EXCELSIA

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EXCELSIA
COLLEGE
— Sydney —

**Handbook for Supervisors
of Higher Degree by Research Candidates**

CONTENTS

WELCOME

Welcome to your role at Excelsia College as a supervisor of one or more Higher Degree by Research candidates. This is an important and complex role in the development of researchers. Aspects of the role include guiding, supporting, quality control, enabling, exploring, stretching, co-constructing, and contributing to the wider community. In taking on the role of research supervisor you are contributing to students, Excelsia College, our society and the worldwide community of scholars.

As you undertake this work of research supervision, I hope you will find a sense of fulfilment in supporting our students and the mission of Excelsia College, discovering new knowledge and making a difference both locally and globally.

This handbook provides HDR supervisors at Excelsia College with information about higher degrees by research, relevant academic policies and procedures and an overview of expectations of students and their supervisors. It should be read in conjunction with the Higher Degree by Research Handbook for students.

It contains a summary of the College policies and regulations that frame HDR awards. Supervisors are asked to read and comply with the policies and procedures. If clarification is required, please ask for assistance from your School or the Research Office.

The information in this handbook was correct at the date of publishing; however, this information may change. Supervisors should check the relevant website for the most current information. Full copies of policies and procedures relating to research can be found at excelsia.edu.au/research

Maureen Miner Bridges
DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH

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1   Bruce, Christine S. & Stoodley, Ian D. (2013) Experiencing higher degree research supervision as teaching. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(2), pp. 226-241.

RESEARCH DEGREES AT EXCELSIA COLLEGE

Currently, Excelsia College offers a PhD in Organisational Leadership and a Master of Business (Research). Both are located within the School of Business.

PhD (Organisational Leadership)

The Doctor of Philosophy is an integrated program of study and research. It combines advanced coursework in research methodology and preparation with studies in an academic discipline, for the purpose of systematic research. Doctoral level research comprises critical investigation and analysis in a field of learning to uncover new knowledge by discovery, the formulation of theories and/or the innovative re-interpretation of known data and established ideas. The Doctor of Philosophy program offers a specialisation in Organisational Leadership.

The course has been designed in order to satisfy the intersecting requirements of:

1. (a) the Australian Qualifications Framework;

2. (b) Excelsia College's Graduate Attributes; and

3. (c) the designated Learning Outcomes of the course.

Students are required to undertake nine units of study as part of the Doctor of Philosophy course, four of which are advanced postgraduate units in a discipline area related to the proposed research topic area; one ethics unit; three units which are a combination of advanced research methods learning and research preparation during which students will be required to prepare and present their research proposal, develop a literature review and other relevant background investigations, and devise an appropriate methodology for the conduct of the proposed research; and the thesis itself.

Over the period of the research methods and preparation units, students will be required to progress their research proposal through all relevant Institute procedures and reviews for approvals, including ethics approvals and preparation for Confirmation of Candidature. Once candidature is confirmed, candidates will then concentrate on supervised research, analysis and other activities associated with the implementation of their approved research proposal, the final examinable product of which will be a thesis.

Master of Business (Research)

This is an advanced coursework and research program in organisational leadership. Coursework consists of one year of study in leadership/management as well as research preparation; followed by a year to complete a research thesis. The course offers progression to the PhD program for selected candidates.

RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

Research at Excelsia College is conducted according to the standards and requirements of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. 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. "

"'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."

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." 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. "

Research at Excelsia College is therefore conducted ethically, according to standards of responsibility, integrity, respect, justice and beneficence.

2   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.

3   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.

4   Australian Code, 5

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

6   National Statement, 9.

7   National Statement, 6.

RESEARCH PLAN

Research Plan

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.

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.

The College will realise its research vision and achieve its 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.

Table 1 broadly outlines our current research profile, including designated research leaders, other researchers, priority areas, research topics, and aligned coursework programs.

