Facilities and Resources to Support Higher Degree Research Candidates Guideline

Version: 5.0 Effective: 10 June 2021

### Guideline Statement

#### Purpose
This Guideline sets out the roles and responsibilities of Schools, Faculties and the central University administration regarding provision of facilities and resources to support Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates in their studies.

#### Scope
Higher Degree Research candidates.
All staff involved in:
- the provision of facilities and resources to HDR candidates
- admitting candidates to HDR programs
- providing induction, supervision or support for HDR candidates.
Postgraduate coordinators (PGCs).

Are Local Documents on this subject permitted?
☒ Yes, however local Documents must be consistent with this University-wide Document
☐ No

### Guideline

#### 1. Principles
The following basic principles for Facilities and Resources for HDR candidates at UNSW are as follows:

- At UNSW, HDR candidates are full members of the research community, who have an important contribution to make to the intellectual life of the University and its research reputation.
- All staff involved in the provision of facilities and resources to HDR candidates should adopt a student-centred perspective aimed at enabling HDR candidates to realise their full research potential.
- Facilities and resources for HDR candidates include physical and material resources, as well as social, emotional, and intellectual resources.
- All HDR candidates should have equitable access to facilities and resources, in a way that takes account of their individual needs, abilities and expectations, and of applicable University policies.
- The purpose of an HDR degree provide candidates with a thorough grounding in a particular academic discipline or field rather than a narrow competence in their particular area of research. Facilities and resources should support this mission.
- UNSW strives to meet the highest international standards of support for HDR candidates.
- HDR candidates should have the same level of access to specialised software and computing as UNSW staff.
- UNSW Canberra offers a range of facilities to HDR candidates in addition to many of the resources listed in this Guideline.

#### 2. Admission, Induction and Commencement of Candidature

##### 2.1. Offers of Candidature
Candidates can only be admitted to an HDR program if the School/Faculty is able to provide appropriate space, resources and supervision to conduct the research. Before approving an admission of candidature, the School/Faculty should be satisfied that the proposed research project is feasible to undertake, having regard to the availability of appropriate supervision and infrastructure.
2.2. Induction

In addition to the general induction program run by the Graduate Research School (GRS) for candidates on the Kensington and Paddington campuses and by UNSW Canberra, induction programs should be offered at Faculty and School level. These inductions should be conducted as soon as practical after commencement of candidature, the aim of which should in part be to inform candidates of the facilities and resources available to them.

2.2.1. General Induction

The induction programs should provide candidates with information including:

- research integrity, data management and codes of conduct;
- the University’s expectations relating to progress, completion, standards of research and originality of research as defined by the relevant policy and procedures documents;
- all University facilities and services available throughout candidature;
- the University’s expectations of supervisors and host Schools/Faculties relating to all aspects of the candidature, as defined in relevant policy and procedures documents;
- the University’s student code policy and complaint procedures; and
- targeted services available through the GRS; and other targeted support services available across the University.

2.2.2. Local Induction

Faculty and/or School induction programs are designed to complement centralised inductions and should provide information regarding:

- discipline-specific facilities and support arrangements (e.g. funding from Faculty or Schools for conference attendance, other travel funding, and research seminar programs specifically available to HDR candidates in the Faculty or School);
- key personnel contact details, such as the Associate Dean of Research Training (or equivalent), the School Postgraduate Coordinator, key administrative staff (and their functions);
- Workplace Health and Safety inductions and training;
- Faculty, School or discipline-specific expectations relevant to the degree and candidate’s progression;
- building access, access to office or lab space, tea and washroom facilities, photocopying, consumables, travel, internet access, on-campus mailing addresses;
- support for fieldwork, testing, technical support, statistical services, equipment access, and laboratory space;
- School- or Faculty-specific academic processes and requirements that may be mandatory for HDR candidates (e.g., seminars, compulsory coursework);
- how best to effectively utilise the research infrastructure of the School and/or Faculty and become involved in its research culture; and
- support provided by other Faculties or Schools that may be relevant to any interdisciplinary element of a candidate’s research project.

2.3. Supervision

High quality supervision is essential to supporting HDR candidates. Appropriate supervision practices should be followed as outlined in the Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy, Higher Degree Research Supervision Procedure, and the Higher Degree Research Supervision Guidelines.

