



Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts

LHA RESEARCH PROPOSAL REVIEW GUIDELINES

Date approved:	August 2014	Date procedure will take effect:	April 2020	Date of Next Review:	April 2022
Approved by:	Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts				
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Responsible Faculty/ Division & Unit:	Faculty Research Unit Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts				
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this procedure:	General Course Rules Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervision and Resources Policy Research Proposal Review Guidelines Course Transfer Guidelines				
References & Legislation:					
Audience:	Higher Degree Research candidates, HDR Supervisors, Heads of Postgraduate Studies, Heads and Deans of School and FRU administration staff				
Expiry date of procedure:	April 2022				

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1 Introduction / Background

The research proposal review (RPR) process provides an opportunity for Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates to develop a coherent research plan, clear methodology and receive constructive academic criticism. The RPR process also enables the Faculty to determine that adequate resources and appropriate supervision are available to support the HDR candidature.

2 Scope / Purpose

The first year RPR is a formal process for monitoring the progress of all HDR candidates. RPRs ensure that the aims and objectives of the research, outlined in the original, or appropriately modified, research proposal, are being met satisfactorily. Continuation of enrolment in the research degree is subject to the satisfactory completion of an RPR.

These Faculty guidelines should be read in conjunction with the General Course Rules, the Higher Degree Research Supervision and Resources Policy and the Research Proposal Review Guidelines.

3 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
ANCORS	Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security
APR	Annual Progress Report
EFTSL	Equivalent Full Time Study Load
FRU	LHA Faculty Research Unit
GRS	Graduate Research School
HDR	A Higher Degree Research candidate including candidates undertaking the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated) (PhD(I)), Doctor of Creative Arts (DCA), Master of Philosophy (MPhil) or Master of Research (MRes)
HPS	Head of Postgraduate Studies
HSI	School of Humanities and Social Inquiry
LAW	School of Law
LHA	Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts
RPR	Research Proposal Review
SOLA	School of Liberal Arts
TAEM	School of the Arts, English and Media

4 Instructions

4.1 Scheduling of the RPR

- The RPR should be completed within the first year to allow candidates the opportunity to address any problems with their proposal and make adjustments if necessary.
- Part time candidates should ideally complete their RPR within their first year of enrolment but this can be assessed on a case by case basis.
- The EFTSL associated with coursework in the MPhil and PhD(I) courses will not be counted when calculating when the RPR should take place.
- The FRU or the relevant School academic staff will contact candidates in regards to the scheduling of their RPR via their UOW email address.
- In the event that a candidate has issues or concerns relating to their supervision, they should contact the HPS for their school prior to the RPR.

RPR timeframes by program of study:

MPhil	RPR finalised within half a year of enrolment (4-6 months full time or part time) or the accrual of 0.5 EFTSL of thesis component
PhD / DCA	RPR finalised within one year of enrolment (6-12 months full time or part time) or the accrual of 1.0 EFTSL
PhD(I)	RPR finalised within one year of enrolment in the thesis component (6-12 months full time or part time) or the or accrual of 1.0 EFTSL of the thesis component
MRes	Students of the Master of Research do not need to complete a RPR

RPR scheduling by School/Research Centre:

HSI / TAEM/SOLA	The RPR is scheduled by the HPS with the support of the FRU. The FRU advises the candidate of the dates and location.
LAW/ANCORS	The RPR is scheduled by the principal supervisor in consultation with the candidate and the HPS. The principal supervisor advises the candidate of the dates and location.

4.2 RPR Components

The RPR has two components: (1) a research plan submission; and (2) an oral presentation.

4.2.1 The research plan submission

- Candidates must consult with their principal supervisor and are advised to also consult with their co-supervisor in preparing for their RPR.
- The supervisor/s will give feedback on the research plan and any issues that should be raised during the oral presentation.
- The research plan paperwork must be submitted to the principal supervisor a minimum of three weeks before the oral presentation for feedback. Candidates who would prefer more than one round of feedback should submit a draft as early as possible.
- Candidates must submit their research plan to the FRU at least two weeks prior to their oral presentation.
- The research plan should be emailed as a Microsoft Word document or PDF document to Administration Officer, Research via the FRU lha-research@uow.edu.au

- The presentation and review may be postponed if the research plan and paperwork is not submitted.
- The research plan will be distributed to all review panel members two weeks prior to the oral presentation.

