

WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



Graduate Research School



Higher Degree Research

CANDIDATE HANDBOOK 2021

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HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH CANDIDATE HANDBOOK

WELCOME

As the Dean of the Graduate Research School (GRS), it is my pleasure to welcome you as a higher degree by research candidate at Western Sydney University. Western is a large research-led university serving a growing and diverse metropolitan region.

The Graduate Research School is an integral part of the University's continued commitment to research excellence by continuing to expand our strong and dynamic research culture. We are committed to ensuring that you have the best possible research experience, research training and exposure to academics and industry professionals.

In your research training journey, you will not only develop outstanding research skills but also gain an interdisciplinary perspective that will prepare you for an ever-changing research and professional environment. We are also committed to providing you with appropriate facilities, support, workshops to prepare you for your future career and supervision throughout your study.

This handbook provides valuable information that will help you take advantage of the opportunities that Western Sydney University has to offer, as well as where to access further support and resources.

I wish you every success in your research and beyond, and look forward to meeting you over the course of your candidature at a workshop session or research event.

Professor Caroline Smith

Dean, Graduate Studies (Policy and Innovation)



GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL

The GRS promotes a vibrant, collegial and respectful research culture that expands the University mission and meets the needs of our community.

For our Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates, this means we:

- Offer sector-leading HDR programs;
- Provide accessible support to our HDR candidates throughout the whole research process;
- Promote and nurture the interests and wellbeing of our HDR candidates;
- Promote our HDR candidates and their research locally, nationally and globally;
- Provide avenues to fully integrate our HDR candidates into the life of the University;
- Acknowledge excellence in researcher development;
- Provide opportunities for our HDRs to acquire skills for employment; and
- Deliver industry, community and international engagement opportunities.

The GRS will help to ensure you have a smooth transition into the University and your higher degree studies by looking after aspects of your research candidature including:

- student recruitment, admission and enrolment;
- scholarship applications, conditions, stipends, allowances and variations;
- candidature milestones including confirmation and progress reports;
- thesis submissions and examinations;
- workshops, training and development for all research candidates; and
- supervisor training for staff to ensure our research candidates have the best supervisors possible.

The health and wellbeing of our HDR candidates is also extremely important and the GRS will work to address your needs and provide support as required.

As a research candidate, you are provided with numerous opportunities to gain superior skills and training through seminars, workshops and online programs to ensure you are career-ready and highly competitive for global careers in:

- Industry and business: researcher, consumer and social research, public relations, publishing, personnel work, training, marketing and human resources.
- Community and non-profit organisations: administration, overseas aid and development agencies, social research, policy development and lobbying.
- Government: policy development and analysis, general administration and social research.
- Academia: after completion of your PhD you will be able to pursue postdoctoral or lectureship positions.

The Graduate Research School, along with your academic supervisors who are leading researchers in their field, are here to assist you to achieve in this vibrant research environment.

INTRODUCTION TO HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH

Western Sydney University produces graduates with definable skill sets and attributes, with the responsibility for a positive candidature resting not only with the supervisor and the candidate, but with the entire community of scholars and professional staff.

Higher Degree Research (HDR) has moved on from the apprentice-master model of education to a culture that embraces supervision as a shared responsibility. Western Sydney University has well established frameworks and policies to assist candidates and staff.

Schools and Institutes work closely with other departments to actively direct policy, resources and candidature management under the guidance of the Research Studies Committee.

RESEARCH CULTURE

Western Sydney University is highly focused on building a rich research culture where research is highly regarded and where excellence in research is valued and actively promoted. For HDR candidates, it means working in an environment of good research practice and having the opportunity to present work and to participate in discussions about research and research practice.

KNOWING YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Relationships between candidates and academic supervisors are expected to be flexible and collegial, however, they are also hierarchical. At the beginning of your candidature, your principal supervisor is your primary academic guide and mentor and your relationship is critically important. Your supervisors are responsible for guiding the direction and standard of your work.

University processes establish an operational framework so that staff and candidates understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from others. However, rules and policies can only go so far, candidates and supervisors are human and subject to the complexities of interpersonal relationships and personal styles.

The research environment is different from what you may have previously experienced as an undergraduate student. An intimate understanding of who is responsible and accountable within the University and where and when you should seek advice or assistance will make you a much more effective candidate and will enhance the relationship with your supervisor. It will enable you to make the most of a system that is designed to help you succeed. This is part of being an independent learner; taking initiative and actively directing your education and your relationship with the University.

