Higher Degree by Research Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This procedure supports the Higher Degree by Research Policy by stating detailed requirements for higher degree by research (HDR) candidates' enrolment, candidature, supervision, submission of theses, examinations and academic appeals.

Scope

(2) This procedure applies to:

a. all HDR courses offered by Charles Sturt University (the University)
b. all dual awards where the University is one of the awarding partner institutions, and
c. joint awards where the University is the lead university for a student's candidature. (Where the partner university is the lead university for a joint award student's candidature, the partner university's policies and procedures for HDR awards apply.)

(3) Some aspects of requirements for HDR courses are stated by other policies and procedures:

a. the Admissions Policy and Admissions - Entry Requirements (Higher Degrees by Research) Procedure state entry requirements for HDR courses
b. the Course and Subject Procedure - Coursework Design states subject design requirements for coursework subjects in HDR courses
c. the Academic Staff Qualifications and Expectations Procedure states
    i. required levels of qualification for teaching and assessment in all types of courses, including HDR courses, and
    ii. the process for assessment of a person's qualifications and experience as equivalent to the required level of qualification.

(4) The Higher Degree by Research Scholarships Procedure - Australian Government Research Training Program Funded Scholarships states requirements specific to those scholarships.

References

(5) Where supporting documents are named in this procedure, they will be listed on the associated information tab.

Section 2 - Policy

(6) This procedure supports the Higher Degree by Research Policy and should be read alongside that policy.

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Section 3 - Procedure

Enrolment

(7) Candidates will be enrolled in full-time or part-time study load, and can only change to the other study load with the approval of their principal supervisor and Sub Dean (Graduate Studies). Additional approval is required for all AGRTP scholarship holders from the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services. They must notify the Office of Research Services of such changes.

(8) A candidate must maintain their enrolment until they submit their thesis or their candidature is terminated.

(9) Professional doctorate candidates will first complete the coursework subjects stated in the University Handbook. Doctor of philosophy, masters by research candidates and professional doctorate candidates who have completed their coursework components will typically enrol in two higher degree by research shell subjects, one in session 1 and one in session 2, as stated in the University Handbook. Session 1 shell subjects will typically run from January to June but apply the standard session 1(30) census date, and session 2 shell subjects will run from July to December and apply the standard session 2(60) census date. Session 3(90) census dates do not apply to HDR subjects.

(10) A candidate must be enrolled for two sessions in each year of their candidature, with subject enrolment aligning with the enrolment pattern provided in the Handbook for the year admitted into the course, except where leave for a session has been approved.

(11) Candidates are expected to focus their studies on their HDR course, as these courses are demanding. A candidate may, however, apply to the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services for approval to enrol concurrently in another award course, with the support of the student's principal supervisor and the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) of the faculty in which their HDR candidature is based.

(12) A candidate who has submitted their thesis for examination and is asked to respond to the examiners' recommendations must provide their response by the due date for response, or they may be required to enrol in that session, as determined by the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services.

(13) Where the examination committee requires the candidate to resubmit, the candidate must be enrolled while they prepare the resubmission.

Calculating the period of candidature

(14) A candidate's period of candidature will be calculated starting from:

a. the start date of actually commencing work in their course, as confirmed by the candidate and their supervisors, or
b. if the candidate has transferred from a course at another institution leading to the same award, the start date of their enrolment in the course at the other institution.

(15) Any period of probationary candidature will be included in the calculation of the total period of candidature.

(16) The maximum periods of candidature stated in the Higher Degree by Research Policy are extended by any approved leave of absence that lasts for a whole session: see the 'Leave' section in this procedure.

(17) The Higher Degree by Research Policy authorises the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services to approve an exception to the minimum or maximum periods of candidature stated in that policy, for an individual candidate where there are exceptional circumstances, on the recommendation of the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies).

Candidates' rights and responsibilities

(18) HDR candidates' rights are set out in the Student Charter.

(19) Candidates will have opportunities to provide feedback on their educational experiences through their progress reports and the annual graduate student research experience survey.

(20) HDR candidates are responsible for:

a. applying themselves to their research and preparation of their thesis diligently and to the best of their ability
b. completing the training required by the Academic Integrity Policy and, if required, the Defence Trade Controls Act – Compliance and Administration Procedure or any other appropriate training as required for their research
c. consulting their supervisors regularly as agreed in the expectations and communications plan
d. participating fully in the six-monthly report to the Office of Research Services on their progress
e. collaborating with their supervisory team to obtain any ethical and/or safety approvals needed for their research and meeting the conditions of such approvals. This may include approvals from Charles Sturt University, Australian Government regulatory authorities, host organisations, or regulatory authorities of another country in which the candidate undertakes their research
f. completing ethics training where research projects involve human participants or animals, and
g. abiding by the codes, rules, policies, procedures, guidelines and decisions of the University and, as relevant, Australian Government regulatory authorities, a host organisation or regulatory authority of another country in which the candidate undertakes their research.

Supervision

Appointment of supervisors

(21) A prospective candidate's admission recommendation will nominate their proposed supervisors, as recommended by the appropriate Head of School (or equivalent) or their delegate and the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) when it is submitted to the Office of Research Services. All members of the supervisory team must confirm their willingness to supervise by signing the admission recommendation or providing their written endorsement.

(22) All principal supervisors and co-supervisors, including anyone external to the University, must be approved and recorded on the register of supervisors as stated in the Higher Degree by Research Policy.

(23) A principal supervisor and at least one co-supervisor must:

a. have expertise relevant to the proposed research and appropriate methodology
b. expect to be available for the candidate's maximum period of candidature
c. have relevant supervisory load approved to support the candidate, and
d. hold a qualification, or a combination of qualifications and experience, at the required level stated for research supervisors in the Academic Staff Qualifications and Expectations Procedure.

