Faculty of Business

HDR Research Proposal Review (RPR) Procedure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure No</th>
<th>FOB-RES-PROC-005</th>
<th>Date approved</th>
<th>20 April 2015</th>
<th>Date of Next Review: January 2020</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approved by</td>
<td>Faculty Executive Committee</td>
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<td>Responsible for Monitoring Procedure</td>
<td>HDR Coordinator</td>
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<td>Responsible School/ Unit</td>
<td>Faculty Research Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevant AACSB Standard/s</td>
<td>Standard 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Faculty HDR students and supervisors</td>
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1 Introduction

The Research Proposal Review (RPR) is a key milestone for Higher Degree Research (HDR) students enrolled in the Faculty of Business. It is also the University’s formal process for monitoring the progress of research being undertaken by its HDR students.

2 Scope / Purpose

The purpose of the RPR is to ensure that the:

- proposed research is academically sound;
- student has the skills required to complete the project;
- appropriate supervisory arrangements are in place;
- research can be completed within the appropriate timeframes; and
- aims and objectives of the research, outlined in the original research proposal are being met satisfactorily.

The RPR process provides an opportunity for HDR students to develop a coherent research plan and methodology as well as receive constructive academic feedback. The Faculty of Business places emphasis on supporting and guiding students through the RPR process.

The RPR also allows the Faculty to ensure that it can provide adequate resources for the project.

These procedures should be read in conjunction with UOW policy and supporting references.
3 RPR Process

3.1 Overview
The RPR should be completed early in the thesis component of the degree, between 1.0 and 1.5 EFTSL for both the PhD (Integrated) and Doctor of Business Administration, and between 0.5-1.0 EFTSL for the Master of Philosophy. The EFTSL associated with coursework should not be counted when calculating when the RPR should take place. There is no RPR for the Master of Research.

RPRs are normally scheduled for late July and late November. The Faculty’s HDR Coordinator will advise the exact dates and times once they have been set. Students unable to present on their allocated date will need to write to the HDR Coordinator to request a deferral. Students need to make a clear case as to why they are unable to present, should have the backing of their supervisors and provide supporting documentation (e.g. a medical certificate) as per the standard set out in normal academic consideration policies. Requests will be considered by the Associate Dean (Research) and the Head of Postgraduate Studies from the relevant school.

3.2 Composition of Committee

The RPR is made up of two parts, a written research proposal and an oral presentation. The written proposal is submitted to the HDR Coordinator in Word or PDF format approximately two weeks prior to the date set for the oral presentation.

The written proposal and oral presentation are reviewed by the Research Proposal Review Committee. The Committee consists of the following staff members:

- Relevant Head of Postgraduate Studies (standing chairperson)
- Relevant Head of School (or representative)
- Relevant Head of Discipline (or representative)
- Academic Staff Member
- The student’s supervisors
- HDR Student representative (observer only)

The Associate Dean (Research) may approve amendments to the Committee members.

3.3 Format

3.3.1 Written Proposal

1. The written research proposal should not be more than 30 pages (maximum of 20,000 words – a word count has to be included on the cover page of the proposal)
2. The document should include:
   a. A research plan that includes information about the project’s background, design, methods, hypotheses (if applicable), and theoretical approach
   b. Preliminary literature review
   c. Ethical issues that may be encountered
   d. A research timetable for the duration of the candidature including key milestones
   e. A statement of the resources required to complete the project including a detailed budget
   f. A Turnitin report
3.3.2 Oral Presentation

The oral presentation will be held on the date advised by the HDR Coordinator. The duration of the presentation will be 20 minutes.

The oral presentation should clearly outline the:
- research question(s)
- aim(s) and significance of the project
- approach
- originality of the project and its contribution to knowledge.
- Preliminary literature review - demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of the field of research including the published findings as well as the areas requiring original research

The presentation should enable the Committee to assess the student’s capacity:
- to clearly articulate their research question;
- explain the significance of their research;
- explain how the research will be conducted; and
- respond to questions about their research.

Following the 20 minute oral presentation, the Committee will have 15 minutes to ask further questions of the student concerning aspects of the research project. The Committee will then ask the candidate plus any other students (excluding the Student Representative), and the Supervisors to leave the room. The Committee will assess the written proposal and the presentation in the subsequent 10 minutes before making their final decision and inviting the candidate and Supervisors back into the room, at which time the candidate will receive feedback and the final outcome of their RPR.

Once the committee has deliberated over the proposal they will decide if what has been presented is satisfactory or unsatisfactory and inform the student immediately.

