

Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy specifies the fundamental principles and appointment provisions underpinning higher degree research (HDR) supervision at Macquarie University.

Background

(2) Supervision is the most important support offered by the University to research candidates. Objective 2 of the [Strategic Research Framework 2015-2024](#) states that the University will 'provide unrivalled and inspirational supervision; enable a transformative research experience; provide opportunities to engage with the real world; offer internationally-aligned programs with global relevance; and support [candidates] with personally enriching experiences and excellent support structures'.

(3) The supervision of research candidates must provide the highest quality of academic and professional mentoring and advice. The University aims to develop a rich campus-wide and off-campus culture of reflective research supervision founded on mutual respect and co-operation that values and fosters the HDR candidate experience. The University sets minimum standards for the appointment of HDR Supervisors. It also recognises the contribution HDR supervisors make by offering an HDR Supervision Fellowship Program, promotion criteria related to HDR supervision, and HDR Supervision Awards.

Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all individuals engaged in the provision and support of HDR supervision, including University staff, and individuals appointed to adjunct or advisory positions. Obligations for HDR candidates are outlined in the [Overview \(Handbook and Guide\)](#) for Candidates and Supervisors.

Section 2 - Policy

The University's HDR Supervision Framework

(5) To achieve Objective 2 of the [Strategic Research Framework](#) 2015-2024, four interconnected dimensions frame the development of HDR supervision.

- a. Engagement and Influence – appropriate methods are adopted to foster an HDR candidate's capacity to achieve world-leading research with world-changing impact;
- b. Knowledge – reflective supervision pedagogy and evidence-informed approaches are utilised;
- c. Governance and Organisation – appropriate candidature management and HDR governance underpin a candidate's journey; and
- d. Effectiveness – appropriate evaluation of supervisory practices is routinely conducted.

(6) These will be achieved through the practices of HDR supervisors, supported by appropriate University certification and provision of professional development, an HDR Supervision Fellowship Program, and the University's [Academic Promotion Policy](#).

Categories of Supervisor

(7) There are eight categories of supervisor.

- a. Principal Supervisor (Doctoral/M Phil);
- b. Associate Supervisor (Doctoral/M Phil);
- c. Research Masters Supervisor;
- d. Associate Supervisor (Research Masters);
- e. Higher Degree Research Cultural Advisor;
- f. Adjunct Higher Degree Research Supervisor;
- g. Higher Degree Research Advisor; and
- h. Higher Degree Research Supervisor (End-User Partnership).

Minimum Standards for Appointment to an HDR Supervisor Role

(8) HDR supervisors must meet the following minimum standards for appointment to respective roles.

Role	Minimum standards
Principal Supervisor (Doctoral/M Phil) Acting Principal Supervisor (Doctoral/M Phil)	Must be a Macquarie University staff member or an employee of an affiliated organisation with which the University has a formal agreement who holds a conjoint appointment To enable successful completion of existing candidates, may be a former Macquarie University staff member who is an affiliate of Macquarie University - refer also Clause 9 Must have met mandatory training requirements for HDR Supervision Must be research active according to the Macquarie University definition Holds a PhD or equivalent Must be able to provide 'continuity of supervision'. Discretion exists for Faculty to determine how to achieve 'continuity of supervision'. In most instances, this may be achieved by appointing a Principal Supervisor who is on a contract of three (3) years or more.
Associate Supervisor (Doctoral/M Phil) Acting Associate Supervisor (Doctoral/M Phil)	Must be a Macquarie University staff member May be an affiliate of Macquarie University - refer also Clause 9 Must have met mandatory training requirements for HDR Supervision Must be research active according to the Macquarie University definition Holds a PhD or equivalent Must be able to provide 'continuity of supervision'. Discretion exists for Faculty to determine how to achieve 'continuity of supervision'. In most instances, this may be achieved by appointing an Associate Supervisor who is on a contract of three (3) years or more.
Research Masters Supervisor Acting Research Masters Supervisor	Must be a Macquarie University staff member or an employee of an affiliated organisation with which the University has a formal agreement who holds a conjoint appointment To enable successful completion of existing candidates, may be a former Macquarie University staff member who is an affiliate of Macquarie University - refer also Clause 9 Must have met mandatory training requirements for HDR Supervision Must be research active according to the Macquarie University definition Holds a PhD or equivalent Is employed on a minimum of a 12-month contract for the duration of the appointment, or where the candidate is part-time, is appointed on the discretion of Faculty that the person can provide 'continuity of supervision'.
Associate Supervisor (Research Masters) Acting Associate Supervisor (Research Masters)	Must be a Macquarie University staff member May be an affiliate of Macquarie University - refer also Clause 9 Must have met mandatory training requirements for HDR Supervision Must be research active according to the Macquarie University definition Holds a PhD or equivalent Is employed on a minimum of a 12-month contract for the duration of the appointment, or where the candidate is part-time, is appointed on the discretion of Faculty that the person can provide 'continuity of supervision'.

