1. Introduction and Scope

This Guideline outlines the roles, responsibilities and typical duties of the Postgraduate Research Coordinator (PGC) and gives guidelines on the support that should be available for PGCs to assist them in carrying out their role. PGCs serve a critical role in the overall experience of higher degree research (HDR) candidates. At UNSW PGCs make recommendations on academic management of HDR candidatures to the Dean of Graduate Research on behalf of the Head of School. This Guideline applies to Heads of School and PGCs and may be used for training and induction of new PGCs.

2. Definitions

Postgraduate Research Coordinator: Acts on behalf of the Head of School in making academic, administrative and, in some cases, resource recommendations relating to HDR candidatures across the range of disciplines covered by the School.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The PGC should be an experienced senior member of the academic staff of the School competent to act on behalf of the Head of School in matters related to HDR candidatures. In some instances, for example in small Faculties with only one school, Head of School and/or PGC responsibilities for HDR recommendations may be given to an Associate Dean or equivalent senior position/s. Where such variations are implemented, they should be documented in Faculty guidelines.
3.1 Roles of the Postgraduate Research Coordinator

- Advisor to the Head of School on all higher degree research matters
- Advisor to HDR candidates on academic and administrative matters relating to their candidature
- Member of the Faculty Higher Degree Committee (HDC) or its equivalent committee
- The School's point of contact with the Associate Dean Research or equivalent and the Graduate Research School.

3.2 Responsibilities of the Postgraduate Research Coordinator

- Review the Schools' higher degree research profile and advising the Head of School on related matters
- Coordinate recruitment and admission of HDR candidates at the School level
- Advise candidates and supervisors on all HDR related matters including facilities and appropriate levels of resources
- Establish and implement appropriate School procedures and guidelines for monitoring HDR candidate progress

3.3 Duties

Upon appointment, new PGCs should meet with the Head of School/Associate Dean Research or equivalent and confirm the duties they are expected to perform, including any other discipline specific duties and to be advised of any specific Faculty procedures and guidelines. The following duties are normally performed by the PGC.

3.3.1 Recruitment and Admission

- Manage recruitment of high-quality applicants by providing advice to supervisors and supporting recruitment activities as required
- Provide applicants with advice on eligibility requirements, possible research topics, available resources, School research strengths and supervisor availability
- Make formal recommendations on applications for admission, including any special conditions of candidature
- Monitor recommendations on the approval of admission of candidates to ensure adherence to policies relating to admission, supervision and provision of resources
3.3.2 Candidature Management

- Coordinate confirmation and annual progress reviews and monitor timely progress towards completion by all candidates enrolled in the School
- Recommend approval of variations to candidature (including program leave, suspensions, coursework requirements, change in attendance from full-time to part-time or vice versa, change to remote status, withdrawal, supervision changes, visa extensions)
- Manage annual re-enrolment
- Be aware of and keep candidates and supervisors informed of policies, procedures, due dates and other relevant information
- Coordinate the dissemination of information about relevant workshops, seminars, scholarships and other opportunities
- Coordinate and/or conduct School Induction programs for graduate students that complement the UNSW Postgraduate Researcher Induction with School specific information
- Act as a confidential advisor for HDR candidates experiencing difficulty with any aspect of their candidature including supervision and access to resources
- Act as the initial point of contact for the Associate Dean Research or equivalent and the Dean of Graduate Research in resolving candidature problems and formal grievances
- Ensure that the School practices and procedures, including space, resources and facilities as outlined in *Minimum Resources for Postgraduate Research Students* are available on the School web site linked to the Graduate Research School for University policies and general information
- Make recommendations on student cases to the Faculty Higher Degree Committee
- Where required, make recommendations to the Dean of Graduate Research directly or via the Higher Degree Committee (or equivalent) according to the Register of Delegations on admission, research areas, supervision, progress, deferment and variations to candidature including leave.

3.4 Scholarships

- Be familiar with the UNSW Research Scholarship conditions (APA/UPA, IPRS/UIPA, TFS and APA(I)’s) and able to advise scholarship holders on matters relating to these conditions
- Make recommendations on applications for extension, suspension, time overseas, sick/maternity leave
- Where required, score scholarship applications (including justification of Honours I equivalence) for local and international scholarship rounds.

3.5 Thesis Examination

- Coordinate requests for confidentiality agreements in examination, and coordinate nomination of examiners prior to submission
- Liaise with supervisors regarding the nomination of examiners and recommend examiners to the Faculty Higher Degree Committee on behalf of the School
- Assist the Graduate Research School in obtaining examination reports from overdue examiners during examination
• Consult with the supervisor on the examiners’ reports and make an appropriate recommendation to the Head of School after examination
• Liaise with supervisor and candidate about outcome after examination
• Coordinate the checking of the corrections to thesis after corrections
• Provide advice to the Faculty Higher Degree Committee (or equivalent) on whether the candidate has satisfied the conditions for the award of the degree

4. Advice and Support
As the key point of contact for research students, this position is recognised by the University as a significant administrative position that has a high associated workload, particularly in large Schools with high numbers of HDR candidates

4.1 Support

4.1.1 Heads of School are expected to
• Provide an appropriate level of administrative support commensurate with the student load and discipline. For a cohort of 50 postgraduate students, a typical minimum of 40% of an administrative assistant’s time is recommended. The percentage allocated time will depend on the level of the appointment and overall position description.
• Provide access to training required to fulfil the role
• Take into account the workload implications of this appointment in the assignment of teaching and other administrative duties

4.2 Training and guidance
New and current PGCs should be provided with advice and guidance by the Head of School. The Graduate Research School provides the following resources for PGCs
• Postgraduate Coordinator’s Kit
• Graduate research forums and practice sharing sessions held to update PGCs
• Induction session with Graduate Research School staff for all newly appointed Postgraduate Research Coordinators

5. Acknowledgements
The following external sources were used for preparing this document:
The Role of Postgraduate Coordinators, University of Queensland
## Appendix A: History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Authorised by</th>
<th>Approval Date</th>
<th>Effective Date</th>
<th>Sections modified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Academic Board (AB03/53)</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Academic Board (AB03/53)</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Combines two previous Guidelines listed above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Academic Board (AB07/38)</td>
<td>5 June 2007</td>
<td>1 July 2007</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)</td>
<td>23 March 2011</td>
<td>23 March 2011</td>
<td>Implemented formatting consistent with UNSW Policy Framework and revisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Roles and Responsibilities for School Postgraduate Research Coordinators
2Guidelines for Generic Administrative Support Requirements for Postgraduate Research Coordination in Schools