of the merit of a research proposal, consistent with the guiding principle of research merit and integrity (National Statement). Research merit is assessed by the peer review process for funding proposals, and the confirmation of candidature process for HDR candidates.

However, the research merit of all other research proposals by staff, students and others associated with Excelsia by their research will be assessed by the HREC.

Stage 2 is the assessment of the degree of risk associated with a research proposal, according to the definitions of risk given by the National Statement (2.1.6, 2.1.7 and 5.1.6). The degree of risk associated with all research under the auspices of Excelsia College will be assessed by the HREC. In all cases degree of risk will be considered in conjunction with the extent of those affected by risk, ways to minimise risk, potential benefits of the research, and the extent of those for whom benefits are likely to accrue (National Statement 2.1.3).

Stage 3 is the assessment of justice, benevolence, safety, and integrity as evidenced within the proposal and consistent with the core values of the National Statement. Where the research is deemed to be of greater than low risk the assessment at Stage 3 will be conducted by a fully accredited HREC.

Monitoring of ethical conduct of research

Any unforeseen event, adverse or otherwise, that affects the conduct of research, or any change in the research procedures that may affect the ethical conduct of research must be notified immediately to the Chair of the HREC through the Ethics Officer. Such a report must include any steps taken to remedy an adverse event.

- In the case of an adverse event that occurs during the presence of the researcher, the researcher must immediately cease gathering data, secure existing data, and if applicable, take steps to ensure the safety of all present.
- Researchers must inform the HREC via the Ethics Officer immediately of any adverse event occurring during the process of research, and any steps taken to deal with the adverse event.
- Reports of adverse events will be sent immediately to the Chair of the HREC for assessment of the degree

of risk or harm and urgency of response. In urgent cases the Chair will work with the researcher to ensure that the welfare of research participants and others is not compromised.

- Where immediate action is not deemed necessary, the report of an adverse event will be discussed at the next HREC meeting. The HREC may require the researcher to take steps to ameliorate the situation and/or modify research procedures in order to mitigate future risk.

The Ethics Officer must be notified of, and the Chair of HREC approve, any amendments to the original protocol, including but not limited to changes to the membership of the research team, the research design or methodology, research tools, or research participants' recruitment method.

If the research is discontinued for any reason, notification must be given to the Ethics Officer, any data already collected must be submitted to the Ethics Officer for safekeeping under the same conditions as data lodged on the completion of an approved research project.

An annual report is required to be submitted by the Principal Researcher to the Ethics Officer on the anniversary of ethics approval concerning the progress of their research, compliance with the proposal as approved by the HREC, and the security of research records. Researchers must also submit a report to the Ethics Officer at the completion or cessation of approved research covering issues of compliance, security of records, and any matters of concern to the researcher. The HREC may, at its discretion, request more frequent reports or require additional surveillance to ensure that the project continues to conform to ethical standards.

Complaints about the Ethical Conduct of Research

- Explanations about approved research, such as Participant Information Sheets, will specify that complaints may be directed to the Ethics Officer whose contact details must be provided.

- On receipt of a complaint about the conduct of research the Ethics Officer will deal with the complaint in compliance with the Breaches and Research Misconduct provisions of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

- The complaint will be directed to the Chair of the HREC who will determine whether the complaint refers to a breach of the Code, or an allegation of more serious research misconduct (see Australian Code).

- Alleged breaches will be raised at the next HREC meeting with a view to ensuring fair treatment of all parties and remediation of any harm.

- Actions taken with respect to any breach will be recorded in HREC minutes and communicated to all parties by the Ethics Officer.

- If the complaint refers to the conduct of the HREC, the matter will be referred to the Excelsia College Chief Executive for independent review.

- Complaints about HREC, and their resolution, will be reported to the Chief Executive for communication to the Board of Directors.

4.3.4. Reporting on HDR Progress

A student admitted to the research phase of candidacy is expected to make satisfactory progress during each enrolled semester. The candidate and supervisor are jointly responsible for holding regular discussions on the progress of the research and for providing detailed Progress Reports either quarterly or biannually to the HOS and Research Office.

Principal Supervisors are particularly expected to monitor progress of candidates and provide timely support and advice in the event of difficulties. They should re-evaluate needs such as skills development or external advice throughout the candidature and take steps to facilitate the acquisition of suitable resources.

A candidate who fails to maintain satisfactory progress:

a) may be placed on conditional status by the Research Committee ; or

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

Where a student's status is Conditional and the Head of School is of the opinion that the academic progress of the candidate remains Unsatisfactory and/or that the candidate has failed to comply with College regulations or any conditions imposed by the Research Committee, the Director of Research will be advised of the Unsatisfactory Progress and the progression to termination. The Director of Research will refer the matter to the Research Committee to review the candidate's progress and determine if the candidate is liable for termination.