Here are some questions to consider as you negotiate the HDR education environment:

- What are your responsibilities as a candidate?
- What are the academic governing bodies in HDR education and what are their responsibilities?
- What research activities, seminars, conferences etc., can you attend?
- Who is your School Associate Dean, Research or Institute HDR Director?
- Who are the advocates for research candidates?
- Are there candidate representatives on governing bodies?
- What is the role of the candidate organisation?
- What roles do administrative units play?
- Who can you talk to if there are problems?
- How do you communicate officially with the University?
- What are the degree rules (policy) and what is the research conduct policy?
- How are you expected to report progress?
- Are there accredited courses or informal courses/workshops that you can attend?
- What internet resources and handbooks are available for you?
- What resources are you entitled to (books, photocopying, equipment allowances, specialist research advice, travel funds, office space or other physical resources)?
- Are there websites and/or email lists you can join?
- What services and resources are available from the Library?

Research candidates are members of the research community and you are invited to participate in our research culture. You are encouraged to attend as many events as you can – orientation programs, workshops, skills training programs, seminars and talks.

Your suggestions or recommendations are also welcome and will help Western Sydney University to excel in HDR education. You can send feedback or suggestions to grs.hdr@westernsydney.edu.au

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

The HDR Candidate Handbook is a reference guide on matters that are important to your candidature and to provide you with a source of information about how to get things done, who in the University to contact and to outline your terms of candidature.

However, it is intended as a guide only and does not cover everything. It is your responsibility as a research candidate to understand Western Sydney University policies.

Policies and updates are published on the website at: westernsydney.edu.au/policy/policy_DDS

WHO TO CONTACT

If you are unsure about any parts of the higher degree research candidature process or you have questions or concerns, please talk to your supervisors, the Graduate Research School or staff in your School or Institute as early as possible to avoid potential problems or delays in your candidature.

If you have specific questions for the Graduate Research School, you can email:

Admission enquiries

grs.admissions@westernsydney.edu.au

Enrolment and variation of candidature enquiries

grs.enrolments@westernsydney.edu.au

Fee enquiries

grs.fees@westernsydney.edu.au

Candidature progression, milestone and training and development enquiries

grs.hdr@westernsydney.edu.au

Scholarship enquiries

grs.scholarships@westernsydney.edu.au

Examination enquiries

grs.exams@westernsydney.edu.au

Website

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school

Office address

Graduate Research School
Building K.2.46
Kingswood Campus

Mailing address

Graduate Research School
Western Sydney University
Locked Bag 1797
Penrith NSW 2751

ASSOCIATE DEAN, RESEARCH / HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH DIRECTOR

Your School Associate Dean, Research or Institute HDR Director is an important contact in the management of your candidature. They can help you find the right supervisory panel, provide advice about policies and procedures in your candidature and connect you with key events and people in your research area.

Visit the website to find the current Associate Dean, Research or HDR Director in your School or Institute.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/find_a_supervisor

HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH

With a focus on contemporary social issues and scientific problems, our research degrees are designed to produce career-ready, solution-focussed researchers who can solve new problems and adapt to emerging opportunities in a constantly changing world.

MASTER OF RESEARCH

Western Sydney University is transforming research education and training with this frontier research training program.

The Master of Research (MRes) is an internationally recognised postgraduate training degree that delivers an in-depth research training experience. It combines specialist disciplinary knowledge, an advanced understanding of research methodologies, and a year of independent research conducted under expert supervision.

The program provides you with the necessary educational experiences and expert knowledge to enable you to confidently approach PhD studies and prepare for a future career in research.

The Master of Research degree is completed in two years full-time, or part-time equivalent.

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

The Master of Philosophy (MPhil) degree is undertaken as a supervised program of original research, though the depth of the research required is less than that required for a PhD.

The degree is an opportunity to develop and enhance analytical and research skills through independent investigation in a specific field.

The Master of Philosophy degree is aimed at professional development, with particular emphasis on research methodology appropriate to the field of study. It provides candidates with the opportunity to develop their potential for research, enhance their skills of problem identification and specification, and their ability to develop and present solutions.

The Master of Philosophy degree is completed within a maximum two-years full-time candidature, or part-time equivalent.

Candidates undertake their independent research under the expert guidance of a panel of supervisors.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree provides training and education to produce graduates with the capacity to conduct research independently at a high level of originality and quality.

A PhD candidate will uncover new knowledge either by the discovery of new facts, the formulation of theories or the innovative reinterpretation of known data and established ideas.

