

HDR - Graduate Research Training Quality Management Rule

Section 1 - Overview

(1) The purpose of this Rule is to describe the University of New England's integrated approach to assuring the quality of its Higher Degree Research (HDR) training across the entire research training enterprise, encompassing systematic monitoring, cyclic review and implementation of improvements. It is the overall framework within which best possible quality research training outcomes for HDR students are pursued and maintained.

(2) The Rule is based upon a culture of continuous improvement based on the four-stage quality cycle of Plan, Act, Evaluate, and Improve, and is consistent with the University's [Academic Quality Assurance Policy](#).

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Rule applies to all UNE Representatives and organisational units that deliver, or contribute to the delivery of high-quality research training at higher degree level.

Section 3 - Rule

Principles

(4) The University will offer HDR training that:

- a. contributes to the strategic research goals and objectives of the University
- b. meets the principles and criteria specified in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and other regulatory requirements
- c. provides high-quality research training to candidates
- d. promotes a collaborative and professional research culture committed to excellence

Framework for Assuring Quality of Research Training

(5) Evaluation of the University's research training activities occurs through a number of monitoring and review processes:

- a. Confirmation of Candidature: every HDR Student must undergo confirmation of candidature after six months of full-time equivalent candidature to allow the supervisors and confirmation chair to identify any support or guidance necessary for the candidate to proceed to full candidature; assess progress to date and the academic preparedness of the candidate; provide an opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate their writing and other necessary research skills; and allow the candidate and their supervisory team to plan for a successful and timely completion.
- b. HDR Progress Reporting: occurs every six months and is undertaken by all HDR candidates to provide the opportunity for the candidate and their supervisors to critically reflect on the progress in the candidate's

research during the past six months; consider intended research directions for the next six months and identify any issues regarding progress or resourcing. Each progress report is considered by the candidate, their supervisors and their Head of School, and is tracked by Research Services. The aggregated results of HDR Progress Reporting are reported to the Graduate Research Committee, which has oversight of the progress reporting process.

- c. Supervisor Accreditation Training: in order to ensure quality supervision is available to HDR candidates, the University provides Supervisor Accreditation Training.
- d. HDR Program Review: is conducted to ensure that all HDR programs are systematically evaluated through internal monitoring and, where necessary, revision, internal and external reviews at least every seven (7) years based on available benchmarks in terms of admission criteria, Students' progress and completion, structure, alignment of learning objectives to learning outcomes and assessment in the context of the University's graduate attributes, currency of the curriculum, changes to the discipline, quality of the supervision, Student support, Student perceptions, physical and electronic resources and infrastructure and feedback from relevant professional, accreditation and employer groups. This process is overseen by the Graduate Research Committee, in its capacity as the course advisory committee for HDR programs.
- e. Where areas for improvement are identified from the monitoring, these should be reported to the Graduate Research Committee with an implementation plan which includes a final report when issues are resolved.
- f. Academic Governance: a summary of the yearly monitoring of all HDR programs, and of the internal and external reviews of HDR programs, is provided to Academic Board annually.
- g. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research is responsible for ensuring that this Rule is implemented effectively and consistently for all HDR programs across all relevant academic and professional areas.

Policy Review

(6) The Graduate Research Committee maintains a review cycle for all HDR rules, policies and procedures. This provides the opportunity for periodic review to ensure policy material is appropriate and sustainable, and to ensure that UNE maintains a quality research environment for research training:

- a. Policy review is continual and entails extensive consultation with relevant stakeholders across the University and affiliated organisations.
- b. Where necessary specialist working parties can be established to undertake targeted analysis or benchmarking.

Authority and Compliance

(7) The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, pursuant to Section 29 of the UNE Act, makes this Rule.

(8) UNE Representatives and Students must observe it in relation to University matters.

(9) The Rule Administrator, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, is authorised to make procedures and guidelines for the operation of this Rule. The procedures and guidelines must be compatible with the provisions of this Rule.

(10) This Rule operates as and from the Effective Date.

(11) Previous policy on Research Training Quality Management and related documents are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date of this new Rule.

(12) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this Rule, the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may approve an exception to this Rule where the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer determines the application of the Rule would otherwise lead to an unfair, unreasonable or absurd outcome. Approvals by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer under this clause must be documented in writing and must state the reason for the exception.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	9th November 2015
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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"UNE Representative" - Means a University employee (casual, fixed term and permanent), contractor, agent, appointee, UNE Council member, adjunct, visiting academic and any other person engaged by the University to undertake some activity for or on behalf of the University. It includes corporations and other bodies falling into one or more of these categories.

"Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)" - Is the national guidelines that establishes standards for Australian qualifications. Qualifications are given a level based on the depth of learning.

"Student" - Is an admitted student or an enrolled student, at the relevant time: 1. an admitted student is a student who has been admitted to a UNE course of study and who is entitled to enrol in a unit of study or who has completed all of the units in the UNE course of study; 2. an enrolled student is a student who is enrolled in a unit of study at UNE.

"UNE Act" - Is the University of New England Act 1993 (NSW).

"Effective Date" - means the Rule/Policy takes effect on the day on which it is published, or such later day as may be specified in the policy document.