Table 1: Current Research Profile

Research Priority Area	Religion, Spirituality and Human Well-being	Theology and Integration	Business and Organisational Leadership and Management	Performance, Creativity and Innovation	Christian Teaching and Teacher Education
Principal Researcher	Associate Professor Ebi Cocodia	Professor Kirsty Beilharz	Professor Ian Eddie	Dr Lotte Latukefu	Dr Leonardo Veliz
Other Researchers	Dr Dion Khlentzos	Dr Lex Akers	Dr Sunaina Gowan Dr Sarah Eyaa Dr Patrick Kakwezi	Dr Mark Seton Dr Christine Carroll	Dr Scott Smith
Current Topics and Indicative Interests	• Spirituality, Mental Health and Well-being across the Life-span • Formation of the Counsellor and Counsellor Education • Person-centred approaches • Emotion-focused parenting programs • Fathers and attachment to their children • Gender and Psychology	• Faith-Life Integration • Christianity, Culture, and Vocation • Theology and social justice • Christian Higher Education • Theology and the Arts • Spiritual formation • Christian Ethics • Christian Theological integration in society • Christian flourishing and wellbeing • Christianity in diversity • Philosophy of religion • Christian Phenomenology • Christian Philosophy of Education	• Cluster 1: Leadership and Management of Large Corporations • Cluster 2: Leadership and Management of Not-for Profit Organisations • Cluster 3: Leadership and Management of Start-ups, SMEs and Family Business • Cluster 4: Leadership and Management of Digital Transformation • Cluster 5: Leadership and Management of Sustainable Business Operations • Cluster 6: Leadership and Management of Government and Multilateral Organisations • Cluster 7: Leadership and Management of Tourism and Hospitality Organisations	• Formation of the Artist • Community Arts • Performance and Practice-led Research • Pedagogy, Assessment and Curriculum Development for Higher Music Education • Career trajectory in the Creative Arts • Health and Wellbeing in the Creative Arts	• Christian (Higher) education • Christian Philosophy of Education • Curriculum and Assessment • Teaching Methods • Teacher Preparation and Teacher Mentoring • Teacher Professional formation • Teacher Identity • Teacher Cognition • Culturally Responsive Pedagogies
Aligned Postgraduate Coursework Programs	• Master of Counselling	• Grad Cert Christian Leadership Proposed future Master of Christian Leadership	• Master of Business (Research) • PhD (Organisational Leadership)	• Master of Music	• Master of Teaching (Primary) • Master of Teaching (Secondary)
Current Research Partnerships	• University of Western Sydney • University of Notre Dame Australia	• Macquarie University • Melbourne University of Divinity • Sydney College of Divinity	• Indiana Wesleyan University • RMIT University • Southern Cross University • Western Sydney University • Macquarie University	• University of Sydney • Western Sydney University • University of Wollongong • Australian Catholic University • Royal Northern College of Music (Manchester) • University of Canberra • University of Auckland	• University of Wollongong • University of Western Sydney

Table 2 outlines the key components of our Research Plan including our overall aims, goals and strategies

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,

(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 biannual interdisciplinary academic conference • Publicise external research training events and workshops (e.g., ACSPRI)	• Provide full or part 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

RESEARCH SUPERVISION

Requirements for Appointment of Supervisors

Principal Supervisor

The requirements as specified in the HDR Framework are that Principal Supervisors must meet the following criteria:

a. Be employed as academic staff or contract staff of Excelsia College full-time or part-time, or be appointed as an honorary member of staff. Where the staff member holds a fractional or honorary appointment, they must demonstrate capacity to provide effective supervision that includes sustained commitment to the task.

b. Hold a PhD or other relevant doctoral degree in a field relevant to the candidate's proposed research, or have an equivalent record of scholarly achievement.

c. Be registered on the Supervisors' Register.

d. At the time of appointment as Principal Supervisor for a candidate, be currently supervising no more than six PhD candidates or ten M.Res. candidates

e. Show evidence of an acceptable level of research activity over the past five years in the form of publications, research grants and/or HDR completions as specified in the Policy on Research Active Status, or have relevant industry, government or professional experience at an executive level.

f. Agree to carry out the duties of Principal Supervisor according to the Policy for Research Supervision.

g. Complete an Induction Process on first appointment as Principal Supervisor and then attend an Excelsia College Research Supervision Forum at least once every three years.

Co-Supervisor

As specified in the HDR Framework, Co-Supervisors must meet all of the above criteria except for criterion a and at criterion f agreeing to carry out the duties of Co-Supervisor. Co-Supervisors are not required to be staff members of Excelsia College.

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.

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.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS

All candidates enrolled in a higher degree by research are supervised by a panel of at least two supervisors. Panels are the preferred supervisory model because panels include a breadth of expertise; allow for ongoing support in the absence of the Principal Supervisor; provide a tool for mentoring new supervisors within a co-supervisory role; may include external members from other universities or research groups; and allow the candidate to access several perspectives on their chosen topic.

The roles and responsibilities of panel members are specified in the policy: Policy for HDR Supervision. The roles of Principal Supervisors and Co-Supervisors are reproduced below from this policy.

Principal Supervisor

The Principal Supervisor has primary obligation for oversight of the candidate's progress and takes a leadership role in managing the panel and candidature.

The role of the Principal Supervisor is to:

a. advise and assist the candidate to complete an original and feasible research program;

b. monitor the quality of the research being conducted;

c. advise the candidate on any additional skills training they may require; and

d. support the candidate in timely completion of the research.