The award of a PhD is recognition of successful research experience of international standard in the discipline.

The PhD is completed within three-years full-time candidature, with a maximum enrolment of four-years full-time, or part-time equivalent.

Candidates undertake their independent research under the expert guidance of a panel of supervisors.

PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE

Professional doctorate degrees include the Doctor of Creative Arts (DCA), Doctor of Cultural Research (DCR) and Doctor of Education (EdD).

Professional doctorates provide extended and advanced training in professional fields where projects and investigations are more applied in nature and more obviously oriented to professional practice. Professional doctorates are designed to equip candidates to be critical consumers of research in a professional setting.

Professional doctorates are completed within three-years full-time candidature, with a maximum enrolment of four-years full-time, or part-time equivalent.

Candidates undertake their independent research under the expert guidance of a panel of supervisors.

ENROLMENT AND ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNT

All official communication will be sent to your student email account. It is essential that you check your account regularly so that you do not miss important information or updates.

Please use your student email account when you are communicating with the Graduate Research School.

Students who are also Western Sydney University staff members will need to check both their staff and student email accounts. These accounts are not interchangeable and should only be used for the relevant purpose.

Scholarship holders may also have an account related to their scholarship payments. This email account is only available for the duration of the scholarship and should not be used for other communications.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Once you are enrolled, you will need to apply online to receive a student identification card.

Student ID cards are needed to access the Library and IT services. You may also need one to access buildings and facilities.

Security or other staff may ask you to produce your student ID card at any time when you are on campus.

Visit the website for up-to-date information about student ID cards.

westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/services_and_facilities/student_central/student_id_cards

ENROLMENT

HDR candidates are responsible for managing their enrolment on an ongoing basis. You must re-enrol as requested by the GRS via the online portal My Student Records (mySR).

mysr.westernsydney.edu.au/connect/webconnect

The GRS will send detailed information about the re-enrolment process to your student email account as required.

If you do not re-enrol by the required deadlines, the University may lapse your candidature.

COMMENCEMENT OF CANDIDATURE DATE

You must submit a Confirmation of Research Commencement Date Form to indicate when you will commence study.

If you do not complete your Research Commencement Date Form within the first month, your candidature may be affected and the Graduate Research School may defer or terminate your enrolment.

An accurately recorded research commencement date is extremely important as we use this to calculate all of your ongoing candidature dates, such as your Confirmation of Candidature due date and your maximum submission date.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/forms,_policies_and_guidelines

VARIATIONS

Any changes to your candidature require approval from your supervisor and your School or Institute, including leave of absence, study mode changes (full-time/part-time), thesis title changes, or changes to your supervisory panel.

Any changes to candidature details must be formally approved and updated on your student record.

Changes that must be accurately recorded include the following:

- change of mode;
- change of personal details;
- change of principal supervisor/co-supervisor;
- variation of thesis title;
- leave of absence from candidature;
- extensions of maximum candidature;
- transfer from Doctoral Candidate to Research Masters;
- upgrade from Research Masters to Doctoral Candidature; and
- variations to scholarships.

Some variations to your candidature can be completed online. Visit the GRS website for forms relating to variations of candidature.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/forms_policies_and_guidelines

TUITION FEES – DOMESTIC CANDIDATES

Tuition fees for domestic candidates are covered by the Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP). This means that you will not be required to pay tuition fees, unless you exceed the maximum candidature time for your program.

If you do exceed your maximum candidature time, you will be charged tuition fees for any additional sessions that you require to complete and submit your thesis.

These fees can be substantial and you need to consider this if you do not think that you will be able to submit your thesis before your maximum submission date.

Tuition fees apply to the coursework component (Stage 1) of the Master of Research, based on the units of study that you undertake.

You can use the online portal My Student Records (mySR) to access your Student Fees (Statement of Account). This will detail any fees payable, due dates and methods of payment.

mysr.westernsydney.edu.au/connect/webconnect

TUITION FEES – INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATES

International candidates are required to pay tuition fees for the duration of your program.

If you exceed your maximum candidature time, you will continue to be charged tuition fees for any additional sessions that you require to complete and submit your thesis.

International candidates that have been awarded a scholarship may also be awarded a tuition fee waiver. This means that you may not be required to pay tuition fees for the duration of your scholarship. If this applies to you, you will be able to find further information about the specific requirements in your conditions of award documents.

International candidates that have not been awarded a scholarship cannot be awarded a tuition fee waiver.

