



Policy owner	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Edwina Murphy
Contact	emurphy@aut.edu.au
Policy Document Approver	Research Committee
Responsible Body/Person	Research Committee
Initial approval date	02 October 2020
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Superseded documents	
Related documents	AUT Handbook Annual Progress Report Form Confirmation of Candidature Policy Grants Policy Expectations and Communication Preferences Checklist HDR Course Enrolment Policy HDR Minimum Resources Policy Research Active Policy Research Data Management Policy Research Plan Research Proposal Gender Based Violence (GBV)/Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) Policy Supervisor and Supervision Policy Wellbeing and Safety Policy
Related HE Standards	1.3.1, 4.2.4
Student Lifecycle Stage/s	Admission

1. PURPOSE

To set out the process of induction for **Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates** and **supervisors** and the related responsibilities and roles.

2. DEFINITIONS

Definitions for any words in **Bold** in this document can be found in the [Policy Glossary](#). The first instance of each defined term has been outlined in bold.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Australian University of Theology (**AUT**) HDR candidates, supervisors, and supervising colleges.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

The Australian University of Theology recognises the key contribution of both supervisory relationships and the relationship with the supervising college for the HDR process, and the necessity for clear and constructive expectations for these relationships. Successful HDR completion also requires that all candidates and supervisors are thoroughly familiar with AUT requirements as well as the support and resources available.

5. PRINCIPLES

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 Every Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidate is admitted by **Research Committee (RC)**. At the time a candidate is admitted as a provisional (or confirmed) candidate, RC will also formally appoint a principal supervisor, and at least one co-supervisor (the supervisory team).
- 5.1.2 The **AUT Office** will then send a letter of offer to candidates, copied to the supervisory team and postgraduate coordinator. This will advise candidates of their commencement date and maximum completion date, their principal supervisor and co-supervisor(s), and other relevant details of their candidature (load, mode, residency status, payment method and field) and a link to the Graduate School of Research website.
- 5.1.3 Candidates will undergo induction through both the Graduate School of Research (GSR) and their supervising college.

5.2 Graduate School of Research Induction for HDR Candidates

Graduate School of Research (GSR) induction will be held each semester for the commencing cohort via Zoom. Topics will include research integrity (including the **Code for Research**, AI use and referencing), ethics, resources, occupational health and safety, intellectual property rights, and respectful relationships, as well as orientation to the GSR website and AUT portal.

5.3 College Induction for HDR Candidates

- 5.3.1 The Postgraduate Coordinator at each supervising college is responsible for ensuring all their HDR candidates receive adequate induction. This may be as an individual or part of a cohort of candidates. Candidates can expect the following matters to be addressed in this orientation meeting:
- College code of conduct;
 - Gender Based Violence and Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (GBV/SASH) awareness training and the contact details for the college GBV/SASH officers;
 - information concerning people and processes they need to be aware of at the supervising college;
 - a library orientation including online resources and accessing interlibrary loans and online articles;
 - reference to the *HDR Minimum Resources Policy* and notification of resources available to them on the campus and through the AUT Office (e.g. workspace, internet access, student support);
 - AUT grants for HDR candidates;
 - a schedule of research seminars;
 - reference to the relevant *HDR Examination and Ranking Form*, including the examination criteria and possible outcomes;
 - a brief section on managing candidature – especially matters related to

suspensions and extensions of candidature.

5.3.2 The **Principal Supervisor** is responsible for ensuring a first formal meeting takes place with the candidate and supervisory team as soon as realistically possible on commencement of candidature. At this meeting, candidates can expect the following topics to be addressed:

- Supervisor and candidate expectations, including distinguishing between the roles and expectations of principal supervisor and co-supervisor, and communication preferences (*Expectations and Communication Preferences Checklist*);
- Reasonable adjustments which may be required due to disability or other ongoing circumstances, including variations to semester course load and/or the provision of additional time to complete the award;
- Research Methods;
- AI use and referencing;
- Research Plan;
- Research Proposal;
- Dissemination of research outcomes;
- Confirmation of Candidature and Submission Panels: requirements and time frames;
- Internship possibilities;
- Schedule of supervision meetings.

