

HDR Admission and Enrolment Policy

Section 1 - Overview and Scope

(1) This Policy provides a framework that guides the admission and enrolment of HDR Candidates at the University of New England (UNE).

(2) This Policy applies to:

- a. all applicants and potential applicants for admission to higher degree by research courses;
- b. all UNE HDR Candidates; and
- c. UNE Representatives involved in admission and enrolment processes for higher degree by research courses at UNE.

(3) Within this policy:

- a. Part A states the principles of this Policy;
- b. Part B outlines the admission requirements for higher degree by research courses;
- c. Part C outlines the enrolment requirements for higher degree by research courses; and
- d. Part D outlines roles and responsibilities.

Section 2 - Policy

Part A - Policy Principles

(4) UNE is committed to applying a HDR Candidate admission and enrolment process that is:

- a. fair, consistent, equitable, and transparent; and
- b. ensures admitted students have the necessary academic preparation and proficiency in English required to successfully participate in, progress through, and complete their intended studies.

Part B - Admission

Eligibility Requirements

(5) Applicants for admission to a higher degree by research course must:

- a. meet the course entry requirements as specified in the relevant course rules of the year of admission;
- b. meet English language requirements for admission as specified in the [English Language Requirements Higher than the Minimum Requirement Annex](#);
- c. have submitted a viable research proposal that clearly identifies research foci and fields of research which are deemed to be University research priorities;
- d. have appropriate supervision for the proposed research;

- e. have adequate facilities, infrastructure and project support for the proposed research;

(6) Government funded Research Training Program (RTP) places for domestic HDR Candidates must be available at the time of admission.

(7) The Dean, Graduate Research has final oversight of admission to higher degree by research courses/programs.

Assessment of Equivalence

(8) Where the course rules state specific academic qualifications required for entry, the applicant must have gained the qualifications either:

- a. at an accredited Australian tertiary education institution; or
- b. at an overseas institution provider assessed by UNE International as delivering qualifications at a standard equivalent to that of an accredited Australian tertiary education institution.

(9) Where applicants present qualifications gained outside of Australia, UNE International will assess them for equivalence against the [Australian Qualification Framework \(AQF\)](#) levels.

(10) Applicants with refugee status and other applicants who cannot provide documentation of previous educational qualifications due to circumstances existing in their home country should provide a statutory declaration stating the qualification(s) and their inability to obtain documentation for review by the Dean, Graduate Research.

English Language Requirements

(11) All applicants must meet the English Language requirements for Higher Degrees by Research as stated in the [English Language Requirements Higher than the Minimum Requirement Annex](#).

Dual and Joint HDR awards

(12) To be admitted for candidature for a dual or joint HDR award, the applicant must:

- a. meet the entry requirements stated in the course rules and this policy for the type of course, any additional entry requirements specific to the course, and the partner university's entry requirements for the course;
- b. be approved for admission by both partner universities;
- c. have appropriate supervision as outlined in the HDR Supervision Policy at both partner universities; and
- d. have appropriate research facilities at both partner universities.

Applying for Admission

(13) For admission applicants must apply using the manner specified on the UNE website.

(14) Applicants must provide all of the required information, including:

- a. certified copies of required documentation;
- b. evidence of change of name where qualifications have been completed in another name;
- c. where an academic record or transcript is presented in a language other than English, an English translation and evidence that the translation is accurate from a National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters certified translator;
- d. evidence that at least one UNE academic staff member has agreed to support the application;
- e. a sufficiently developed research proposal including background and context, aims, methodology, and expected outcomes, significance or rationale.