You can use the online portal My Student Records (mySR) to access your Student Fees (Statement of Account). This will detail any fees payable, due dates and methods of payment.

mysr.westernsydney.edu.au/connect/webconnect

STUDENT SERVICES AND AMENITIES FEES

The Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) provides Western Sydney University with a contribution towards the cost of providing student services and amenities.

All students are required to pay the fee which is charged twice per year and calculated on study load. This includes all domestic and international, full-time and part-time, scholarship and non-scholarship HDR candidates.

Information about SSAF will be sent to your student email account. You can use the online portal My Student Records (mySR) to access your Student Fees (Statement of Account). This will detail any fees payable, due dates and methods of payment.

mysr.westernsydney.edu.au/connect/webconnect

SCHOLARSHIPS

If you have a scholarship, you must observe the specific Conditions of Award that apply to your scholarship, as well as any other relevant policies. You will be provided with a copy of your Conditions of Award at the start of your scholarship and you should refer to this document in the first instance if you are unsure about any of the terms or conditions that apply to your scholarship.

Scholarship holders should consider their candidature as their primary occupation, unless other arrangements have been negotiated with the University. There may be strict limitations to the amount of paid work that can be undertaken while on a scholarship, as per your Conditions of Award.

Scholarship stipends for full-time candidates may be exempt from Australian tax. Scholarship stipends for part-time candidates may be subject to tax, according to the Australian Taxation Office. Part-time scholarships are only permitted in specific circumstances. You should contact the Australian Taxation Office or a registered taxation advisor for advice about personal taxation matters.

If you are an existing candidate that is awarded a scholarship, your previous enrolment time prior to receiving the award will be deducted from the duration of the award. We recommend discussing the conditions of your award with your supervisors to determine how those conditions may impact on the management of your candidature.

EXTENSIONS

If you are unable to complete and submit your thesis within the maximum candidature period of your degree, there may be circumstances where you can request an extension to your candidature and/or scholarship.

There are strict criteria that you must meet to be considered for an extension to your candidature and/or scholarship and you must provide evidence to support your request.

Possible grounds for an extension request may include:

- A delay to your progress due to an unforeseen problem(s) with the research and/or working environment (e.g. moving buildings or facilities, a sudden departure of a supervisor, etc.);
- Unavailability or breakdown of essential equipment for an extended period of time, where you cannot continue your research and the use of alternatives or methodologies is not possible; or
- Other circumstances that are considered outside of your control that you could not have reasonably prepared for.

Personal illness, accidents or other mishaps cannot be used as grounds to request an extension. If you experience personal circumstances that impact your candidature progression, you should request a leave of absence from your studies.

Extensions are not approved automatically and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

You will need to provide documented evidence from throughout your candidature of the events that led to the delay and an explanation of why the research could not be adjusted to compensate for the challenges that were experienced.

If you think that you may need an extension due to an event that has occurred, you must ensure that you keep detailed notes and other supporting documentation. These should be noted by your School or Institute and your supervisory panel at the time that they occur, so that they can be used to support your case at a later stage in your candidature.

Candidature extensions and scholarship extensions are considered separately and you may be approved for a candidature extension without an extension to your scholarship.

Extensions will not usually be approved for a period greater than six months.

You may apply for subsequent extensions and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

You may be charged tuition fees for any extension to your candidature.

STUDENT ADVOCACY

Advocacy is about making sure you are aware and informed about your rights and responsibilities as a member of the Western Sydney University community and that you have access to the right support and advice. Advocacy services available to you at either an individual or broader University level.

A key role of advocacy is to ensure that students are treated fairly by Western Sydney University.

If you believe that you have been unfairly treated during the implementation of any University policy or procedure, you should contact a Student Welfare officer or the Student Rights Advocate.

For more information about individual advocacy visit: westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/services_and_facilities/advocacy_@_uws/individual_advocacy

For more information about University-wide advocacy visit: westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/services_and_facilities/advocacy_@_uws/university_wide_advocacy

OVERSEAS RESEARCH

You are considered to be a Western Sydney University traveller if you are conducting work overseas that contributes towards your degree, whether the travel and/or research is being funded by Western Sydney University or otherwise.

Visit the travel page for more information.

westernsydney.edu.au/travel

You must apply for permission from your School or Institute to travel overseas to conduct field work at least three months before the proposed date of departure.

You can apply using the online Application to Vary Research Candidature forum.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/forms_policies_and_guidelines

There may be other processes or approvals required by your School or Institute in relation to travelling for research, so make sure to check with the relevant staff to find out what you need to do.

