

# Graduate Research Continuation Procedure

## Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) The purpose of this Procedure is to support the implementation of the [Graduate Research Continuation Policy](#).
- (2) This Procedure should be read in conjunction with the [Graduate Research Continuation Policy](#) and Schedules.

### Scope

(3) This Procedure specifies the process and requirements for monitoring student progress and continuation of candidature for the following degrees:

- a. Master of Research (MRes);
- b. Master of Public Health (Research);
- c. Master of Philosophy (MPhil);
- d. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD);
- e. Cotutelle and Joint PhD with an approved partner university;
- f. Combined Master of Clinical Psychology and Doctor of Philosophy;
- g. Combined Master of Clinical Neuropsychology and Doctor of Philosophy; and
- h. Combined Master of Organisational Psychology and Doctor of Philosophy.

(4) This Procedure applies to all:

- a. graduate research students enrolled at Macquarie University;
- b. Supervisors as defined in the [Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy](#); and
- c. other Macquarie University staff acting on behalf of these graduate research students.

## Section 2 - Policy

(5) Refer to the [Graduate Research Continuation Policy](#).

## Section 3 - Procedures

(6) There is a [Graduate Research Continuation Procedure Flowchart](#) available for this Procedure.

### Part A - Review Requirements

(7) Graduate research students are required to complete mandatory milestones and progress reviews, as per University and Faculty requirements.

(8) Additional reviews may be requested by a supervisory team with the Department/School Director of Research Training and/or MRes Director/Advisor if a student needs support and is not making satisfactory progress.

## Progress Indicators

(9) Indicators of progress at a satisfactory level may include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- a. the student has obtained necessary approvals (e.g. ethics) required for data collection;
- b. the student has completed mandatory training components as relevant and appropriate for their year level;
- c. the student has produced written work of appropriate style and content relevant for their year level;
- d. the student has collected and/or analysed data employing appropriate methodology relevant to their year level;
- e. the student is aware of and engaged with the research community, such as attendance and presentation at seminars;
- f. the student is engaging in formal supervisory meetings and documented outcomes are being progressed at a pace and depth appropriate for the year level;
- g. the progress of the student indicates timely completion within the maximum allowable time limit for the course; and
- h. the student has successfully engaged, submitted and met candidature milestones as documented and communicated (e.g., Confirmation of Candidature, Annual Progress Review).

(10) Indicators of progress at a marginal level may include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- a. the student has obtained necessary approvals (e.g. ethics), yet data collection is slower than expected for this stage of the degree;
- b. the student has partially completed mandatory training components as relevant and appropriate for their year level;
- c. the student has produced some written work; however, it is slower and/or not quite the appropriate style or content relevant for their year level;
- d. the student has partially collected and/or analysed data; however, it is slower and/or not quite the appropriate methodology relevant to their year level;
- e. the student is aware of but not engaging with the research community, such as attendance and presentation at seminars;
- f. the student is engaging in formal supervisory meetings and some documented outcomes are being progressed; however, at a slower pace and/or not quite at the depth appropriate for the year level;
- g. the progress of the student is at a slower pace and/or depth appropriate for the year level and there are signs that they may not complete within the maximum allowable time limit for the course; and
- h. the student has partially engaged and/or submitted candidature milestones as documented and communicated (e.g., Confirmation of Candidature, Annual Progress Review).

(11) Indicators of progress at an unsatisfactory level may include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- a. the student has not obtained necessary approvals (e.g. ethics) required for data collection;
- b. the student has not completed mandatory training components as relevant and appropriate for their year level;
- c. the student has not produced written work of appropriate style and content relevant for their year level;
- d. the student has not collected and/or analysed data employing appropriate methodology relevant to their year level;
- e. the student is not aware and does not engage with the research community, such as attendance and presentation at seminars;
- f. the student is not engaging in formal supervisory meetings, does not document outcomes, and is not progressing at a pace and depth appropriate for the year level;
- g. the progress of the student indicates they will not complete within the maximum allowable time limit for the

course; and

- h. the student has not engaged, submitted and/or met candidature milestones as documented and communicated (e.g., Confirmation of Candidature, Annual Progress Review).

## **Non-completion of Milestones**

(12) Failure to complete the candidature milestones as outlined in [Schedule 1 - Graduate Research Candidature Milestones](#) may lead to cessation of enrolment as outlined in the [Graduate Research Variations to Candidature Policy](#).

## **Part B - Review Process**

### **Confirmation of Candidature Process**

(13) Confirmation of Candidature (CoC) is assessed by the supervisory team and Director of Research Training and/or MRes Director/Advisor where one of two outcomes will occur, each clearly communicated to the student in writing:

- a. the student has demonstrated they have developed a viable research project plan and are progressing their candidature at a satisfactory level to indicate completion in the maximum time limit allowable for their degree. The candidature is confirmed; or
- b. the student has not demonstrated they have developed a viable research project plan and are not progressing their candidature at a satisfactory level to indicate completion in the maximum time limit allowable for their degree. The candidature is not confirmed. The student will be required to complete a Panel Review of Progress and resubmission of CoC documentation.

### **Departmental Review of Progress**

(14) The Annual Progress Review (APR) or supervisory team recommended review or other Departmental/School progress reporting requirement is assessed by the Director of Research Training and/or MRes Director/Advisor where one of three outcomes will occur, each clearly communicated to the student in writing:

- a. the student's progress is at a satisfactory level, and the candidature will continue;
- b. the student's progress is at a marginal level, and the student will be required to complete an interim progress review; or
- c. the student's progress is at an unsatisfactory level and the student will be required to complete a Panel Review of Progress.