5.4 HDR Candidate Responsibilities

- 5.4.1 Candidates have the responsibility to be well-informed about, and to conform to, the regulations governing the course and its academic standards.
- 5.4.2 Candidates must be aware of the prescribed word limit for theses. The word count includes all material except the bibliography i.e., it includes footnotes and any excurses or appendices. An excursus contributes to and supports the argument; an appendix contains information which verifies the argument of the thesis, such as a translation of a key text, extensive tables, or a questionnaire. Research data must be handled in accordance with the Research Data Management Policy.
- 5.4.3 Candidates should keep a log of any AI use and reference it appropriately in the thesis.
- 5.4.4 Candidates should expect to submit to their supervisor coherent accounts of the research to date.
- 5.4.5 Candidates should communicate with and submit material to their supervisor in accordance with a mutually agreed schedule. Personal contact is preferable to merely submitting work by email. At least three annual face-to-face meetings (in person or via Zoom) are recommended.
- 5.4.6 Supervisors comment on whether they consider a candidate's progress to be satisfactory in the Annual Progress Report (APR), including appropriate use of AI. Reports of unsatisfactory progress will be investigated and, after discussion with

the candidate, may lead to the candidate's status being reviewed or, ultimately, terminated by Research Committee.

- 5.4.7 Candidates are advised to keep a diary of meetings with their supervisor.
- 5.4.8 Candidates should not hesitate to seek clarification if unsure about the expectations of their supervisor.
- 5.4.9 Candidates should accept responsibility for maintaining negotiated regular communication with their supervisor and the progress of research agreed upon. If impediments arise, these should be immediately discussed with the supervisor.
- 5.4.10 When submitting the thesis for examination, the candidate must lodge with the supervisor a copy of the thesis in the form in which it has been submitted.
- 5.4.11 Admission to AUT Higher Degree by Research candidature does not guarantee eventual graduation.

5.5 Supervisor Responsibilities

The requirements for supervisors and their roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Supervisor and Supervision Policy and the Research Active Policy.

5.6 Graduate School of Research Induction for Supervisors

- 5.6.1 Graduate School of Research (GSR) induction for supervisors is mandatory for AUT affiliated staff acting as **supervisors** and for all external **supervisors** who are acting as **principal supervisors**. It is encouraged for external co-supervisors and adjunct supervisors.
- 5.6.2 GSR induction will cover respectful relationships and AUT's expectations of supervisors, as well as key milestones and processes. It will include orientation to the AUT portal and the GSR website, which has links to all HDR-related policies, forms, and resources, including those related to supervision. It will also include the Code for Research and its Guide on Supervision.
- 5.6.3 GSR induction is in addition to supervisory training as required by the Supervisor and Supervision Policy.

5.7 College Induction for Supervisors

It is the responsibility of the Postgraduate Coordinator to ensure all HDR supervisors affiliated with their college (including Honorary Supervisors and external supervisors), receive adequate induction to the supervising college. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- information concerning people, policies, and processes they need to be aware of at the supervising college;
- information about resources available to them to support their supervision (e.g. workspace, internet access, library resources, student support);
- notification of scheduled meetings of any relevant committees of the supervising college (e.g. Advisory Panel, Research Committee, Submission Panel);
- a schedule of college research seminars;

- where applicable, a contract with the supervising college.

6 RELATED LEGISLATION

7 REFERENCES

8 VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
1	R&RSC	2015	2015	
2	R&RSC	1/02/2017	1/02/2017	
3	R&RSC	July 2018	July 2018	Reformat, slight rename change of rules around co-supervisors, safe spaces policy included, DMin (removed, changed)
4	R&RSC	02 October 2020	1 January 2021	Modification of wording regarding timing of first supervision, 5.2.3 section on DMin coursework units added, section 5.1.3 deleted, 5.1.4 renumbered
5	Research Committee	19 April 2024	19 April 2024	Removal of references to Candidate and Supervisor Handbooks; updates to cohere with other policies and procedures; rearrangement of sections; removal of appendix.
6	Vice-Chancellor	June 2025	June 2025	New policy format, minor editorial updates to implement university status.
7	Research Committee	3 July 2026	3 July 2026	Additional references to AI and updated processes.

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