

Graduate Research Supervision Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) This Policy specifies the fundamental principles and appointment provisions underpinning graduate research supervision at Macquarie University.
- (2) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the [Graduate Research Supervision Procedure](#).

Background

- (3) This Policy covers the requirements for supervising graduate research students in the following degrees:
- a. Master of Research;
 - b. Master of Public Health (Research);
 - c. Master of Philosophy;
 - d. Doctor of Philosophy;
 - e. Cotutelle and Joint PhD with an approved partner university or universities;
 - 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.

Scope

- (4) This Policy applies to all individuals engaged in the provision and support of graduate research supervision, including University staff, and individuals appointed to adjunct or advisory positions.

Section 2 - Policy

- (5) This policy is aligned with the standards set by the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#).

Part A - Principles of Supervision

- (6) Macquarie University is committed to providing students with outstanding supervisors who employ their research expertise, knowledge, and experience to provide the highest quality of academic and professional mentoring and advice.
- (7) Supervisors are only appointed where there is:
- a. an appropriate fit between the applicant, research environment, available resources, and the supervisor; and
 - b. appropriate consideration and management of actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- (8) Supervisors will:

- a. foster research integrity and provide guidance and mentorship on responsible research conduct 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 diversity, inclusion and belonging and cultural safety in research that involves Indigenous peoples;
- b. provide academic support and guidance throughout candidature with the objective of enabling the student to achieve a high standard of researcher development, research activity and output;
- c. support the development of research and transferable skills relevant to the student's career strategy, including encouragement to engage with the [Graduate Researcher Development Framework](#) and [Graduate Researcher Development Program](#); and
- d. adhere to the [Principles of Respectful Supervisory Relationships](#).

(9) The University will recognise the contribution graduate research supervisors make through award schemes and promotion criteria related to graduate research supervision.

Part B - Appointment of Supervisors

(10) Each student is supported by continuing supervisory arrangements by the appointment of a Principal Supervisor and at least one Associate Supervisor with relevant research expertise. The Principal Supervisor will be located in the Department/School in which the student is enrolled.

(11) Supervisors must not supervise, or be on a supervisory team, where a close personal relationship exists. Close personal relationships include sexual or romantic relationships between:

- a. the supervisor and student; or
- b. members of the supervisory team.

(12) The maximum number of research students a supervisor can supervise is specified in their Faculty Workload Model.

(13) Additional supervisors may be appointed to fulfil specific roles in the candidature.

Minimum Standards for Appointment

(14) All supervisors must meet the following minimum standards for appointment to respective roles.

Role	Minimum standards
Principal Supervisor Acting Principal Supervisor	a. must be: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. an employee of Macquarie University who holds a continuing or fixed-term position; or ii. an employee of an affiliated organisation who holds a conjoint appointment at Macquarie University; b. holds a PhD or equivalent (see clauses 16 to 17); c. is compliant with mandatory training requirements; and d. is research active according to the Macquarie University definition.
Associate Supervisor Acting Associate Supervisor	a. must be: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. an employee of Macquarie University who holds a continuing or fixed-term position; or ii. a Macquarie University Honorary Academic Title holder; b. holds a PhD or equivalent (see clauses 16 to 17); c. is compliant with mandatory training requirements; and d. is research active according to the Macquarie University definition.
Adjunct Supervisor	a. is not a current Macquarie University employee; b. holds a PhD or equivalent (see clauses 16 to 17); c. brings specialised knowledge, skills, attributes and/or field experience to the student's research training; and d. completes mandatory supervision training requirements within 12 weeks of appointment.

Role	Minimum standards
Cultural Advisor	a. may or may not be a current Macquarie University employee; b. is recommended by Walanga Muru Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous); c. brings specialised knowledge concerning cultural safety, ethical conduct, respect and protocols for the support of Indigenous students, and research that involves Indigenous peoples or is on Indigenous lands; and d. completes mandatory supervision training requirements within 12 weeks of appointment.
Research Advisor	a. may or may not be a current Macquarie University employee; b. is appointed on the basis of a Curriculum Vitae and written recommendation by the Principal Supervisor; c. brings specialised knowledge, skills, attributes and/or field experience to the student's research training; and d. completes mandatory supervision training requirements within 12 weeks of appointment.
Industry Advisor	a. is an individual from an industry partner who is appointed in the context of an Industry-University Partnership; b. is external to academia and not employed by organisations that are affiliates, controlled entities, or subsidiaries of Macquarie University; c. brings specialised industry knowledge and access to equipment, data and other industry resources relevant to the student's research training; and d. completes mandatory supervision training requirements within 12 weeks of appointment.