The research plan should include:

- Title page (with full name, current thesis title, names of supervisors and date of the review)
- Abstract
- Table of contents for the research plan
- Research proposal (research question/s, the aims and significance of the project, research methodology, theoretical framework and ethics requirements)
- Literature review
- Chapter outline and project timeline (factoring in planned fieldwork or scholarly activities up to the submission of the thesis) - can be represented session-by-session, quarter-by-quarter, or month-by-month.
- COVID-19 Contingency plan (see below)
- Appropriate referencing following relevant School or discipline style
- Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts HDR Candidate Research Proposal Review (RPR) Summary Form including a summary of any required resources or support required for activities (such as planned fieldwork, conference presentations, exhibitions, performances or any training that will need to be undertaken as part of the candidate's research).

COVID-19 Contingency Plan (this does not count towards the word limit):

- Candidates must include a COVID-19 Contingency Plan to demonstrate that they are prepared for risks that can sideline their research and specify how they will progress in circumstances beyond their control.
- The Contingency Plan should include a proactive strategy which points to HDR candidates being prepared for disruptions to research for a) 3 months, b) 6 months and c) 12 months. The plans will need to include timelines, any changes to resources/funding, and specifically state if these disruptions will mean students will need to make substantial changes to their planned research/topic, or if they will require additional time/an extension beyond 4 years (or 3.5 years if they have a AGRTP /UPA etc. scholarship).

Length of the research plan:

- As a guide, the overall research plan (excluding the contingency plan) will be a maximum length of 8000 words.
- The literature review component of the research plan varies for each school, from approximately 2000 words (TAEM/HSI) to approximately 5000 words (Law/ANCORS).
- Candidates should always seek the guidance of their supervisor in the development of the written research plan, including the appropriate length.

Identifying required resources:

- All HDR candidates are eligible to apply for limited funding to support their research activity towards timely completion of their thesis and thesis related research outcomes.
- Please refer to the Faculty HDR Support Funding Scheme webpage for information on eligibility, criteria, closing dates and application forms via: <https://www.uow.edu.au/law-humanities-the-arts/research/students/hdr-support-funding-schemes/>

4.2.2 The oral presentation

- The oral presentation will be conducted online, via Zoom or Webex and will be scheduled for one and a half hours.
- The candidate will speak for approximately 20 minutes about their research with reference to the written research proposal. The Chair will conduct a question and answer session, following the

oral presentation, where the panel members will provide constructive criticism and feedback to the candidate.

- Candidates are encouraged to prepare visual presentation tools such as a PowerPoint presentation, but this is not compulsory.
- Following the conclusion of questions and feedback by the panel, the candidate and HDR Student Representative will be asked to leave the online meeting so that the panel can discuss their recommendation.
- A panel representative will contact the candidate and HDR Student Representative via email and instruct the students to re-join the online meeting to receive feedback from the Oral Presentation and the panel's recommendation.

The RPR oral presentation review panel will consist of:

- A review panel chair;
 - For HSI, SOLA and TAEM - the HPS
 - For Law and ANCORS - the principal supervisor
- HPS for the relevant school;
- Principal and co-supervisors, and associate supervisors as appropriate;
- An academic staff member with an understanding of the candidate's area of research; and
- One HDR student representative as an observer

4.3 Outcome of the Review

The outcome of the Review will be one of the following:

Satisfactory	<p>Progress is deemed satisfactory.</p> <p>A signed copy of the RPR Report, along with comments and feedback from the panel members will usually be provided 2 - 3 weeks of the presentation day.</p>
Satisfactory, with issues	<p>(TAEM/HSI) – allows student to revise written material within 3 months and then get a satisfactory outcome without needing to do a full presentation</p>
Unsatisfactory	<p>Progress is deemed unsatisfactory, and the candidate will be given a second opportunity to present within three months of the initial review.</p> <p>A signed copy of the RPR Report, along with comments and feedback from the panel members will usually be provided 2 - 3 weeks of the presentation day.</p> <p>If the second review is also deemed unsatisfactory, the panel can recommend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a degree downgrade/transfer, • probation (please see link below for details) • other remedial action in line with UOW RPR Guidelines. <p>For more information: https://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/UOW238026.html</p>

The FRU will send written notification of the RPR outcome, including the completed report form, via email to the candidate and the review panel. The report form is also sent to the GRS for their records. School of Law candidates will receive their written notification from the HPS when it is sent to the GRS.