4.3.5. Variation of Candidature

Changes to candidature details must be formally approved and recorded on the student record system. It is expected that changes will be made in the thesis topic and title over the course of candidature; hence, a working title is used until the thesis is submitted for examination. Changes to the supervisory panel can only be made with permission from the Head of School and Research Committee. However, continuity of expertise is important for candidates and changes should only be made in cases where additional expertise is required, or if a supervisor is unable to continue in that role.

Changes in mode can be made in some circumstances. Candidates may change between full and part-time enrolment if necessary: for example, the need to find part-time work. However, in normal circumstances scholarship holders must be enrolled full-time and, as an Australian government visa requirement, international candidates are not permitted to enrol part-time.

Candidates may normally apply for leave of absence during their candidature. A candidate will be encouraged to take leave if problems are interfering with progress and there is an expectation that a period of leave will allow time to resolve the problem. The problems may include ill health, health problems within the family, short term professional pressures, personal emotional issues etc. During periods of leave the candidate is not enrolled and may not access College resources, including contact with supervisors. In cases of authorised leave the maximum period of enrolment is adjusted to account for the period of leave. International students must consider whether leave of absence is permitted under their visa requirements.

4.4. Examination Phase

4.4.1 The Thesis

A candidate will submit to the Research Office electronic and hard copies of the written component of the thesis prepared in a form approved by the Research Committee. The submission will include a certificate of authenticity signed by the candidate to the effect that the work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other institution. The candidate will indicate in the thesis the sources of information and the extent to which the candidate has used the work of others.

A candidate will submit to the Research Office one electronic and one loosely bound copy of the written component of the thesis prepared in a form approved by the Research Committee. The submission will include a certificate of authenticity signed by the candidate to the effect that the work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other institution. The candidate will indicate in the thesis the sources of information and the extent to which the candidate has used the work of others.

Notification of Intention to Submit a PhD thesis (NOITS)

NOITS must be completed at least 2 months prior to the expected thesis submission date via the method outlined in the HDR examination procedures. The supervisory panel must be satisfied that the thesis meets suitable academic standards, and format and presentation requirements, before it may be submitted for examination by the candidate.

If the supervisory panel does not agree that the thesis is ready for examination, the candidate may refer the matter to the Research Committee for determination. If the examination is refused the candidate will be asked to remain enrolled and to take further academic advice from their Principal Supervisor.

Time of Submission

A thesis will normally be submitted after completion of the study program and not earlier than three years (or six semesters) after full-time enrolment in a PhD or two years (or four semesters) after full- time enrolment in a Masters by Research degree. Maximum and minimum periods of candidature are specified in the relevant course regulations. However, the Research Committee may approve submission of a thesis for examination after less than the minimum number of semesters of enrolment, on consideration of the body of research completed, and the recommendation of the Supervisor and Chief Academic Officer, and evidence that the academic readiness of the work would not be increased by a further period of candidature.

Method of Submission

The candidate will submit one copy of the thesis in electronic PDF format and one copy in temporary binding. With the thesis, the candidate must submit a signed statement affirming that the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another

person except where due reference is made, and that it contains no work which the student has previously presented for an award of the College or any other educational institution.

4.4.2 Thesis examination

At least six weeks before the planned submission date, the Research Committee will appoint three (3) external examiners, including a reserve, for PhD theses, and two (2) examiners, at least one of whom is external, for Masters Research theses. An external examiner is a person who is neither a current employee of Excelsia College, nor an employee within the last three years prior to the thesis submission. There will not normally be more than one examiner from any one institution. A past Supervisor of the candidate cannot act as an examiner. Examiners must complete a declaration relating to conflicts of interest.

Candidates will not be told the identity of examiners. A candidate must not contact any person presumed to be an examiner during the examination process. Violation of this requirement may be construed as an attempt to influence the examination and may give rise to a charge of academic misconduct.

At any other time, the candidate must seek permission from the Supervisor or Research Committee before contacting an examiner. Any permission granted shall be in writing and require the prior agreement of the examiner concerned.

Each examiner is asked to report in writing to the Research Office within ten weeks (PhD candidates) or five weeks (Masters Level candidates) of the date of posting of the thesis.

The Research Office will forward the examiners' reports to the Principal Supervisor for comment and advice. The Principal Supervisor will prepare for the Research Committee a written report that will recommend an initial outcome based on the reports of the examiners and list in detail any recommended changes to the thesis. The Research Committee will then specify action to be taken by a candidate to meet any requirements of the examiners. The principal supervisor who will then assist the candidate in responding to recommendations for major or minor revision of a submitted thesis.