Doctoral Equivalency

(15) The University recognises that some staff members may have undertaken research activity that could be deemed equivalent to having completed a research doctorate. Such research activity would normally include evidence of substantial experience that has qualified a person to plan, direct and implement a research program equivalent to a doctoral thesis, and meeting the learning outcomes specified in the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) at level 10.

(16) When determining equivalency, the University will look closely at the nature, amount and duration of research previously undertaken, including the extent of independent research involved. Evidence may include:

- a. leadership in the design and management of research projects in a relevant field;
- b. the quality and quantity of publications, and whether they are peer-reviewed;
- c. contributions to research culture, including participating in peer-review;
- d. an assessment of research standing and leadership, for example in the provision of expert advice at a senior level or the development of professional standards;
- e. other evidence of competitive research awards including prizes; and
- f. appointment to advisory boards and professional associations, testimonials and other peer esteem factors.

Exceptional appointment

(17) Where a proposed supervisor does not meet the minimum standard for the role, their appointment will require approval by the Executive Dean(or nominee) as an 'exceptional' appointment. An exceptional appointment may include:

- a. an Adjunct Supervisor affiliated with an organisation with which the University has a formal agreement may act as the Principal 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 Supervisor to Principal Supervisor is not permitted where the Adjunct Supervisor is employed by a Higher Education Provider in Australia or Internationally;
- b. a Macquarie University honorary title holder (Clinical) may act as the Principal Supervisor providing the Associate Supervisor is a Macquarie University staff member.

Mandatory Training Requirements

(18) All Graduate Research supervisors are required to complete mandatory training requirements, as follows:

- a. Principal and Associate Supervisors are required to:
 - i. complete mandatory supervision training issued by the University; and
 - ii. undertake at least one supervision workshop offered by the Graduate Research Academy every three years.
- b. Adjunct Supervisors, Research Advisors, Cultural Advisors and Industry Advisors must complete mandatory supervision training issued by the University within 12 weeks of appointment to the role, unless they are a former Macquarie University staff member and have completed mandatory supervision training.

(19) The completion of 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.

Professional Development

(20) Supervisors are encouraged to participate in the University staff development programs and other training opportunities relevant to research supervision to help maintain currency and to reflect on and further develop their skills.

(21) The completion of professional development courses delivered by the Graduate Research Academy will be recorded in the supervisor's HR Online Training Record.

Continuity of Supervision

(22) All students must have one Principal and at least one Associate Supervisor appointed for the duration of their candidature.

(23) An Acting Supervisor should be appointed for absences of the Principal Supervisor greater than eight (8) weeks. The period of appointment will generally be no more than six (6) months, after which time consideration should be given to replacing the absent supervisor.

(24) With approval from the Executive Dean (or nominee), a Macquarie University honorary academic title holder who was employed by the University may continue to act as the Principal Supervisor for their existing student/s providing the Associate Supervisor is a Macquarie University staff member. Approval must be sought within six (6) months of leaving the University.

Conflict Resolution

(25) Conflict resolution between the student and supervisor or the supervisory team should be resolved in accordance with the [Graduate Research Grievance Resolution](#) process.

Conflict of Interest

(26) The University expects supervisors to report all actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest with their students or supervisory team in accordance with the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

Part C - Compliance

(27) The University will investigate alleged breaches of the expectations outlined in this Policy (or related Procedure) in accordance with the applicable policy and may take commensurate action.

(28) Commensurate action may involve but is not limited to:

- a. coaching and developmental support;
- b. removal from a supervisory appointment;
- c. removal from a supervisory role; or
- d. suspension from supervising new students.

Section 3 - Procedures

(29) Refer to the [Graduate Research Supervision Procedure](#).

Section 4 - Guidelines

(30) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(31) Nil.

Status and Details

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