If the RPR has been deemed to be satisfactory there’s no further action required at that point in time. The relevant Head of Postgraduate Studies will complete the required paperwork and the HDR Coordinator will forward it to the Graduate Research School (GRS) to be added to the student’s file.

3.4 Unsatisfactory RPR Outcomes

If the RPR has been deemed to be unsatisfactory the student will be informed that they will need to re-present in three months. The committee will provide direction on areas the student will need to improve on in order to be successful in the second RPR.

Following the first RPR the Associate Dean (Research) will complete the required paperwork and include clear deliverables, as recommended by the Committee, for the student to achieve by the next RPR. The HDR Coordinator will forward the documentation to the student and the GRS to be added to the student’s file. The GRS will then write to the student to formally notify them of the outcome of their first RPR.

As with the first RPR students will need to submit a written research proposal and make an oral presentation to a RPR committee (the members of the committee may or may not be the same depending on staff availability). The written proposal and the oral presentation should highlight the achievement of the deliverables set out after the first RPR.

At the conclusion of second RPR, the panel will make one of the following recommendations:

a. allocate a Satisfactory outcome for the RPR, or
b. allocate an Unsatisfactory outcome for the RPR and:
   i. downgrade the student’s enrolment to Master of Philosophy,
   ii. put the student on official probation (see section 11 of these guidelines) for a designated period,
   iii. change the supervisor,
iv. refer the student to RESH900/901 Fundamentals for HDR Writing, or
v. recommend to the DOR that the student be discontinued (see section 11 of these guidelines).

The completed RPR report must be signed off by the HPS and lodged with the GRS. A copy should be kept in the relevant faculty.

If the 2nd RPR is unsatisfactory the RPR Committee should make a recommendation to the Associate Dean (Research) on the student's continued candidature. The Associate Dean (Research) will refer this request, with their comments, to the Dean of Research who will make a final decision.

3.5 Probation

a. If the student is placed on probation, a probationary supervisor must be appointed by the HPS.
b. A meeting will be held with the student, the probationary supervisor and current supervisors, to define the milestones and timeframes to be completed.
c. A written copy of these milestones will be provided to the supervisors, students and GRS.
d. These students need to be managed as per the probation process and not be required to represent their RPR for a third time while on probation.
e. Students who successfully complete the probation process must present their RPR within .5 EFTSL, or one session of completing probation.
f. In the case of a student who does not complete probation successfully, the faculty ADR will make a decision on the student’s continued candidature which will be referred to the DOR for a final decision.

3.6 Discontinuation

a. In the case of a recommendation for discontinuation, the RPR panel should make a recommendation to the ADR of the faculty.
b. If the ADR supports the recommendation, s/he will refer the RPR report and discontinuation recommendation to the DOR.
c. The DOR will review the report and any other associated information.
d. If the DOR supports the recommendation for discontinuation, he will write to the student to inform them of their discontinuation.
e. The student will be given a 20 day period to appeal their discontinuation, as per the HDR Student Academic Complaints Policy.

3.7 Grievances against an outcome

Students who believe they have a grievance with the outcome of their RPR should consult the HDR Student Academic Complaints Policy.

All grievance cases need to be made within 10 working days of the incident occurring.
4 Related Documents

- Higher Degree Research (HDR) Progress Guidelines
- Higher Degree Research Supervision and Resources Policy
- Code of Practice – Research
- Faculty of Business Student Grievance Policy
- UOW Course Rules

5 Version Control Table

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version Control</th>
<th>Release Date</th>
<th>Author/Reviewer</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20/08/2014</td>
<td>Faculty HDR Coordinator</td>
<td>Faculty Research Committee (resolution number 2014/3)</td>
<td>New Guideline</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>20/04/2015</td>
<td>Associate Dean Research and Research Project Manager</td>
<td>Faculty Executive Committee (resolution number 2015/17)</td>
<td>Clarify the Research Proposal Review Committee and include a turnitin report in the written report. Administrative amendments have been made to reflect the change from the Research Student Centre to the Graduate Research School, name change from Guidelines to Procedures to reflect Faculty conventions, and general formatting to increase readability of Procedure.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>20/02/2018</td>
<td>Faculty HDR Coordinator / Faculty Research Manager</td>
<td>Faculty Research Committee</td>
<td>Alignment of Faculty RPR Guidelines with new UOW RPR Guidelines</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>27/03/2019</td>
<td>Faculty HDR Coordinator / Faculty Research Manager</td>
<td>Faculty Research Committee</td>
<td>Minor amendment to process whereby the Supervisors will leave the room for the deliberation period of the RPR presentation</td>
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