

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

Advice on ranking HDR applicants for scholarships in the 2013 International & Domestic rounds

1. Introduction

The University ranks HDR scholarship applicants using a scoring system.

Each faculty should determine a ranking that truly meets its **strategic priorities** and should put forward a **thorough argument** to support their recommendations. Faculty rankings will be merged for the HDR Scholarship Committee ranking meetings.

2. Scoring Framework

Scoring depends on the origin of qualifications. You **MUST** review details on the [ranking criteria](#) before scoring.

International and domestic qualifications	Max Points
Academic merit	40
Research experience and publications relative to opportunity	20
Strategic alignment	30
Supervisor experience/support	10
TOTAL	100

3. Four important points about ranking

- Only rank first class Honours (or equivalent) applicants should be ranked.
- Use the advice of academics in the discipline area
- Justify your arguments carefully or your applicant will be bumped down the list, as well as those applicants who follow.
- Use more than one person to assess applications. The PVC or nominee must endorse the ranking.

Detailed information on the ranking criteria is in [Appendix 1](#) and you should review this carefully.

4. Final ranking of applications and offers of award

There are two separate meetings of the HDR Scholarships Committee: one for domestic and one for international applicants. At each, a merged list of all Faculty ranking scores is considered.

However, there is flexibility to allow Faculties to put forward outstanding applicants in either round. If Faculties have a competitive international applicant who did not receive a scholarship in the international round, they can be raised again by the Faculty during the domestic round ranking and vice versa. Domestic and international applicants to be ranked in a particular round will be handled in separate tabs of the scholarship ranking spreadsheet.

The Committee preserves the order of applicants within each Faculty provided that cases are **adequately justified**. If the Scholarships Committee is unconvinced by a particular case it may:

- eliminate the applicant from the list
- move the applicant down the list and potentially, as a result, those that follow.

You should thus take great care in scoring and seek advice on special cases from experienced colleagues or the Research Scholarships Officer, Rheanne Hogema.

Unconfirmed results: Final results are preferred wherever possible. Applicants whose results are provisional or predicted (such as current Honours students) can be included in the ranking and a conditional offer made if they are successful. However, offers cannot be held up indefinitely by late results, and it is possible that all scholarships will be allocated before some results are available.

5. Timetable for 2013 HDR scholarship round ranking

5.1 International Applicants

Applications can be made	1 February 2013
Applications close	31 July 2013
Applications from DI to Deakin Research	22 August 2013
Applications to Faculties	29 August 2013
Ranked Faculty lists to Deakin Research	26 September 2013
Scholarships Sub-committee meets	2 October 2013
Offers made	3 October 2013
Final date for lodgement of acceptances	17 October 2013

5.2 Domestic Applicants

Applications open	1 May 2013
Applications close	31 October 2013
Applications to Faculties	11 November 2013
Ranked Faculty lists to Deakin Research	26 November 2013
Scholarships Sub-committee meets	4 December 2013
Offers made	5 December 2013
Final date for lodgement of acceptances	19 December 2013

6. Reviews and Appeals

A request for a review of a decision concerning the allocation of Awards must be made in writing to the Scholarships Subcommittee within 14 days of the applicant being notified. The request must be based on procedural grounds and cannot be made against the judgement used in assessment of an application.

The Scholarships Subcommittee shall consider the case and convey its decision to the applicant. The applicant may, within 14 days, lodge a written appeal against such decision to the Scholarship Appeals Committee, which will be appointed by the DVC (Research). All correspondence is to be via the Executive Officer, Higher Degrees by Research.

An applicant who has been unsuccessful in their candidature application may **not** lodge a request for a review of a decision concerning a scholarship application, or appeal such a decision.

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Appendix 1

1. Academic merit

The primary academic merit criterion is the honours standard achieved. Applicants must be ranked only if they have either

- (1) qualified for a bachelors degree with first class honours (H1 actual); or
- (2) qualifications that are demonstrably equivalent to a bachelors degree with first class honours (H1 equivalent). This is discussed in the section below.

In the absence of an actual first class honours degree, there must be independent and verifiable evidence of equivalence to first class honours. The Faculty must present a case in writing to support the claim for equivalence to first class honours. Qualifications for which it may be possible to make a case for equivalence to first class honours include:

- masters degrees by research;
- coursework masters degrees with a substantial research component;
- graduate diplomas with honours.