If you are an international student, there may be visa or other immigration implications if you leave Australia for any period. You are responsible for ensuring you understand the conditions of your visa before travelling outside Australia.

CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES

You have a responsibility to understand the requirements and expectations for HDR candidates at Western Sydney University.

You are required to review and understand the policies that apply to your candidature:

westernsydney.edu.au/policy/policy_DDS

Your supervisory panel will expect that you understand:

- a.** The requirements for the degree in which you are enrolled and the objectives of the degree.
- b.** That your research degree is research training with an output in the form of a thesis or major work which measures the success of that training. It should be planned and carried out within a clear time frame. Part of the training is to be able to plan and execute a project within defined time limits.
- c.** That the degree is undertaken under supervision where you must establish agreed methods of working and fulfil your side of any agreement with the members of your supervisory panel.
- d.** That you must complete all compulsory reporting milestones such as Early Candidature Plan, online training modules, Confirmation of Candidature and Annual Progress Reports.
- e.** That you must provide evidence of progress to the panel at regular intervals, in addition to formal reporting milestones. You and your panel should plan together how and when material will be presented and how progress will be evaluated against the timeline.
- f.** That you must participate in activities determined as required by your School or Institute. Involvement in the University's research culture is important for your development and candidates have much to offer the University; to supervisors, as models for other candidates and as contributors to the intellectual environment at Western Sydney University.
- g.** That you are responsible for ensuring that you abide by relevant policies such as the Research Code of Practice, the Research Ethics Policies and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.
- h.** That you are responsible for notifying your supervisory panel and/or the Associate Dean, Research or HDR Director if you have any difficulties that may impact your candidature progression. You should be aware of the mechanisms that exist to resolve problems.
- i.** You are responsible for obtaining approval to take time away from your candidature or for factors that otherwise vary your record of candidature.
- j.** You must ensure that you meet all the administrative requirements of the University, such as maintaining your enrolment and regularly accessing your student email account.
- k.** You must work with your supervisory panel to construct a reasonable timeline and to decide how to judge progress against it and make adjustments when necessary.
- l.** Scholarship recipients must abide by their Conditions of Award, in addition to the degree policy.
- m.** You are solely responsible for the content, style and presentation of the thesis or work that is finally presented and for certifying its originality.

CANDIDATURE TIME

You must work with your supervisory panel to construct a reasonable and achievable timeline that covers all aspects of your candidature. It is up to you and your supervisory panel to determine how you will monitor and evaluate your progress and to make adjustments to your timeline when necessary.

You should be aware of your minimum and maximum submission dates. These dates should be considered strict deadlines and you should be planning to submit your thesis in advance of your maximum submission date, allowing time for unforeseen circumstances or delays in the final stages.

Extensions are considered on a case-by-case basis following strict criteria and you should not assume that you will be approved for an extension to your candidature.

You are encouraged to write early and write often throughout the length of your candidature. Your supervisors will provide you with advice and support, however, you are responsible for ensuring that you have sufficient time to finish and write up the thesis or exegesis, and that you know what is necessary in terms of content, style and presentation.

FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME EXPECTATIONS

It is expected that a full-time candidate will normally spend a minimum of 35 hours per week on their study and that part-time candidates will spend a minimum of 20 hours per week. This is offered as a guide only and circumstances may change at different periods of your candidature.

The time of day that you work on your study can be negotiated with your supervisory panel. You may choose to work much like a normal workday (9.00am – 5.00pm, Monday to Friday), after hours, on weekends or on a flexible arrangement that suits your personal circumstances and the needs of your research.

Managing a heavy workload is a significant consideration for many doctoral candidates. For part-time candidates, finding twenty hours a week of effective working time can be difficult. This means time with minimal interruptions, when you are fresh and alert and the time is long enough at a stretch to be useful. Some people are late night intellectual workers, others are best early in the morning.

Candidates with significant family responsibilities need strategies for sharing the load and finding effective study time. Your colleagues and other family organisations can be very supportive.

You may choose to work on-campus, at home or off-campus elsewhere as appropriate to your personal needs, your research requirements and in negotiation with your supervisory panel.

CANDIDATE RESOURCES

Western Sydney University provides financial support for candidature expenses under the Research Higher Degree Candidature Essential Resources Policy.

APPLYING FOR CANDIDATURE SUPPORT FUNDS

For advice on how to apply for funding you should contact the relevant staff in your School or Institute. Processes and procedures may vary as these funds are administered directly by your School or Institute and not by the Graduate Research School.