The approach of the principal supervisor at this final stage of amending a thesis is significant for the candidate's future response to peer review. The supervisor should model a constructive, respectful and academically robust approach to examiner feedback. Further, the supervisor should demonstrate how to distance oneself emotionally from any negative critique and consider it as dispassionately as possible on its academic merits.

4.4.3 Post examination

In the final stages of candidature the supervisors should prepare the candidate for ongoing professional development and presentations of the research through conferences and publications. In particular, the candidate should be encouraged to: develop a publication plan with a view to building their curriculum vitae; attend and present at conferences; seek early career funding opportunities; consider networking opportunities; and develop professional skills relevant to their intended career.

The Research Committee will recommend the awarding of the degree when all requirements of the degree have been met. As soon as possible after the Research Committee meeting at which the awarding of the degree is approved, the candidate will be informed of the result and given a copy of the examiners' reports. The candidate is required to lodge one digital (CD in PDF format) version of the thesis incorporating all amendments and/or revisions as specified during the examination process. The digital version of the thesis will normally be lodged in the Excelsia College Library unless otherwise determined under the Intellectual Property Policy. In addition, the candidate is required to lodge bound copies of the thesis to be given to members of the supervisory panel.

4.4.4. Transfer to PhD

1. General Guidelines

A transfer from the Master of Business Research to the PhD in Organisational Leadership may be considered by the Research Committee on a case-by-case basis and ONLY in exceptional circumstances.

2. Eligibility

2.1 The candidate is only eligible to apply for a transfer to the PhD program if they have met all the eligibility requirements for entry into the PhD program and can provide all the necessary documentation to support their application to the Research Committee.

2.2 The candidate must hold an Honours Degree Class 2 Division 1 or equivalent research qualification as recognised by the Australian Qualification Framework.

2.3 If the candidate does not meet the criteria in 2.2, then they must demonstrate they have subsequently gained eligibility since commencing their Master of Business Research program by being the sole author or the recognised first author on a peer reviewed publication in an journal ranked by the ABDC journal list as a B rank or higher rank publication, or other research output assessed to be equivalent by the Research Committee.

2.4 The candidate must demonstrate that the Master research project they are investigating meets the AQF Level 10 requirement for a PhD degree and that they are making an 'original contribution to knowledge' in the field of research.

2.5 Evidence of the original contribution to knowledge may be provided by publication of a peer reviewed paper in an ABDC journal ranked at B level or higher. Alternative evidence may be provided by an external examination of the Master research project where at least two independent external examiners state that the Master thesis provides an original contribution to knowledge and is at a standard equivalent to a PhD thesis.

2.6 The candidate must meet all the requirements for Confirmation of Candidature for the PhD program and have satisfactorily completed all progress reviews for their Master research project.

3. Application Process

3.1 The candidate must present in writing to their Principal Supervisor a document containing evidence required in Section 2 above and clearly state they wish to have their Master of Business Research candidature transferred to the PhD in Organisational Leadership and demonstrate they have met all eligibility requirements.

3.2 The candidate must present a detailed plan and timeline for completion of the PhD research project demonstrating how the scope of the project will be changed from the Master level project to meet the requirements for a PhD level research project. The PhD research project plan should include evidence of all portions of the research that have been completed and indicate all areas of the research project that remain to be completed up to the date of thesis submission.

3.3 The Principal Supervisor must write a detailed report to be submitted to the Head of School providing evidence that the candidate has conducted research at the level equivalent to the PhD and has made an original contribution to knowledge and a justification for recommending the transfer.

3.4 The Head of School must verify all independent evidence that the candidate is conducting research at the PhD level and has made an original contribution to knowledge in their field of research.

3.5 The Head of School is required to submit to the Research Committee all evidence relating to the application for transfer from the Master of Business Research to the PhD in Organisational Leadership that has been submitted by the candidate, the Principal Supervisor and any other independent examiners or assessors of the research project and must make a recommendation to the Research Committee either supporting or rejecting the candidate's application.

4. Review and Assessment

4.1 The Research Committee is required to review all documents submitted by the Head of School from the Candidate, Principal Supervisor and all independent external assessor reports.

4.2 The Research Committee may call for any additional evidence or require additional expert evidence to assess that the proposed research project is making an original contribution to knowledge and meets the AQF requirements for a Level 10 award.

4.3 The Research Committee is required to make a determination that the candidate has met all the eligibility requirements for a PhD, has a detailed research plan to complete the proposed PhD research project and has access to sufficient resources and supervisor capability and capacity to complete the proposed PhD thesis according to the proposed completion project plan and timeline.

For more information about admission requirements,
course suitability and career pathways please contact us
using the email or telephone number below.

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