- (15) Applicable HDR Candidates will be required to undergo an Autonomous Sanctions check in accordance with the specific requirements under Australian Law, for example Sanctions Compliance or Defence Export Controls Compliance.
- (16) The Graduate Research School will make offers to applicants who meet the required criteria and are deemed to have the capacity to succeed in their chosen research project.
- (17) Offers may be conditional upon the provision of evidence of meeting all admission requirements or other requirements such as meeting Genuine Temporary Entrant and Financial Capacity requirements. Conditions may be required to be met within a specified timeframe.
- (18) Domestic applicants who receive an offer of admission to a higher degree by research course/program may be offered an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) fee offset, exempting HDR Candidates from tuition fees for the period of candidature which is specified on their offer of admission.
- (19) Eligibility for admission into a course does not guarantee selection into a course/program. UNE reserves the right to decline admission or withdraw an offer to any person for any reason it deems appropriate.
- (20) Reasons for withdrawal of an offer may include where an error was made in the assessment of an application or where it can be demonstrated that the offer was made on the basis of incomplete, inaccurate or fraudulent information, or in the application. Additional reasons for withdrawal of an offer may include breaching the Student Behavioural Misconduct Rules as determined by the Dean, Graduate Research.
- (21) If an applicant provides fraudulent information in their application, they may be ineligible for any future admission to the University. The Dean, Graduate Research, with advice from the Director International where applicable, will decide whether an applicant who has previously been denied admission due to the provision of fraudulent information is admitted. The Director's decision is final.
- (22) If an applicant is currently or has previously been excluded from either UNE or another higher education provider, the Director Graduate Research, with advice from the relevant Associate Dean, Research (or delegate), will make the decision on admission, and any conditions that may apply. The Director must consult with the Director UNE International for an international applicant.
- (23) An offer of admission is only valid for the commencement period specified and will expire if a student does not enrol in the period specified on the offer.
- (24) If a student is unable to enrol by the specified commencement date they can request to defer their commencement to a later date.
- (25) If approved, the Graduate Research School will provide a revised offer of admission.
- (26) Request for deferral must be submitted before the expiry of the research commencement period. Deferrals can only be requested once for up to a maximum of twelve months after the initial commencement date.
- (27) Unsuccessful applicants, other than those who were unsuccessful because they have been excluded from UNE or another institution, may appeal the decision if the following conditions are met:
- a. the applicant considers they satisfy the admission criteria, including any conditions applied, and considers that this Policy was not applied correctly; and
 - b. the application for admission was lodged on time, in the manner specified and all required documentation was provided or there were mitigating circumstances (supported by documentary evidence) which directly and significantly affected the applicant's ability to provide complete and accurate information.

(28) Appeals must be in writing (outlining the grounds for the appeal) and submitted within ten (10) working days of notification of the decision and addressed to the Dean, Graduate Research.

(29) The Dean, Graduate Research (or delegate) will review the case to determine if this Policy was applied correctly and if the appellant possesses the capacity to succeed in their chosen field of study. The Dean, Graduate Research will advise the appellant of the outcome of their appeal in writing within ten (10) working days of receipt of the appeal. The decision of the Director is final.

(30) If the review results in a decision that supports the applicant the Graduate Research School will immediately implement any corrective action required.

(31) The appellant must be advised that they can lodge a complaint with the [NSW Ombudsman](#).

Transferring from another University

(32) A HDR Candidate may request to transfer their higher degree by research candidature from another Australian higher education institution. To be eligible to do this, an applicant must be at the same level of degree, and have normally one (1) year Full Time Equivalent (FTE) of candidature remaining in which to complete their higher degree by research course at UNE.

(33) HDR Candidates should apply for admission to candidature via the standard process, and provide a candidature history statement from their current university.

(34) The Director Graduate Research School has final authority for approving the transfer of candidature to UNE.

(35) The maximum candidature time limit is reduced by the period of enrolment in the course from which the HDR Candidate has transferred.

Credit

(36) For HDR Candidates, UNE may grant credit for prior learning for courses which have a mandatory coursework component.

(37) Any higher degree by research courses that do not include a mandatory coursework component will not be eligible for credit.

(38) For higher degree by research applicants, credit may be granted as part of the admissions process.

(39) In granting any credit, UNE must:

- a. be satisfied that the prior learning's learning outcomes, volume of learning, program of study and learning and assessment approaches are comparable or equivalent to the relevant component of the UNE course for which credit is sought;
- b. consider any accreditation requirements that may limit or prevent credit being granted;
- c. be satisfied that the student possesses the capacity to succeed (and is not disadvantaged by the granting of credit) in achieving the remaining course learning outcomes; and
- d. ensure that the integrity of the course and qualification are maintained.

Part C - Enrolment

Enrolment Requirements

(40) HDR Candidates will be enrolled in their higher degree by research course by the Graduate Research School. This

will include:

- a. research units;
- b. mandatory coursework units as prescribed on the offer of admission or course rules/handbook; and
- c. specific coursework units which are completed concurrently with the research degree.

(41) Where HDR Candidates are enrolled in specific coursework units concurrently with the research degree, the Principal Supervisor must consider these units necessary for successful completion of the degree.

(42) Where requests for enrolment in specific coursework units are made outside of the original offer of admission, approval is required by the relevant unit coordinator and Principal Supervisor.

Transfer

(43) A transfer from Masters to Doctoral candidature can only take place after the Confirmation of Candidature milestone process has been completed in the Masters candidature.

(44) A transfer to Doctoral candidature must occur before the first 18 months of full time candidature, or part-time equivalent.