CANDIDATURE SUPPORT FUNDS

Candidature Support Funds are allocated to Schools and Institutes through the Research Investment Framework (RIF). The funds provide financial support to HDR candidatures for expenses related to research.

The scheme is designed to be flexible in addressing the requirements of candidates working across a wide range of academic enquiry and in establishing consistency across the University to ensure equity of access for all HDR candidates.

You are eligible to claim up to \$2,000 per full-time year if you are in a low cost discipline, and up to \$7,000 per full-time year if you are in a high cost discipline. The funds differ in consideration of factors such as access to specialist equipment and consumable-intensive, high expense areas of research.

Candidature Support Funds are not a direct payment to you on the basis of your enrolment. Funding approval is subject to the discretion of your School or Institute.

Candidature Support Funds may not be used to fund living expenses, including travel to Western Sydney University, for any purpose.

Requests to use Candidature Support Funds should be carefully evaluated by your supervisory panel as part of managing the candidature and your supervisory panel should take a leading role in determining how candidature project funds will contribute to your candidature.

In assessing the application, the supervisory panel and Associate Dean, Research or HDR Director will consider the timing of the request (for example, international travel for conferences may have greater benefit if taken later in the candidature) and they are encouraged to take a “whole of candidature” view of anticipated expenses. Your request should consider the requirements of your candidature in its entirety as one year may be more resource intensive than other years.

Not all candidates require the full nominal sum each year. Candidature Support Funds are not an entitlement that must be used and you should only claim for resources that you need. Expenditure should not be made in anticipation of approval and access to funds is not guaranteed.

You must outline your Candidature Support Funds requirements at your Confirmation of Candidature and in your Annual Progress Reports. Expenses and opportunities may arise that had not been anticipated or expected and they may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Your application should be made directly to your School or Institute and must be endorsed according to the processes required in your School or Institute.

Any equipment purchases remain the property of Western Sydney University and must be returned to your School or Institute upon the completion of your study or your withdrawal from candidature.

Changes to the direction of your work does not guarantee access to additional resources. Any changes to estimated resource requirements must be negotiated within your School or Institute.

Scholarship holders may be entitled to access other funds specifically described in their Conditions of Award.

If you travel on Candidature Support Funds, you must abide by the Western Sydney University Travel Policy.

Candidature Support Funds can be used for a range of expenses including, but not limited to:

- skills development;
- research materials or equipment;
- field work;
- transcription costs;
- participant reimbursement;
- travel for conference attendance;
- other travel;
- consumables;
- registration fees;
- writing skill development;
- technical costs associated with exhibitions, recording, or filming;
- thesis binding;
- special software purchases or licences;
- access to external facilities;
- access to vehicles for field trips;
- postage, printing, photocopying and office materials expenses;
- acquisition of data sets;
- editing services; and
- Work Health and Safety (WHS) or other compulsory training.

REPORTING ON PROGRESS

FIRST YEAR MILESTONES

The first year of your candidature is structured to help you focus on making good progress in the early stages. The Early Candidature Plan (ECP) and the associated online training modules and the Confirmation of Candidature (CoC) are compulsory milestones for all candidates and non-compliance may jeopardise your continued enrolment in your research degree.

EARLY CANDIDATURE PLAN

The Early Candidature Plan (ECP) requires you to work with your supervisory panel to identify the goals that you would like to achieve leading up to your Confirmation of Candidature. It is one of the first tasks you will complete in your candidature and will establish a framework that can be used to assess your progress in the early stages of your research project.

Further information about completing your Early Candidature Plan can be found in the Research Fundamentals online training module.

CONFIRMATION OF CANDIDATURE

You must complete your Confirmation of Candidature (CoC) within the first to six to nine months from your research commencement date. The maximum allowable time to complete your Confirmation of Candidature is twelve months for both part-time and full-time candidates.

The Confirmation of Candidature is a formal and comprehensive process that reviews the progress and plan of your candidature from commencement to completion. The process may identify improvements that can be made and it is an opportunity to for your supervisory panel and others to provide constructive feedback about your progress.

Further information about completing your Confirmation of Candidature can be found in the Research Fundamentals online training module.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

All continuing candidates must complete an Annual Progress Report (APR). First year candidates in some schools may not be required to write an Annual Progress Report if their Confirmation of Candidature has recently been completed.

Further information about the Annual Progress Reporting process will be sent to your student email.

THESIS SUBMISSIONS

While it may seem like a long time away, it is important to become familiar with the thesis submission process during your candidature so that you understand the expectations and know what you are working towards.

