

Deakin University

Faculty of Health

Doctor of Philosophy and Masters by Research

Procedures for Confirmation/Review of Candidature and Conversion to PhD

The responsibility for matters relating to Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidature rests with the University Higher Degrees by Research Committee, however the regulation and procedures includes an expectation of the School and Faculty to monitor progress of candidature. The Faculty Research and Graduate Studies Committee requires candidates to undertake a 'Confirmation/Review of Candidature' after six months of full time study for Masters by Research, and after one year for Doctor of Philosophy. The equivalent for half time enrolment is therefore one year and two years respectively. The confirmation process provides an opportunity for the candidate to submit and obtain recommendations on a plan for the structure of their research program, describe the investigative program and identify the range of expertise necessary to complete the research.

The candidate is required to submit a written document and to give an oral presentation which is followed by discussion. The candidate should provide clear evidence to a Confirmation/Review Committee that they have the ability to complete the award and that progress is such that it is reasonable for them to do this within the time allowed. The supervisor and School RAGS coordinator (or HOS) are responsible for the selection of the Confirmation/Review Committee. The supervisor will normally assist with the organisation of the confirmation/review.

Format of written document.

A **guide** to the **overall** length (excluding references) is 5000 – 7000 words for a Masters and 6000-10000 for a PhD.

This should include:

1. A critical literature review with a reference list. For PhD review, this may be in the form of one or two chapters if appropriate.
2. A document of 2000 – 3000 words outlining:
 - The aims of the research;
 - A clear rationale for the work to be undertaken;
 - A hypothesis or hypotheses, or a clear statement of the questions which will be addressed by the research;
 - An outline of the methodology to be used;
 - A report on the work undertaken to date and the skills obtained;
 - An outline of the future work to be undertaken and an indication of the time frame;
 - A comment on any new skills which need to be acquired;
 - A statement that Ethics Committee approval has been obtained or comments on the ethical implications of the study and proposed submission date for approval (if required).

For PhD candidates

- A brief discussion of the originality of the work;
- Clear documentation that the candidate possesses the skills to complete the work or has realistic plans to acquire these skills.

Any abstracts presented at conferences can be submitted as appendices.

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the written materials are forwarded to the Confirmation/Review panel members at least 2 weeks prior to the date of the oral presentation.

Oral presentation

The candidate is required to give an oral presentation of about 15 minutes duration. This presentation should clearly outline the aims and objectives of the research, the questions being addressed, the rationale, the choice of methodology and the intended outcomes, with an indication of current progress.

The presentation will be attended by the Confirmation/Review Committee -which will normally include at least:

- the supervisor, and
- the School RAGS coordinator/HOS or Professorial nominee of HOS as Chair, and
- the Head of School, or nominee (a nominee being an active researcher, preferably at Professor/Assoc Prof level), and
- a researcher from outside the School (or University).
- Associate and Research supervisor(s) should be present if possible.

Following the presentation there will be up to 30 minutes allocated for questions and discussion with the panel.

The panel will provide oral and/or written feedback on the written material and the presentation/discussion to facilitate the preparation of a written report for the candidate which will be prepared by the supervisor. A private meeting of the panel following the presentation will be used to discuss any further aspects or supervisor's comments/concerns, and to finalise a recommendation on confirmation.

The written report on the work and the panel's comments should be completed by the supervisor within one week of the presentation, in discussion with any associate/cosupervisors. The supervisor is required to provide a written report for the candidate together with a recommendation on confirmation. The written report should include an overview of the comments, advice and recommendations from the review panel. This report should identify the panel members and be signed/authorised by the supervisor and one other member of the panel-normally the chair.

The report should include a recommendation, which will be one of the following:

- 1 The candidate's enrolment is confirmed;
 - 2 the candidate's enrolment is maintained and extended for a maximum period of three months full time equivalent enrolment during which time a second review will occur;
 - 3 The candidate's enrolment is terminated.
- For (1) and (2) above, copies of the written report should be given to the candidate and sent to the Head of School for signature, identifying any action required. A copy of the written report, accompanied by the written information submitted by the candidate, will then be forwarded to the Faculty (Manager Collaborative Programs and Research).
 - If the recommendation is (2) the candidate must be given clear guidelines in writing by the supervisor detailing the requirements to be completed and the format of the second review.
 - If the recommendation is (3) the Associate Dean -Research will forward all information to the Deakin University HDR Committee, and the University will inform the candidate in writing of their decision.

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