(45) If an applicant is successful in receiving a transfer to Doctoral candidature, they will receive a new offer of admission which will specify the candidature duration remaining in the degree in which they transfer.

(46) Variations to original offer of admission need to be in accordance with HDR Candidature Management Policy.

(47) The maximum candidature time limit is reduced by the period of enrolment in the course from the HDR Candidate has transferred.

Re-admission

(48) HDR Candidates seeking re-admission for the purposes of submitting their thesis (see Candidature Management Policy), will need to re-apply for admission to candidature as per the process at the time of re-admission and be approved for re-admission by both the relevant Associate Dean, Research or delegate, along with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research.

(49) Any HDR Candidates approved for re-admission will be liable for any outstanding tuition of other fees that relate to their initial period of enrolment with UNE.

Additional requirements

(50) HDR Candidates are expected to use the UNE Learning Management System to access learning materials for any course work units or HDR Training.

(51) The HDR Candidate shall abide by the expectations of the [Australian Code of Conduct for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), the UNE [Code of Conduct for Research](#) as well as any general or specific requirements of candidature, as detailed, and agreed to, in the letter of offer issued by UNE, any requirements imposed by the UNE Ethics Committees, or other relevant contractual arrangements relating to the candidature.

(52) HDR Candidates must maintain knowledge of all other relevant UNE policies and procedures as they relate to their higher degree by research candidature and conduct, including all HDR policies and the Student Behavioural Misconduct Rules.

(53) HDR Candidates are required to pay tuition and Student Services and Amenities Fee as specified on their offer of admission, and as invoiced by Student Accounts.

(54) Failure to pay required fees may result in an encumbrance being placed against a HDR Candidate's record resulting in loss of access to UNE systems, and other facilities.

(55) The University may require additional conditions be met, such as coursework. If coursework is required, the relevant course's tuition fees will be covered under the HDR program tuition fee and the HDR Candidate will not be liable for any additional tuition fees related to the course.

(56) If the proposed research involves working with children under 18 years of age, the applicant must be eligible to hold an appropriate Working with Children Check, as required by law and the University's ethics approval process.

(57) HDR Candidates acknowledge that the information provided as part of their admission and enrolment will be stored and held at UNE for the purposes of:

- a. processing and assisting with an application;
- b. admission, enrolment and study progression (as applicable);
- c. for sending information regarding the University; and
- d. for various other administrative, security, academic and statistical purposes that assist the University to achieve its objects and functions, as described under the University of New England Act 1993 (NSW), the By-laws, Rules, Principles, Guidelines and Policies of the University, as amended and updated from time to time.

(58) All HDR Candidate information and records will be kept in accordance with the [Records Management Rule](#).

Section 3 - Authority and Compliance

Authority

(59) The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer, pursuant to Section 29 of the [University of New England Act 1993 \(NSW\)](#), makes this University policy.

(60) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research (DVCR) is authorised to make procedures and processes for the effective implementation and operation of this policy, and to publish as associated documents any tool that will assist with compliance.

(61) Policy Administrator for this policy is the Director Governance and University Secretary, who is authorised to make minor administrative updates to this policy.

Compliance

(62) UNE Representatives must observe this policy in relation to HDR admission and enrolment requirements. Non-compliance may be a breach of the Code of Conduct and may be addressed under the disciplinary provisions of the relevant Enterprise Agreement.

(63) This policy is consistent with all legislative standards and regulatory frameworks, including the [Higher Education Support Act \(HESA\)](#), the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(HESF\)](#), the [Education Services for Overseas Students Act \(ESOS Act\)](#) and the [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students](#). Further information regarding compliance obligations is available via the Compliance Register

(64) This policy operates as and from the Effective Date. Previous policies relating to HDR admission and enrolment requirements are replaced and have no further operation from the Effective Date.

(65) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this policy, the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer may approve an exception to this policy where the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer determines the application of this

policy 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.

Section 4 - Quality Assurance

(66) Data on HDR Candidate admissions and enrolments will be reported on annually to the Graduate Research Committee and the Research Committee.

Section 5 - Definitions

(67) Candidature history statements – means a document that provides information on a HDR Candidate’s enrolment including commencement and completion date, candidature consumed and remaining, any variations to candidature, and any scholarship details as applicable.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	7th December 2023
Review Date	7th December 2025
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer
Approval Date	7th December 2023
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Unit Head	Chris Armstrong Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research
Enquiries Contact	Jane Stadler Dean, Graduate Research <hr/> Graduate Research School

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.

"HDR Candidate" - Means a Higher Degree Research student.