Everything you need to know about thesis submissions is described in the HDR Examination Handbook.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/forms,_policies_and_guidelines

THESIS EXAMINATIONS

It is important for you to be familiar with the HDR examination process and understand all the requirements for a successful submission. Preparing your thesis for examination can be a time consuming and stressful process, so it is a good idea to start thinking about this well in advance of your submission date.

Everything you need to know about thesis submissions is described in the HDR Examination Handbook. This explains each step in the process of a HDR examination including what to expect, how to proceed and who is responsible for various tasks.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/forms,_policies_and_guidelines

The HDR Examination Handbook also provides advice about a range of topics including:

- How to choose your examiners;
- Conflict of interest guidelines;
- Format and presentation of your thesis;
- Thesis lodgement; and
- Examination results and reports.

You may also find it useful to review the advice in the HDR Guidelines for Examiners document for more information about the examination process and what your examiners expect from your thesis.

HDR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

HDR WORKSHOPS

Western Sydney University provides you with a comprehensive package of workshops, training opportunities, online modules and seminars. The program will take you from the start of your research project, technical skills training, all aspects of conducting your research, managing your candidature, as well as planning for your future.

HDR training and development opportunities are free to candidates (unless otherwise specified) and the workshops and resources are reviewed and updated each year based on your feedback and the latest research in the field of HDR pedagogy.

Broader skills, knowledge and practice based programs are offered by the Graduate Research School. Discipline specific parts of the program may be delivered by the Schools and Institutes and your supervisor will be able to advise you about these opportunities.

You may be interested in accessing high quality programs delivered by other institutions. In some cases, Western Sydney University holds membership and may be able to offer discounted rates. You may also use your Candidature Support Funds to attend courses as appropriate.

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

There is detailed information about the HDR Training and Development Program available on the Graduate Research School website.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/workshops

Announcements about upcoming workshop sessions will be sent to your student email on a regular basis.

When you register, you are committing to attending a course or a workshop and it is a professional courtesy that you attend. Many sessions are in high demand and there are limited places available, so if you realise you cannot attend, please send the Graduate Research School an email so that we can offer your place to another candidate.

If you do not attend a session that you have registered for and do not provide advanced notice, the GRS has the discretion to charge a penalty fee for the training to your Candidature Support Funds.

ACADEMIC WRITING SUPPORT

The Graduate Research School offers a number of initiatives that aim to enhance the research and writing environment for higher degree research candidates at Western Sydney University, supported by an Academic Literacy Advisor.

This support includes academic writing spaces, facilitated thesis writing sessions, social writing groups and one-on-one support. Services are offered both on-campus and online as appropriate.

You can find out more about what sessions and services are available via the links on the Graduate Research School website.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/workshops

STATISTICS SUPPORT

The Graduate Research School offers statistics support for HDR candidates through a range of workshop sessions and the provision of a Mathematics and Statistics Consultant.

For more information about this service and to book a consultation, visit the links on the Graduate Research School website.

westernsydney.edu.au/graduate_research_school/grs/higher_degree_research_students/workshops

ONLINE RESEARCH TRAINING

The Graduate Research School provides a range of online workshops and resources to support you through your candidature.

The Research Training vUWS site provides extensive resources including videos, research tools, recommended blogs to follow, suggested books, readings, coverage of events and access to the Turnitin plagiarism checking tool.

You are required to access the Research Training vUWS site to complete the following compulsory online training modules:

- Research Fundamentals: outlines everything you need to know in the early stages through to the preparation for your Confirmation of Candidature;
- Research Integrity Online: describes your responsibilities in relation to ethics and integrity as a research candidate;
- Privacy Training;
- Work Health and Safety Training; and
- Other training as directed by the GRS and/or University.

Depending on your field of research and the specific requirements of your project, you may also need to complete training as required by your School or Institute.

You can access the Research Training vUWS site, online workshops and resources via:
vuws.westernsydney.edu.au

If you have ideas or requests for training that is not currently being offered, please submit your suggestions to the Graduate Research School.

COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS

The Graduate Research School, in conjunction with the Schools and Institutes and broader University community, hosts a number of competitions and events that you might like to participate in as a competitor or join the audience.

These events include:

- Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition;
- Visualise Your Thesis (VYT) Competition; and
- Research Week.

The GRS will send information to your student email about how to get involved in competitions and events.

LIBRARY

Western Sydney University Library provides an outstanding range of resources, facilities and services for HDR candidates.