2.3.1. Early meetings with supervisors

A meeting between the HDR candidate and the candidate’s supervisors should be held prior to commencement of candidature and soon after commencement to discuss:

- project-specific support available to the candidate from the School, Faculty or University;
- where a research project involves an interdisciplinary component, information and assistance to access support in another Faculty or School;
- the supervisors’ and HDR candidate’s expectations;
• any other issues relevant to minimising ambiguity regarding the candidature to ensure that the expectations of the candidate and the supervisor(s) are realistic and understood by both; and
• within the first 3 months, a meeting to set milestones.

3. Facilities and resources during candidature

3.1. General

HDR candidates are entitled to a comfortable, safe and well-resourced work environment. The minimum conditions that the University deems necessary to satisfy this requirement are as follows:

3.1.1. Personal Study Space

All HDR candidates should be provided with appropriate study space to conduct their research. Where possible, full-time HDR candidates should be provided with shared or open-plan office accommodation that includes the following:

- a sole-use desk and ergonomically suitable chair;
- lockable cabinet or other storage space;
- sufficient bookshelf space;
- a sole-use computer with standard software and internet access;
- printing and photocopying facilities;
- adequate air-conditioning (where available), lighting, security and privacy; and
- tearoom and bathroom facilities.

If a sole-use desk is not available to every full-time HDR candidate, hot desks should be negotiated between the School/Faculty, the supervisor and the HDR candidate. Part-time HDR candidates should ideally have shared use of a desk and study space. In the event that the School/Faculty is not able to provide appropriate office facilities, all candidates have access to the Postgraduate Study Space at the Library on the Kensington Campus.

3.1.2. Project-specific Support

HDR candidates should be given appropriate support to facilitate their specific research project. The details of this should be discussed and agreed to by the School/Faculty, supervisor and candidate at the start of the candidature. Such support may include:

- appropriate additional workspace, laboratory, studio or workshop space in which to conduct their research;
- equipment such as laboratory instruments and tools;
- specialised computing equipment and/or software for their research (such as high performance computing systems or time, or specific software packages not provided by university licence agreements);
- access to external or shared research facilities; and
- funding for fieldwork, including any associated travel costs.

3.2. Consumable Resources

Provision of consumable resources and other running costs, such as photocopying, printing, video-conferencing should be commensurate with the requirements of the candidate’s research topic. Reasonable limits will vary across Schools and over the course of the candidature. These issues should be discussed and documented at the start of candidature as outlined in Section 3.1.2, and if necessary revised at each Research Progress Review.

3.3. After Hours Access to Work Space

Candidates may have after hours and ideally 24-hour access to their work spaces with due regard to security and safety and approval of the relevant authority in the School/Faculty. Laboratories at any UNSW campus have policies that restrict after hours access unless an appropriate risk assessment has been signed off by the relevant authority and access has been formally approved with a buddy system in place.
3.4. Information Technology Resources

HDR candidates are entitled to the following IT services and technical support:

- University email account and data/file storage;
- remote access to email and data/file storage;
- University-licensed software as required for the particular project (data analysis, thesis publishing, information access); and
- wireless internet access.

When working away from campus, on approved leave to conduct research, HDR candidates should have reasonable access to University Internet services and other resources required to support their research and thesis preparation.

3.5. Publication and Conference Presentation

An important part of research training is to publish results in peer reviewed journals or other outputs as appropriate to the discipline. Communication of research at both national and international conferences is also a key part of research training.

- Schools and supervisors need to support candidates to actively publish discipline appropriate research outputs in addition to their thesis.
- In addition to any School, Faculty or project-specific conference-presentation support to which they may be entitled, all currently enrolled HDR candidates should have access to the UNSW Postgraduate Research Student Support (PRSS) Scheme. One of the aims of the Scheme is to assist candidates to attend and present their research at international conferences. The scheme is designed to supplement support provided by supervisors, Schools and Faculties, rather than be the sole source of travel support for this purpose.
- HDR candidates should be supported to present a paper at a conference during the course of their candidature. Where PRSS funds are insufficient, the relevant School and/or Faculty should top up any shortfall within its available resources.