4.4 Upgrade Review

If the candidate wishes to upgrade from an MPhil to a PhD degree they can do this either as part of the RPR process or, if they have successfully completed their RPR, as a separate presentation. If the candidate is planning to apply for an upgrade as part of the RPR they will need to inform the FRU immediately when they are contacted about scheduling the RPR. The process is similar to a normal RPR, except for the following:

- The candidate must have completed the required coursework components of the degree
- The candidate must have completed approximately 9 months (0.75 EFTSL) of the thesis component of their degree
- The candidate's supervisor must complete the HDR Course Transfer Report:
<https://www.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@raid/documents/doc/uow211724.pdf>
- In the written material, the candidate will need to include 1-2 chapters of their thesis as it stands at the time of the review.

If a candidate combines their application to upgrade with their RPR, then the review determines both assessment of progress in the research degree and the outcome of the upgrade. For more information:
<https://www.uow.edu.au/research/grs/student/UOW206981.html>

4.5 Timelines for the Review

6-8 weeks prior to scheduled Oral Presentation	HDR candidate contacted by Faculty Research Unit (FRU) with proposed dates for Oral Presentation, including copy of the LHA Research Proposal Review Guidelines, technology request and information on how to setup online presentation.
6-8 weeks prior to scheduled Oral Presentation	HDR candidate replies to FRU lha-research@uow.edu.au with acceptance of proposed Oral Presentation date and an indication of technology requirements (if any).
6-8 weeks prior to scheduled Oral Presentation	HDR candidate consults with principal and co-supervisor(s) with regards to preparation for their RPR, including expectations for a research plan.
3-4 weeks prior to scheduled Oral Presentation	Research plan paperwork submitted to the principal supervisor for feedback. <i>Candidates who prefer more than one round of feedback should submit a draft early than this timeframe.</i>
2 weeks prior to scheduled Oral Presentation	The research plan and summary form to be submitted to FRU lha-research@uow.edu.au in Microsoft Word or PDF format.
1-2 weeks prior to scheduled Oral Presentation	Research plan distributed to all review panel members by FRU.
1-2 weeks prior to scheduled Oral Presentation	FRU arranges a suitable time to undertake a 'test' presentation with HDR candidate and HPS to ensure technology is adequate and in working order.
1 week – 2 days prior to scheduled Oral Presentation	FRU representative, HDR candidate and HPS undertake 'test' presentation.
2 - 3 weeks post scheduled Oral Presentation	HDR candidate receives written notification of the RPR outcome via email.

5 Roles & Responsibilities

- FRU – manages the administrative support to the HPS', the RPR panels and the HDR candidates, for HSI, SOLA and TAEM.
- HPS/principal supervisor – facilitates the review presentation and is Chair of the RPR Committee.
- Principal supervisor – takes notes during the panel meeting and drafts the RPR Report
- RPR panel – assists the HPS/principal supervisor by reviewing written documentation and participating in the oral presentation and deliberation.
- HDR Student Representative – acts as an observer for the presentation and support person for the candidate presenting. Is not involved with the assessment of the presentation or written material.

6 Version Control Table

Version Control	Release Date	Author/Reviewer	Approved By	Amendment
1	04/04/2014	Susanne Sindevski, Administrative Assistant - Research		First Draft Version
2	07/08/2014	Kirsty Greatz, Administrative Officer – Research		Updated links and more specific School related information added to the processes Reformatted document.
3		Bethany Pye-Respondek, Administrative Officer, Research	Prof Vera Mackie	Scheduled review with reference to recently published RPR Guidelines from the GRS,
4	09/04/2020	Kirsty Greatz, Administrative Officer – Research	Prof Simon Ville	Updated links, inclusion of timeline chart, inclusion of requirement for COVID-19 Contingency Plan, details of change to Oral Presentations format, inclusion of SOLA and ANCOR specific information
5	05/05/2020	Kirsty Greatz, Administrative Officer – Research		Updated the reference to the word limit to exclude the contingency plan

Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts
HDR Candidate Research Proposal Review (RPR) Summary Form

Name:		Student No:	
Degree:		Current EFTSL:	
First Session & year of Enrolment:		Date of RPR:	
Enrolment Status (Full or Part-Time):			
Supervisors:			
Thesis Title:			
100-word Summary of Research:			
Statement of Resources (include separate page if needed):			