### **Interim Progress Review**

(15) Students with marginal outcomes to a Departmental Review will be required to complete an action plan in consultation with the supervisory team and provided with a set period of time to demonstrate progress. This will be measured by completing an interim progress report. The period of time provided will vary according to the graduate research degree:

- a. for MRes, students will be provided with one (1) month(or part-time equivalent);
- b. for MPhil, students will be provided with two (2) months(or part-time equivalent);
- c. for PhD, students will be provided with three (3) months(or part-time equivalent).

(16) Students required to complete an interim progress report will be provided with relevant academic and research support from the University as needed. In consultation with the student, the interim progress report will be reviewed by the supervisory team. A recommendation of progress by the supervisory team is provided to the Director of Research Training and/or MRes Director/Advisor, who determines if progress is at a satisfactory level with respect to

the agreed upon action plan. One of two outcomes will occur, each clearly communicated to the student in writing:

- a. the student's progress is at a satisfactory level, and the candidature will continue; or
- b. the student's progress is at an unsatisfactory level and the student will be required to undergo a Panel Review of Progress.

## **Panel Review of Progress**

(17) Students with progress at an unsatisfactory level as determined by a Departmental Review of Progress, Interim Progress Review, or an outcome of non-confirmation of candidature from their CoC will be required to complete an action plan in consultation with the supervisory team and will be provided with a set period of time to improve their progress prior to undergoing a Panel Review of Progress. The period of time provided will vary according to the graduate research degree:

- a. for MRes, students will be provided with a month (or part-time equivalent);
- b. for MPhil, students will be provided with two(2) months (or part-time equivalent);
- c. for PhD, students will be provided with three(3) months (or part-time equivalent).

(18) In collaboration with the student, an independent Experienced Advisor, Director of Research Training and/or MRes Director/Advisor, and the supervisory team will set objectives and review the action plan progress over the designated time period.

(19) At the end of the designated time period, the student will complete a Panel Review Progress Report on their progress against the set objectives outlined in the action plan. The report will be reviewed by the supervisory team, and a recommendation of progress is provided to the Review Panel.

(20) A Review Panel consisting of the independent Experienced Advisor, Director of Research Training and/or MRes Director/Advisor, at least one academic external to the department/school, and the Associate Dean, Research Training and Performance (AD, RTP) will review the Panel Review Progress Report and overall dynamics of the supervision provided, in accordance with the agreed action plan. The Review Panel will determine if progress is satisfactory. One of two outcomes will occur, each clearly communicated to the student in writing:

- a. if progress is deemed to be at a satisfactory level by the Review Panel the candidature will continue, or in the case of Confirmation of Candidature, candidature is confirmed;
- b. if progress is deemed to be at an unsatisfactory level the Review Panel will recommend one of the following options:
  - i. the student may transfer degrees if eligible (PhD to MPhil only);
  - ii. withdraw; or
  - iii. Formal Review of Candidature by the Faculty Executive Dean.

(21) The University will report any international students who transfer degrees or withdraw under Section 19 of the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#) and will notify them of any potential impacts under the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#). Students are responsible for following the advice and required actions in their notification.

## **Formal Review**

(22) Students recommended for Formal Review are provided with twenty (20) working days (or part-time equivalent) to provide a written response letter to the Faculty Executive Dean to accompany the Formal Review.

(23) All documentation and evidence provided to the Review Panel, together with the Review Panel recommendation

letter, and the response letter from the student, are reviewed by the Faculty Executive Dean. One of two outcomes will occur:

- a. if the decision is to continue candidature, the student will be required to complete an interim progress review as per clause 15; or
- b. if the decision is to terminate candidature, the Executive Dean is to send a report summarising the reason(s) for termination (and associated documents) to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) via the Graduate Research Academy (GRA).

(24) In the case of decision for Termination of Candidature, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) is to advise the student of termination including the reason(s) for such a decision. The Graduate Research Academy will inform the Research Degree Subcommittee/Graduate Research Management Committee that termination has taken place and the effective date.

(25) The University will report any international students who are terminated under Section 19 of the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#) and will notify them of any potential impacts under the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#). Students are responsible for following the advice and required actions in their notification.

## **Withdrawal**

(26) A student may withdraw from candidature at any time during the review process. The University will report any international students who withdraw under Section 19 of the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000](#) and will notify them of any potential impacts under the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018](#). Students are responsible for following the advice and required actions in their notification.

## **Non-completion/Non-engagement of Progress Reports**

(27) Where a student does not submit a milestone report as detailed in [Schedule 1 - Graduate Research Candidature Milestones](#), or where they fail to engage in a review process, cessation of enrolment may occur in accordance with clause 45(b) of the [Graduate Research Variations to Candidature Policy](#).

## **Part C - Communication of Review Outcome**

(28) All students will receive advice/notification regarding continuation of their graduate research degree.

(29) In the case of a degree transfer or termination of candidature, students will also be advised of:

- a. the reason(s) for such a decision; and
- b. the appeals processes available to appeal through the [Academic Appeals Policy/Academic Appeals Procedure](#).

## **Part D - Graduate Research Student Grievances**

(30) Graduate research students can raise any concerns in relation to their review process with the Head of Department (or nominee).

## **Part E - Appeals**

(31) Students may appeal decisions relating to the termination of their PhD, MPhil or MRes candidature in accordance with the [Academic Appeals Policy](#). Appeals on this basis are limited to procedural grounds only. Students have twenty (20) working days to submit an appeal following notification of the decision.

## **Section 4 - Guidelines**

(32) Nil.

## **Section 5 - Definitions**

(33) Nil.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	1st September 2024
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