



Guidelines for the Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Thesis Chair

Higher Degree by Research Candidates

These Guidelines should be considered in conjunction with Higher Degree by Research Policies and Procedures. These documents are available on the [Compliance, Legislation and Policy website](#).

1.0 THESIS CHAIR

- 1.1 The minimum role requirements for a Thesis Chair are set out in *Rule No. 10 Made Pursuant to Statute No. 12 – Enrolment: Degree of Doctor by Research* and *Rule No. 11 Made Pursuant to Statute No. 12 – Enrolment: Degree of Master by Research*.
- 1.2 The Director of Graduate Research appoints an Interim Thesis Chair when they accept an application for a position in a HDR program.
- 1.3 The Director of Graduate Research of a candidate's Enrolling School will nominate a Thesis Chair when they make a recommendation to accept a candidate's application for Milestone 1. Normally, the Thesis Chair will be the Interim Thesis Chair.
- 1.4 The Thesis Chair must be a member of Curtin's academic staff and registered as a level 1 supervisor on Curtin's Supervisor Register and should be familiar with the candidate's discipline of study.
- 1.5 The Thesis Chair for a Doctor by Research candidate must possess a Doctoral degree qualification or be deemed by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee to be of equivalent status.
- 1.6 The Thesis Chair for a Masters by Research candidate must possess a Masters by Research degree qualification or be deemed by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee to be of equivalent status.
- 1.7 The Thesis Chair should ensure that HDR candidates are familiar with [Universities Australia Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships](#).

2.0 THESIS CHAIR AND CANDIDATE MEETINGS

- 2.1 The Thesis Chair and HDR candidate should meet to discuss general matters related to HDR programs, Curtin's HDR candidate supports and training opportunities and other related matters.
- 2.2 A Thesis Chair should initiate the first meeting with a HDR candidate when the candidate's enrolment is confirmed or when a Chair first joins a thesis committee.
- 2.3 Typically, a Thesis Chair will meet with a HDR candidate between 1 and 4 times per year. A Thesis Chair may elect to hold group meetings inviting all the HDR candidates for who they act as Thesis Chair.

3.0 THESIS CHAIR AND HDR MILESTONES

- 3.1 A Thesis Chair may meet with a HDR candidate prior to the candidate's Milestone due date and/ or during the Milestone assessment process.
- 3.2 Typically, a Thesis Chair will attend a candidate's Milestone presentation and will collate reviewers' feedback on the Milestone application.
- 3.3 At the delegation of the Director of Graduate Research, a Thesis Chair may have a role in identifying reviewers for a HDR Milestone application or chairing a HDR milestone presentation

4.0 CONVERSIONS FROM A MASTERS BY RESEARCH DEGREE TO A RESEARCH DOCTORAL DEGREE

- 4.1 In the case of a candidate converting from a Master's degree to a research Doctoral degree, the Thesis Chair and the Supervisor shall certify that the outcome of the proposed research program will be a thesis or exegesis and creative output of the standard required for the Doctoral degree.

5.0 HDR EXAMINATIONS

- 5.1 The Faculty Graduate Studies Committee appoints a Thesis Examining Panel, comprising the Thesis Chair (ex officio) acting as Chairperson; and two Examiners.
- 5.2 The Thesis Chair should ensure that they are familiar with the relevant rules, policies and procedures governing HDR examinations at Curtin.
- 5.3 The Thesis Chair is the only member of the Thesis Committee who is permitted to contact the Examiners during the Examination. Such communications should be confined to determining the progress of the examination or clarifying aspects of the examiners reports.
- 5.4 The Graduate Research School will convey the examiners' reports and recommended classifications to the Thesis Chair. Drawing on the examiners reports, and normally following consultation with the supervisors, the Thesis Chair will advise the candidate and supervisors if the candidate is required to undertake further work order for the Thesis Chair to make a recommendation to the Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Excellence through the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee.
- 5.5 Where a Thesis Chair has considered the examiners reports and determines a clear weight of opinion exists, but the Thesis Chair's recommendation conflicts with a recommendation of one or more examiners for the candidate to revise and resubmit the thesis, the Thesis Chair shall, as far as is practicable, discuss the reasons for their determination with the relevant examiner(s). This information should be conveyed to the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee at the time of recommending the classification of the thesis.
- 5.6 If the Thesis Chair advises the candidate that further work is required, the Thesis Chair will provide the candidate with a list of the required changes.
- 5.7 If the Thesis Chair advises the candidate that substantial further work is required, the Thesis Chair may recommend that the thesis be re-submitted for examination. Normally, when both examiners make a recommendation that a thesis be submitted in a revised form for re-examination, the Thesis Chair will also recommend that the thesis be re-submitted for examination.
- 5.8 The length of period for an amendment or submission for re-examination of a thesis shall be determined by the Thesis Chair, but should not exceed twelve months from the date of notification to the candidate.

6.0 COMPLAINT OR GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION

- 6.1 A HDR candidate who has a complaint or grievance regarding supervision or any other matters affecting candidature (other than in relation to classification of theses or termination of enrolment) shall report, in the first instance, to the Thesis Chair.
- 6.2 The Thesis Chair should seek to address the candidate's complaint or grievance in accordance with relevant Curtin policies and procedures and Curtin Values.
- 6.3 If the Thesis Chair is not able to address the candidate's complaint or grievance the Thesis Chair should escalate the matter to the Director of Graduate Research or Faculty Dean of Research.

RELATED DOCUMENTS/LINKS/FORMS

[Curtin University Act 1966 \(WA\)](#)

[Rule No. 10 made pursuant to Statute No. 12 – Enrolment: Degree of Doctor by Research](#)

[Rule No. 11 made pursuant to Statute No. 12 – Enrolment: Degree of Master by Research](#)

[TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#)

[Education Services for Overseas Students \(ESOS\) Act](#)

[Course Approval and Quality Manual](#)

[Universities Australia Principles for Respectful Supervisory Relationships](#)