Co-Supervisors

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.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CANDIDATES

The main responsibility of HDR candidates is to carry out their studies with diligence and integrity. Research degrees require independent, self-motivated work over a period of time. Perseverance is necessary to conduct and complete all phases of research. In addition, there are many ethical considerations in the conduct, writing and publication of research. Hence a high degree of ethical behaviour and personal integrity will be needed.

Research candidates are guided and supported by their supervisory panel. It is a requirement of candidature that candidates meet regularly with their supervisors to discuss the progress of their work.

Candidates are also responsible for completing their research within the prescribed time limits. In order to submit theses on time candidates must take note of milestones in their progression and submit reports and work in progress accordingly.

All HDR candidates are expected to:

• Complete the Research Supervision Agreement form within the first month of starting the research phase of their award.

• Meet with their supervisors regularly as specified in the Research Supervision Agreement.

• Complete the Confirmation of Candidature process, usually within three months of commencing the research phase of their award.

• Complete Progress Reports every quarter (M.Res. candidates) or six monthly (PhD candidates).

• Present at Excelsia College HDR seminars and attend staff research seminars where possible.

• Notify supervisors in writing of any form of leave required, ie. fieldwork, conference attendance, holiday or an extended break from study.

Research Code of Conduct

At all times supervisors and candidates must comply with the Excelsia College Research Code of Practice [excelsia.edu.au/documents/2015/04/research-code-practice.pdf].

The Code states that 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. Further, The Code enshrines the four values in the National Statement: respect for human beings, research merit and integrity, justice, and beneficence. The Code proclaims 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.

Sections of the Handbook relating to the ethical conduct of research, stages of the research degree and issues arising in the conduct of research all must be read in light of the values of respect, integrity, justice and beneficence enshrined in the National Statement of the Research Code of Practice.

SUPERVISION THROUGHOUT THE STAGES OF HDR CANDIDACY

Preparation: First Year of Enrolment in the Award

Students enrolling in a PhD or Masters Degree by Research will normally complete units in research methods and the development of a research proposal unless there is evidence of relevant prior learning. When the candidate completes a research proposal of a quality suitable for the award being undertaken the Head of School or Director of Research (in the case of candidates located within a Research Centre) will arrange a supervisory panel.

Initial Stage of Researching Under Supervision

After completion of the coursework units, candidates will normally enrol in the Research Thesis unit that covers the conduct and writing of their research. Candidates will then begin to meet regularly with allocated supervisors.

Initial issues for discussion 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, they 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, 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. See EC-PO-RES-12 Policy for Presentation of HDR theses by Publication when considering a thesis by publication or PO-RES-11 Policy for the examination of HDR theses for considering submission of a traditional dissertation.

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.

Confirmation of Candidature

Confirmation of Candidature is a formal and comprehensive process that reviews a candidate's progress and plan for research from commencement to thesis submission. Confirmation of Candidature tests the question to be explored; its intellectual context; research objectives and research procedures according to what is expected in the specific degree and the available time frame. Confirmation of Candidature requires presentation of a written document only for Masters Level candidates, both a written document and a verbal presentation to a panel for PhD candidates, and formal written feedback on the presentations and/or the document for all candidates. The written document extends the proposal and literature review that was developed in the first year of enrolment to include an

integrated justification for the proposed research, a statement of the significance of the research, a draft application to the relevant Ethics Committee if relevant, projected costs of the research and a timeline for completion.

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.

Time-Line of Goals for the M.Res Thesis Unit

Note to Candidates: These are general goals only and should be discussed with your supervisors and tailored to your particular situation. However, they should be used as a guide if you want to complete your research project with time to think carefully about your results and to revise your early drafts.

Month	Tasks
1	Revise literature review and research proposal based on comments of examiner and supervisors. Set up indexing and referencing systems.
2	Further extensive reading and revision of proposal, leading to Confirmation of Candidature document. Locate measures if applicable, or develop stimulus materials for experiment, or prepare interview questions. In consultation with supervisors, prepare a time line and, if applicable, an ethics proposal. Submit Confirmation of Candidature document to Course Coordinator for approval by Research Committee. If time permits, begin extension of Literature Review into thesis Introduction.
3	Prepare a draft of your thesis introduction. Discuss with supervisor proposed statistical treatment or method of data analysis. Submit draft introduction (approx. 15,000 words) to supervisory panel for their feedback.
4	Pilot measures (where appropriate). Schedule data collection. Compile data collection protocols and pilot. Set up coding and data analysis schemes. After ethics approval, begin data collection. Discuss feedback on draft introduction with supervisors and begin revisions as agreed.
5	Continue data collection. Write and submit draft methodology (approx. 5-10,000 words) to supervisory panel. If using interviews, transcribe interview data.
6	Discuss feedback on methodology with supervisors. Finish data collection and coding and set up data file or, if using interviews, finish transcribing. Check data file, descriptive statistics, or begin first level analysis of interviews. Conduct specific data analyses or more in-depth analyses of interviews.
7	Begin writing of results. Submit draft of Results section to supervisors (approx. 10,000 words).
8	Re-read literature and/or further search based on results. Read any relevant new materials and write discussion section. Submit draft of Discussion section to supervisors (approx. 10,000 words)
9	Revise each section of the thesis in light of supervisors' comments. Compile bibliography and check formatting. By mid-month, submit a full, revised draft of your thesis including appendices (approx. 45 000 words) to supervisors for their final comments. Conduct final revisions and proof-reading. Submit required copies of the final version of thesis as specified in CUO. Where relevant, submit your completion report for the Excelsia College Ethics Committee.