The factors which may be considered in determining H1 status, as well as the score, are:

- Has the applicant completed a first class Australian honours degree or equivalent qualification?
- Grades achieved.
- Did the qualification include a thesis based on original research and how substantial was the document? (e.g. 20,000 words completed over one semester).
- Quality of thesis examination reports.
- Applicant's rank within class.
- Academic awards, prizes, scholarships, special recognitions.
- Strength of the two academic referee reports. Only reports on the Deakin referee report form will be considered. If the information provided is not adequate, Faculties are encouraged to contact the nominated referees directly prior to returning ranking sheets to Deakin Research.
- Research-related coursework undertaken (e.g. research methods).
- Any special considerations.

The School of Education does not offer an honours program and has developed a structured approach to entry to the PhD program via masters by coursework, which has been accepted by the Research and Research Training Committee. The following cases are accepted as honours equivalents:

- H1 A High Distinction for the main research paper plus
a Distinction in four coursework credit points (which must include research methodology),
or
a High Distinction for a four credit point research paper.
- H2A A Distinction for the main research paper plus
a Distinction in three coursework credit points (which must include research methodology),
or
a Distinction for a four credit point research paper.
- H2B A Credit for the main research paper plus
a Credit in four coursework credit points (which must include research methodology), or
a Credit for a four credit point research paper.

In the case of applicants who do not hold a first class honours degree, but who have commenced higher degree by research candidature, satisfactory progress in this candidature does not constitute evidence of first class honours equivalence.

The maximum score is 40 for an applicant with international or domestic qualifications. This score may need to be adjusted if the applicant has not had an opportunity to gain research experience (see 3.2 below).

The scoring scheme for applicants with domestic qualifications who have an actual Honours degree is as follows:

High H1	maximum 35 (+ up to 5 for undergraduate record)
Mid H1	maximum 25 (+ up to 5 for undergraduate record)
Low H1	maximum 15 (+ up to 5 for undergraduate record)
H2A	maximum 5 (+ up to 5 for undergraduate record)

Additional points can be gained under 3.2 below for research experience and output where relevant.

2. Research experience and publications relative to opportunity

Research experience and publications must be scored relative to the opportunity available to an applicant. The maximum score is 20.

We recognise that an applicant who has recently completed their studies may have had limited or no opportunity to gain experience or produce publications. In these cases a zero weighting should be given to this section and a multiplier of up to 1.5 times applied to the academic merit score.

This multiplier should be used to determine an initial ranking and discretion used thereafter in adjusting the score to ensure it is applied equitably.

Factors which may be taken into account in assessing an applicant under this category include:

- Research experience (e.g. laboratory experience, special research projects undertaken within a professional research environment, previous research grants, extent of applicant's contribution).
- Research outputs (number of quality research publications, particularly those that relate to the proposed research topic), e.g. refereed journal articles, conference presentations, creative works. If the evidence includes publications with several authors, the contribution of the applicant must be clearly identified.
- Professional experience (length of time, seniority, how it relates to the proposed research topic)

3. Alignment with strategic research priorities

Faculties are asked to indicate whether the proposed research project aligns with one of the following:

- University Strategic Research Centre or Research Institute
- Faculty Research Centre
- School/emerging research cluster.

Factors to be taken into account include:

- Is the project part of core SRC or FRC activities?
- Does it build on existing research?
- Does it provide support to external or internal grants?
- Does the research project involve a partnership with another university or research organisation?

Up to 30 points can be awarded in this category.

4. Supervisor experience/support

The quality of the nominated supervisor or supervisory team must be assessed. The factors to be considered include:

- Track record in terms of HDR completions within a timely manner
- Progress of current HDR candidates
- Extent to which past or current HDR candidates have published
- Extent to which supervisor(s) has published or is actively researching in the area of the proposed project
- Relevance of the match between the supervisor and proposed project
- Extent to which supervisors have attracted external or internal research funding.

The supervision limit (7 EFTSL) needs to be borne in mind. A significantly smaller load is recommended for less experienced supervisors.

A maximum of 10 points can be awarded in this category.