Role	Minimum standards
Adjunct Higher Degree Research Supervisor	<p>Is not a current Macquarie University staff member or affiliate</p> <p>Holds a qualification or relevant research experience or equivalent at or above the level of the HDR award they are supervising</p> <p>Is making, or has made, an original contribution to a relevant field, industry or discipline</p> <p>Completes Macquarie University HDR Supervision training within 12 weeks of appointment, unless they are a former Macquarie University staff member and have completed mandatory supervision training within the past four (4) years.</p>
Higher Degree Research Cultural Advisor	<p>May or may not be a current Macquarie University staff member</p> <p>May be an affiliate of Macquarie University</p> <p>Meets, through equivalence, the standards for appointment to an Adjunct Higher Degree Research Supervisor role</p> <p>Is recommended by Walanga Muru Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous)</p> <p>Completes Macquarie University HDR Supervision training within 12 weeks of appointment, unless they are a current Macquarie University staff member and have completed mandatory supervision training within the past four (4) years.</p>
Higher Degree Research Advisor	<p>Is not a Macquarie University staff member</p> <p>May be an affiliate of Macquarie University</p> <p>Brings specialised knowledge, skills, attributes and / or field experience to the candidate's research training</p> <p>Is appointed on the basis of a Curriculum Vitae and written recommendation by the Principal Supervisor (Doctoral / M Phil) or the Research Masters Supervisor, and the Associate Dean RTP</p> <p>Completes Macquarie University HDR Supervision training within 12 weeks of appointment</p>
Higher Degree Research Supervisor (End-User Partnership)	<p>Is an individual from an industry partner who is appointed in the context of an Industry-University Partnership</p> <p>Is external to academia and not employed by organisations that are affiliates, controlled entities, or subsidiaries of Macquarie University</p> <p>May be an affiliate of Macquarie University</p> <p>Brings specialised knowledge, skills, attributes and / or field experience to the candidate's research training</p> <p>Completes Macquarie University HDR Supervision training within 12 weeks of appointment</p>

(9) Each research student is supported by continuing supervisory arrangements by the appointment of a Principal / Research Masters Supervisor and at least one Associate Supervisor with relevant research expertise. These supervisors must be Macquarie University staff members, with the following exceptions:

- a. In exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), a Macquarie University honorary title holder (Emeritus Professor, Honorary or Clinical) who was employed by the University may continue to act as the Principal / Research Masters Supervisor for their existing candidate/s providing the Associate Supervisor is a Macquarie University staff member. Approval must be sought within six (6) months of departing from the University.
- b. With the approval of the Executive Dean (or nominee), a Macquarie University honorary title holder (Honorary, Visiting, Adjunct, Conjoint or Clinical) may act as the Associate Supervisor providing the Principal / Research Masters Supervisor is a Macquarie University staff member.
- c. In exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), an Adjunct HDR Supervisor affiliated with an organisation with which the University has a formal agreement or a Macquarie University honorary title holder (Clinical) may act as the Principal / Research Masters Supervisor providing the Associate Supervisor is a Macquarie University staff member. Such organisations may include research institutes, teaching hospitals or other organisations with a significant teaching and/or research role. Note: the appointment of an Adjunct HDR Supervisor to Principal Supervisor is not permitted where the Adjunct Supervisor is employed by a Higher Education Provider in Australia or Internationally.

Where a proposed supervisor does not meet the minimum standard for the role, their appointment will require approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) as an 'exceptional' appointment.

Mandatory Training Requirements for HDR Supervision

(10) All University staff who are to be appointed as a Principal Supervisor, Associate Supervisor, Research Masters Supervisor or Associate Supervisor (Research Masters) must have completed mandatory training requirements in HDR Supervision issued by the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Graduate Research. HDR Supervision currency must be updated every four (4) years.

(11) The completion of HDR Supervision training will appear as a record on a staff member's public profile in a searchable Macquarie University Certified Supervisor Database (PURE or equivalent) and in their HR Online Training Record.

(12) HDR Cultural Advisors, Adjunct HDR Supervisors, HDR Advisors and HDR (End-User Partnership) must complete their training requirements within 12 weeks of appointment to the role.

Continuing Professional Development and Recognition for HDR Supervisors

(13) HDR supervisors will be encouraged to engage in voluntary continuing professional development to help maintain currency and to reflect on and further develop their skills. The University will provide recognition of supervisory achievements.

Appointment of an Acting Supervisor

(14) The Head of Department / School (HoD / HoS) in the relevant Faculty will determine the circumstances under which it is necessary to appoint an Acting Supervisor, on advice from the relevant Supervisor. An Acting Supervisor must be appointed for absences of Principal Supervisor / Research Master Supervisor greater than four (4) weeks. The period of appointment will generally be up to six (6) months, after which time consideration should be given to replacing the absent supervisor.

(15) It is the responsibility of the Principal Supervisor, Department, and Faculty to ensure supervision remains regular, continuous and effective during any period when the Principal Supervisor or Research Masters Supervisor undertakes Outside Studies Program (OSP).

Compliance and Breaches

(16) All persons involved in higher degree research are responsible for fostering research integrity according to national standards and the [Macquarie University Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), other related University policies and procedures, and the University's commitment to cultural safety in research that involves Indigenous peoples.

(17) All supervisors, regardless of type of appointment, are required to comply with the [Higher Degree Research Rules](#), Relevant Legislation, Key Related Documents and any University Policy and Procedures relating to HDR supervision and candidature.

(18) The University may commence disciplinary procedures if a person to whom this Policy applies breaches this Policy (or any of its related procedures). Disciplinary procedures may involve removal from a supervisory appointment, removal from a supervisory role, suspension of certification, or termination.

Section 3 - Procedures

(19) Refer to the [Higher Degree Research Supervision Procedure](#).

Section 4 - Guidelines

(20) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(21) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

- a. 'Affiliate' means persons holding honorary academic titles with the University.
- b. 'Staff' means persons employed by Macquarie University in continuing and fixed term positions.

Status and Details

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