

# Terms of Reference (Council approved) - Graduate Research Examinations Board - Annex B to University Research Committee Terms of Reference

## Section 1 - Overview

### Graduate Research Examinations Board

- (1) The Graduate Research Examinations Board is established as a sub-subcommittee of the Graduate Research Committee.
- (2) This Annex to the Terms of Reference of the Academic Board Research Committee prescribes the following:
  - a. the members and observers of the Graduate Research Examinations Board, and the members' method and term of appointment;
  - b. the functions and terms of reference of the Graduate Research Examinations Board, and
  - c. other matters in connection with the Graduate Research Examinations Board and its operation.
- (3) The provisions of this Annex take effect under the authority of Council.
- (4) The delegation of Council powers under this Annex are actions authorised under [Section 17 of the UNE Act](#).

### Objectives

- (5) The Graduate Research Examinations Board functions as a management advisory body, making recommendations about the examination of higher research degrees to the Graduate Research Subcommittee in relation to:
  - a. appointment of examiners;
  - b. consideration of examiners' reports, and
  - c. the award of higher degrees by research.

## Section 2 - Graduate Research Examinations Board Membership

### Membership

- (6) The members of the Graduate Research Examinations Board are as follows:
  - a. Chair
    - i. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, or nominee.
  - b. Membership
    - i. Four senior members of academic staff (levels D or E) from four different Schools appointed by the Chair

following an expression of interest process for academic staff;

- ii. Deputy Director Graduate Studies.
- c. Observers (non-voting)
  - i. Senior higher degree by research (HDR) Support Officer
  - ii. At the discretion of the Chair, observers may be invited to attend regular or individual meetings and to contribute to the discussion but not to vote.

### **Appointment procedure for appointed members**

(7) Appointed members of the Graduate Research Examinations Board are appointed from among the academic staff of the University at such times when a vacancy on the Examinations Board occurs. The term of an appointed member's tenure on the board is two years. Members may seek re-appointment to the Examinations Board.

### **Appointments**

(8) Appointment to the Graduate Research Examinations Board will be conducted as per these Terms of Reference and the Graduate Research Examination Board's Standing Orders.

### **Automatic vacancy by an appointed representative**

(9) An appointed position becomes vacant automatically if:

- a. the member is absent without prior leave from three consecutive Examinations Board meetings, or
- b. the member loses her/his original qualification for appointment.

### **Acting ex officio members**

(10) An ex officio member of Graduate Research Examinations Board includes a person who has been appointed on an 'acting' basis to the role.

### **Term of office**

#### **Ex officio members**

(11) The ex officio members will be Graduate Research Examinations Board members while they hold their primary office.

#### **Chair**

(12) The Graduate Research Examinations Board will be chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or their nominee.

### **Gender representation objectives**

(13) Gender representation shall accord with the [Gender Representation on Decision-Making and Advisory Committees Policy](#). The objective will be to ensure, so far as is practicable, that the membership of the Graduate Research Examinations Board includes at least two members of each gender.

## **Section 3 - Graduate Research Examinations Board**

# Functions

## Functions

(14) The functions of the Graduate Research Examinations Board are to advise the Graduate Research Subcommittee in relation to:

- a. Advisory functions
  - i. appointment of examiners;
  - ii. consideration of examiners' reports;
  - iii. determination of recommendations regarding the award of higher degrees by research;
  - iv. determination of recommendations regarding the award of Doctoral Research Medals;
  - v. rules, policies, procedures and guidelines in relation to the examination of higher degrees by research.

## Authority

(15) To seek data and information from the University through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research to meet the Examination Board's duties and functions.

## Section 4 - Delegations

### Delegation from Council

(16) The Graduate Research Examinations Board has delegated authority from the Council to perform on its behalf the advisory functions set out in the terms of reference above and all matters ancillary to those functions.

## Section 5 - Conduct of Graduate Research Examinations Board Business

### Reporting to Graduate Research Subcommittee

(17) The Chair of the Graduate Research Examinations Board will report regularly to the Graduate Research Subcommittee on the business conducted by the Examinations Board.

### Meetings

(18) The Graduate Research Examinations Board will normally meet ten times per year, with flexibility for either adding or cancelling meetings as required, in order to perform its functions.

### Business papers

(19) Unless the Chair directs otherwise, Graduate Research Examinations Board business papers will be distributed to board members and official attendees at least four days prior to the meeting, or such shorter period as is practicable in the circumstances.

(20) Public disclosure of business papers, minutes and other information received by the Examinations Board should be made via the Chair or Secretary to the board.

## Quorum

(21) At any meeting of the Graduate Research Examinations Board, one half of the voting membership plus one constitutes a quorum.

## Use of technology

(22) For its business papers, meetings and otherwise to conduct its business, the Graduate Research Examinations Board and its members may use technology including telephone, video-conferencing, telepresence, email and internet as arranged by the Chair and/or board Secretary.

## Resolutions

(23) The Graduate Research Examinations Board may pass a resolution by 'flying minute' provided that the resolution has been approved by a simple majority of the board members at the time the resolution is made.

## Confirmation of minutes

(24) Draft minutes will normally be circulated to members for comment promptly after each meeting. Next the minutes (with any necessary changes) will be circulated for adoption by the Graduate Research Examinations Board. The minutes will be finalised and adopted when they have been approved by a majority of the members that were present at the relevant meeting. Alternatively, the minutes may be included in the business papers for the next board meeting and considered and adopted by the board at that meeting.

## Self-review

(25) Once in every twelve-month period, the Graduate Research Examinations Board shall devote at least a part of one meeting to the review of its policies, practices and procedures over the preceding twelve months.

## Secretary to Graduate Research Examinations Board

(26) Research Services will provide secretarial and administrative support to the Graduate Research Examinations Board.

## Standing Orders

(27) The Graduate Research Examinations Board may make Standing Orders relating to the way it conducts its meetings and business generally. To the extent of any inconsistencies between these Terms of Reference and the Standing Orders, these Terms of Reference prevail.

# Section 6 - Definitions and Interpretation

## Definitions

(28) Words and phrases used in this document have the following meanings, unless the context requires otherwise:

- a. Student means a person who has been accepted into a course at the University and is entitled to enrol in units for the purposes of that course.
- b. UNE Act means the [University of New England Act 1993 \(NSW\)](#) (NSW).
- c. UNE By-law means the [University of New England By-law 2005](#) (NSW).

## **Interpretation**

**This document should be interpreted using the following principles.**

(29) Where Graduate Research Examinations Board membership is defined by reference to an office held (e.g. 'Deputy Director Graduate Studies), that office-bearer is a member ex officio and has all of the same rights and responsibilities (including voting) as other Examination Board members whilst holding the office specified.

(30) This document does not override or otherwise affect:

- a. the Authorities Retained by Council Rule, or
- b. the Functions of the Vice-Chancellor Rule.
- c. However, it operates as a delegation of certain authorities that have been retained by Council.

## **Graduate Research Examinations Board governing documents**

(31) The existing terms of reference, constitution and any other documents governing the HDR Examinations Committee at the time these new Terms of Reference are approved, are replaced and have no further operation.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	20th January 2016
<b>Review Date</b>	20th September 2018
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Council
<b>Approval Date</b>	27th November 2015
<b>Expiry Date</b>	8th May 2024
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