

Milestones: Information for Students

Higher Degree by Research Students

What are Milestones?

Curtin University has adopted a new Milestones policy. The policy is designed to support the progress of Higher Degree by Research Students in their course. The policy establishes a framework to enable students to formally report on their progress to their School at three points, known as Milestones, during their enrolment.

The Milestones are:

1. Milestone 1 (Candidacy). Doctoral students are to complete Milestone 1 in the first 6 months of full time equivalent (FTE) enrolment and Masters students are to complete this in the first 3 months of FTE enrolment.
2. Milestone 2 (Mid Candidacy). Doctoral students are to complete Milestone 2 in the first 18 months of FTE enrolment and Masters students are to complete this in the first 12 months of FTE enrolment.
3. Milestone 3 (Pre-Submission). Doctoral students are to complete Milestone 3 at least three months FTE prior to their thesis submission due date in most circumstances. Where a student is submitting their thesis early due to a scholarship deadline or other reasons, Milestone 3 must be achieved prior to thesis submission.

Who Needs to Complete Milestones?

Milestone 1

If you have *not* submitted your Candidacy application by 31 December 2018 you will need to complete your candidacy in line with the Milestones Policy and Procedures. Your Candidacy will now be called Milestone 1 and the requirements and procedures may be a little different to your School's previous requirements for candidacy.

Milestone 2

If you have *not* passed the Milestone due date by 31 December 2018, you will need to complete Milestone 2.

For Doctoral Students: This means you **will** have to complete Milestone 2 if you are not more than 18 months full time into your study (or 36 months for part time students) at 31 December 2018.

For Masters Students: This means you **will** have to complete Milestone 2 if you are not more than 18 months full time into your study (or 36 months for part time students) at 31 December 2018.

Milestone 3

For Doctoral Students: You **will** have to complete Milestone 3 if you have not completed more than 42 months or 3.5 years (full time) of your study at 31 December 2018.

For Masters Students: You **will** have to complete Milestone 3 if you are not more than 18 months (full time) into your study at 31 December 2018.

You **will not** have to complete Milestone 3 if, by 31 December 2018, you are more than 42 months (3.5 years) FTE into your doctoral course or 18 months FTE into your masters course.

When will I be alerted if I need to complete a Milestone?

You should be able to calculate if and when you have a Milestone due by considering how far you have progressed through your course and how long it is until your thesis is due.

If you are unable to calculate your Milestone due dates yourself, you may wish to contact your Director of Graduate Research who will be able to advise you if you need to complete a Milestone. Alternatively you can contact the Graduate Research School at GRS.CurrentStudents@curtin.edu.au to request a copy of your Research Student Profile, which will list your Milestone due dates.

What if your Milestone is due in early 2019 but you don't believe it is practical to complete?

Some current students may find that their Milestone 2 or Milestone 3 is due early in 2019. For most students, preparing the application for Milestone 2 or 3 will not present a major obstacle. However, for a minority of current students they may find they are not able to complete their milestone application in a timely manner due to the requirements of their already defined research plan. For example, some students may be undertaking intensive fieldwork or lab work in the first few months of 2019. In these circumstances, an extension to the due date for the Milestone can be arranged with the Director of Graduate Research. You or your supervisor need to email your Director of Graduate Research to arrange this.

What is involved?

There are set requirements for each milestone, which are designed to enable students to present relevant information about their progress so they can gain timely and relevant feedback. Students need to apply for each milestone well in advance of the due date.

For Milestone 1, students are required to submit the relevant milestone application form along with a written research proposal. Students also need to provide an oral presentation on their research plan to their School or discipline group.

For Milestone 2, students are required to provide an update on their progress on their research plan in an oral presentation to their School or discipline group. Students will also be required to submit a sample of written work which clearly demonstrates the progress they have made in their study (i.e., a substantive thesis chapter or journal paper) as well as a completion and dissemination plan. The sample of written work and completion and dissemination plan need to be attached to the Milestone 2 application form.

For Milestone 3, students are required to provide an overview of the major findings from their study, as well as a timeline for completion, in an oral presentation to their School or discipline group.

Who reviews Milestones applications?

Student progress is reviewed at each milestone by members of the student's Thesis Committee, Director of Graduate Research and other members of the Curtin academic community. Students will receive feedback on their progress when milestone applications are reviewed in the School. Schools must ensure that students are provided with appropriate opportunity and support to respond to feedback on their milestone application prior to any recommendations about progress being made to the Graduate Research School.

What outcomes are possible?

The Milestones policy is designed to provide a framework to review student progress in a defined and consistent manner. It is not designed to examine the merits of the academic contributions of the study. As such, students do not pass or fail milestones. If an application for a milestone is determined to be insufficient, the application will be rejected.

If an application for a milestone is rejected, the student's enrolment status will be classified as conditional. The student will be advised of the conditions of their enrolment. The conditions will be designed by the student's thesis committee and Director of Graduate Research and will be developed to assist the student to achieve satisfactory progress in the program.

Students can appeal a decision to reject their application for a milestone. In the first instance, appeals should be directed to the Thesis Chair or Director of Graduate Research. If this is not practical (due to the nature of the grievance), the appeal should be directed to the Dean of Research of the Faculty. If the grievance is not able to be resolved in the School or Faculty, a student may submit an appeal to the Dean of the Graduate Research School.

Where can I find information?

All the relevant materials for Milestones including the Policy, Procedures, Guidelines, application forms and various templates are available at Curtin's [Current Students](#) webpage.

Where can I get help?

Your supervisors will advise you on the requirements for milestones and provide support to you as you prepare your application.

Your Director of Graduate Research provides leadership for all HDR matters in your School, including overseeing the assessment of Milestones. If you encounter issues at the School level, you may wish to talk to your Thesis Chair or Director of Graduate Research.

If you are unable to resolve your concerns within your School you may seek to discuss your concerns with your Faculty's Dean of Research.

Student Assist is a support and advocacy service provided by the Curtin Student Guild. It is operated by the Guild and is independent from Curtin University. For information about their services visit <https://www.guild.curtin.edu.au/studentassist>.