Ethical Conduct of Research

If the research approved by the Confirmation of Candidature process involves human participants, candidates should submit an ethics application to the Excelsia College Ethics Committee as soon as possible. For information about policies and procedures relating to ethics applications see: Procedures for Application for Ethical Approval of a Research Project and Policy for Ethical Approval of Research Proposals.

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.

Middle Stage of HDR

The middle stage of a research degree includes the collection of data, data analysis, and the drafting of a thesis. During this stage candidates will be working to complete tasks specified in the Timeline that was agreed at the completion of the Confirmation of Candidature process.

As a minimum, supervisors will be expected to complete an Annual Report on the candidate's progress, including comments on achievements, obstacles, and future needs. The Head of School may request quarterly or six-monthly reports which are normally expected in the case

of Masters Level candidates. Members of the supervisory panel will be asked to comment on matters raised by a candidate in the progress report. Progress reports are reviewed by the Head of School and forwarded to the Research Committee.

Supervisors will also encourage candidates to participate in research seminars at Excelsia College, including attending staff seminars and presenting their findings at HDR student seminars.

Supervisors may advise PhD candidates to attend specific workshops that could be funded by Excelsia College. Such workshops and courses include research writing workshops and courses on quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis.

In addition, PhD candidates should be encouraged to attend and present their research at an Australian conference during their candidature. Selected candidates should also be encouraged to present at an international conference in the final stage of their candidature. Funding for national and international conferences will be available on a competitive basis. Participating in relevant conferences will help the candidate to identify as a researcher, network with other researchers, and obtain wider feedback as they disseminate their research.

Final Stage – Thesis Preparation and Examination

M(Res) candidates are expected to submit a coherent thesis of approximately 40 000 to 60 000 words.

PhD candidates may submit the thesis as a single research narrative of approximately 60,000 to 100,000 words or as a series of publications with a synthesis.

In either case, supervisors should advise candidates to consult EC-PO-RES-11 Policy for the Examination of HDR Theses. Material below is extracted from this policy.

The Thesis

All HDR candidates are required to prepare a thesis in partial or complete fulfilment of their degree. 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 series of papers. For specific policies regarding a PhD by publication of a series of papers, see the Policy for Presentation of HDR Theses by Publication. In exceptional cases, work done jointly with other persons may be accepted, provided that the Research Committee is satisfied as to the candidate's part in the joint research and the contribution is weighted accordingly.

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.

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.

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 Research Committee will approve 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.

OTHER MATTERS

Conflicts, complaints and concerns about progress

Conflicts: From time to time conflict can arise in a working relationship between supervisors and HDR candidates, or between researchers in a team. Conflict can arise due to a difference of professional opinion, a different approach to addressing a research problem, different styles of working, or the level of independence and direction of researchers who are working as part of a team. Supervisors should be alert to signs of conflict and discuss any matters of concern with the candidate, recognising that candidates may find it difficult to raise such matters with their supervisory panel.

Complaints: More serious issues may arise in the context of a supervisory relationship. According to the NSW Ombudsman's Report, complaints have been made by post-graduate candidates in relation to discriminatory, harassing, and illegal behaviour by supervisors. Supervisors at Excelsia College are not permitted to engage in such behaviour.

In cases where the matter cannot be resolved by the supervisor and candidate, the Head of School or Director of Research should be consulted via a face to face meeting or in a confidential memo.

The matter may be dealt with under the Academic Grievance Procedure (PPR-STU-06). Serious allegations of conflicts within a research team should be discussed with the Advisor on Research Integrity (see Procedures for Alleged Research Misconduct). In addition to initiating a complaint under the Academic Grievance Procedure candidates have a right to complain to the NSW Ombudsman, the Australian Research Integrity Committee, The Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, and the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

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.

Progress: 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 to the Head of School.

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.

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8 *Complaints about the supervision of postgraduate students*, Discussion paper, October 2017 available from <u>ombo.nsw.gov.au</u>

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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