The Library can provide you with information and services including research skills development, searching, bibliographic management, referencing and impact reporting.

<https://library.westernsydney.edu.au/>

RESEARCH ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Western Sydney University maintains the highest standards of ethics and integrity in conducting research and this expectation extends to our higher degree research candidates.

Research at Western Sydney University is carried out in accordance with our Research Code of Practice and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.

Research Services provides resources, advice and assistance to researchers navigating the complex issues of governance and compliance in relation to conducting ethical research.

For more information about research ethics and integrity, visit:

westernsydney.edu.au/research/research_ethics_and_integrity

SUPERVISION

YOUR SUPERVISORY PANEL

Western Sydney University uses a panel system of supervision. You will have a panel of at least two supervisors, one of whom is designated as principal supervisor, the other(s) as co-supervisor.

Supervision panels provide research expertise and support to your project, and many candidates will have several co-supervisors.

Your supervisory panel may include cross-disciplinary members from other Schools or Institutes, as well as external supervisors from other institutions.

The operation of your supervisory panel will be determined by your principal supervisor in consultation with you and the other panel members.

QUALITY OF SUPERVISION

Principal supervisors are required to undertake regular training and must be registered on the HDR Supervisor Register. This registration helps to ensure that your supervisors are up to date with the latest research on doctoral education, relevant policies and procedures, and best practice in the supervision of HDR candidates. Your principal supervisor will hold qualifications at least at the level they are supervising.

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR

The principal supervisor has a specific role in leading the panel and taking responsibility for a range of matters. Broadly these are:

- Monitoring your candidature and your progress;
- Encouraging your introduction to and participation in Western Sydney University research culture;
- Ensuring that commitments made by your supervisory panel are met;
- Ensuring that commitments made by you are met;
- Providing timely feedback;
- Ensuring that reporting milestones are met, including the Early Candidature Plan, Confirmation of Candidature and Annual Progress Reports;
- Arranging the nomination of your examiners, approving your thesis submission and responding to examiners reports;
- Taking steps to address any problems that may arise during your candidature;
- Advising candidates about your entitlements as required;
- Ensuring that you are provided with the resources you need to complete your candidature successfully and on-time;
- Advising you about the Western Sydney University expectations of research ethics and integrity, as well as the expectations of researchers in broader terms; and
- Ensuring you are aware of policies and expectations concerning issues such as intellectual property, plagiarism, etc.

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR SUPERVISORS

It is important to establish a positive working relationship with your supervisors in the initial stages of your candidature.

The following points suggest questions to consider with your supervisory panel to get to know each other in the early days of enrolment.

CONSULTATIONS

- How regularly will you meet with your supervisor?
- How long will your regular meetings be?
- Can you contact your supervisor outside of scheduled meeting times?
- Who is responsible for initiating and organising meetings?
- What is the protocol if someone cannot make the meeting?
- Who is responsible for taking and circulating meeting notes?
- What is the protocol for submitting drafts and receiving feedback?

THE PANEL

- What role will be taken by each supervisor on your panel?
- What percentage of work is each supervisor prepared to undertake?
- Will the entire panel meet, and if so, how often?

CANDIDATURE PROGRESS

- Have you mapped projected progress against your candidature time?
- How long will each stage of your candidature take?
- How will you monitor progress in your candidature?
- What is the Early Candidature Plan?
- What is the Confirmation of Candidature?

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND AUTHORSHIP

- Do you understand your intellectual property rights and responsibilities?

- Have you discussed how authorship will be attributed on any potential publications.

WHAT IS A THESIS?

- What is a thesis?
- What is expected of your thesis?
- Will there be a non-text or non-traditional component?
- How will you structure your thesis?
- What is the difference between a passable thesis and an exceptional thesis?
- What title will you give your project?
- What is meant by originality?
- When should you start writing?
- What is expected in a literature review in your discipline?
- Do you understand how the examination process works?

ADVICE AND SUPPORT

- What support can be provided by your principal supervisor?
- What support can be provided by your co-supervisors?
- What support can be provided by your Associate Dean, Research or Higher Degree Research Director?
- What support can be provided by the Graduate Research School?
- Do you have personal circumstances or commitments that need to be considered?

RESOURCES

- Do you have access to the resources you need to complete your candidature?

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS

- Do you know what milestones are required to be completed in the first year and do you have a plan to complete them?
- Do you know about research activities you can get involved in at your School or Institute?
- What is the protocol for submitting drafts and receiving feedback?

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