3.6. School/Faculty Culture and Professional Development Opportunities

HDR candidates should be encouraged to actively engage in the professional life and research culture of their School/Faculty wherever possible. Schools/Faculties should also communicate with HDR candidates clearly and regularly on issues that may affect their candidature such as staff cuts and major building refurbishments that require HDR relocation.

In particular HDR candidates should be provided with opportunities to:

- attend seminars presented by visiting or local academics;
- engage with other researchers in their School/Faculty by presenting their work in a seminar or similar setting;
- participate in development opportunities provided to candidates and researchers; and
- for suitably qualified candidates, the opportunity to tutor, demonstrate or engage in other professional development activities.

3.7. Library Resources

HDR candidates are entitled to have access to full library services equivalent to that of staff including 6 month loan periods, Australian and overseas interlibrary loans, online access to academic journals and other digital resources. Outreach librarians for each faculty are also available for individual consultation about Library services and scholarly collections across disciplines.

3.8. Student Representation

Student representation is available through student organisations such as Arc@UNSW. The University should engage with the student organisation and its representatives via avenues such as Academic Board and its Committees and informal consultation on development of student related policy and procedures.
3.9. Other Forms of Support

To assist optimal engagement in their research, the University should ideally provide HDR candidates with all of the fundamentals necessary to create a stable and high-functioning environment. Where practical, the University should provide on-campus access to the following services for all HDR candidates:

- wellbeing and health;
- careers and employment advice;
- equity and disability support;
- social support through the UNSW student organisation, Arc@UNSW;
- English-language skills courses;
- access to childcare;
- access to on-campus accommodation designed specifically for HDR candidates at a reasonable cost; and
- the general programs and resources available from UNSW’s Student support teams.

4. Ongoing Review of Support Requirements

4.1. Role of Supervisors and/or Postgraduate Coordinator

HDR candidates are entitled to raise any issues regarding the appropriate level of support for their research with their supervisors and Postgraduate Coordinator in the first instance, failing which, with the responsible Associate Dean Research Training (or equivalent).

4.2. Research Progress Reviews

Research Progress Reviews provide an opportunity for candidates to highlight progress and achievements against their agreed milestones. Before every Research Progress Review meeting, HDR candidates and supervisors should review the candidate’s needs, including the forms of support and resources that are required and available to conduct the candidate’s project. Any additional resources required and any complaints about non-compliance with this Guideline, should be listed in the Research Progress Review form. At the relevant panel, the Chair should raise any identified resourcing needs for discussion and devise an appropriate strategy for meeting them.

4.3. Ongoing Monitoring by GRS and Postgraduate Coordinators

In order to ensure continued provision of facilities and resources at the highest international standard, the GRS should monitor the implementation of this Guideline across Schools and Faculties. To this end, Postgraduate Coordinators should compile a list of any complaints of non-compliance with this Guideline made during Research Progress Review panels and report on these, indicating what action was taken, to the GRS on a biennial basis. Postgraduate Coordinators should conduct a biennial survey of student satisfaction with facilities and resourcing for HDR candidates to supplement the information collected from the Research Progress Review panels.

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**Supporting Information**
### Legislative Compliance

- **Anti-Discrimination Act 1977** (NSW)
- **Disability Discrimination Act 1992** (Cth)
- **Disability Standards for Education 2005** (Cth)
- **Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000** (Cth)
- **Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015** (Cth)
- **National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018** (Cth)

### Parent Document (Policy and Procedure)

- **Admissions Policy**
- **Admission to Higher Degree Research Programs Procedure**

### Supporting Documents

- Nil

### Related Documents

- **Anti-Racism Policy**
- **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy**
- **Higher Degree Research Supervision Procedure**
- **Higher Degree Research Supervision Guidelines**
- **Research Code of Conduct**
- **Research Progress Review and Confirmation of Research Candidatures Procedure**
- **Student Code of Conduct**
- **Student Complaint Procedure**
- **Travel Policy**
- **Travel Procedure**

### Superseded Documents

- Facilities and Resources to Support Higher Degree Research Students Guideline, v4.0

### File Number

- 2010/02680

### Definitions and Acronyms

- None

### Revision History

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