Indigenous culture competency requirements for supervisors

(24) For a candidate whose research project is related to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities or cultures, the supervisors and candidate must have completed the University's online module in Indigenous cultural competence.

Criteria for addition to the register of supervisors

(25) Adjunct or honorary academic staff or a person external to the University, subject to the approval by the Dean,

Graduate Studies, can be appointed as a co-supervisor only where they have satisfied the criteria set out in clause (29).

(26) Adjunct or honorary academic staff or a person external to the University appointed as co-supervisors do not attract salary as set out in the Appointments Procedure – Visiting and Adjunct Appointments.

(27) An adjunct or honorary academic staff or a person external to the University may not be appointed as a principal supervisor, with the exception of cases of existing candidates with whom they already have a supervisory relationship, subject to approval by the Dean, Graduate Studies.

(28) Clauses (25) – (27) do not apply to academic staff employed by the university in a School or Centre governed by a third-party agreement.

(29) To be recorded on the register of supervisors as a co-supervisor only, a person must:

a. be a member of the academic staff of the University; or an adjunct or honorary academic staff member or a person external to the University who is endorsed by the Head of School or Research Institute Director, and approved by the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services to be added to the register (refer to clauses (25)–(27))
b. hold a doctoral qualification or have an equivalent record of scholarly achievement
c. be currently engaged in research or, for the supervision of a professional doctorate, be a leading scholar or practitioner in the relevant profession
d. agree to supervise HDR candidates in accordance with the requirements of the Higher Degree by Research Policy and this procedure, and
e. have undertaken, or agree to undertake within six months, training in HDR supervision as required by the University. Exemptions from part or all of the training requirements may be granted by the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services, where evidence of completion of similar training at other institutions has been provided.
    i. Adjunct or honorary academic staff or a person external to the University appointed to a supervisory team where there is already a registered co-supervisor do not need to complete training in HDR supervision and can be classified as an “External Expert”.

(30) To be recorded on the register as a principal supervisor, subject to clause (27), a person must meet all the criteria in clause (29), and also:

a. be research active according to the current university criteria
b. have within the last five years been co-supervisor for a minimum of one year full-time equivalent of a candidate undertaking an HDR thesis (research components).

(31) The Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services may decide, on the recommendation of the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies), to remove a supervisor from the register, or downgrade a principal supervisor to a co-supervisor only, where the person:

a. ceases or fails to meet any of the criteria in clause (29) or responsibilities in clause (34)
b. if a principal supervisor, ceases to meet the criterion in clause (30)a or responsibilities in clause (33).

(32) Anyone who wishes to be added to the register must complete the relevant application form, attach a current curriculum vitae, and submit it to the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) of the relevant faculty.

Responsibilities of supervisors

(33) A principal supervisor is responsible for:

a. negotiating roles with co-supervisors at the start of the candidature, in consultation with the candidate, including the role of the supervisory team
b. leading the supervisory team to ensure active involvement and support for the candidate in achieving their research goals
c. ensuring the candidate and the supervisory team complete all training as required by the nature of the research project, as recommended by the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) and approved by the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services. Training may include but is not limited to academic and research integrity training, Indigenous cultural competence training, copyright training or National Security Compliance Committee required training
d. monitoring the candidate's performance against the standard required for the course
e. completing reports on the candidate's progress, with detailed comments
f. where the research deals with human or animal subjects, ensuring no research data is collected until the relevant university and/or other ethics committees have approved the research: see the Research Policy for ethics approval requirements
g. where the research deals with human biological specimens, or radioactive materials, ensuring that the research has the necessary safety approvals and management plans
h. in conjunction with the Head of School (or equivalent) or their delegate, ensuring suitable resources/facilities are available to the candidate so they can undertake their research
i. advising the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) of academic or research misconduct or poor progress
j. bringing to the attention of the Office of Research Services any issues of intellectual property rights and/or commercial or other confidentiality issues with the candidate's research project or the content of their thesis
k. discussing with the candidate the potential pool of examiners and advising the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services, through the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies), of the names and credentials of suitable examiners
l. informing the candidate of planned leave, departure or retirement and, in consultation with the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies), making alternative arrangements for supervision
m. helping co-supervisors who are inexperienced in supervision to develop their supervisory skills
n. where a candidate's thesis includes commercially sensitive or confidential material, supporting the candidate in requesting approval for restrictions on access to the thesis, and
o. where a candidate's thesis includes material that may require assessment and approval for release in relation to defence trade controls, ensuring that the material is assessed accordingly.

(34) All members of the supervisory team are responsible for:

a. modelling the expected conduct and behaviour, and guiding the development of candidates as responsible and ethical researchers
b. providing guidance, where appropriate, on:
    i. the nature of research
    ii. clarifying expectations of the candidate and of the supervisory team
    iii. the standard expected for the award
    iv. the choice of the research topic
    v. the planning and execution of the research program
    vi. development of a data management plan
    vii. ethical issues relating to the research

viii. methodological issues
ix. assessment of anticipated risks of the research and, where these are significant, developing a risk management plan
x. data analysis issues
xi. possible commercial outcomes and production of intellectual property, and the implications of these, and
xii. possible solutions for unexpected problems that arise in the research

c. maintaining close and regular contact with the candidate after establishing at the start of the candidature arrangements for this contact including, where appropriate, an expectations and communications plan
d. requiring written or other work from the candidate on an agreed schedule so that progress can be assessed regularly
e. monitoring carefully the candidate's performance against the standard required for the course, and bringing inadequate progress or work below the expected standard to the candidate's attention in a timely manner. The team should help the candidate develop solutions to problems once identified, including referral to academic or other support and resources available through the University
f. ensuring that the research work and examinable work are the candidate's own work and that where the candidate receives substantial assistance, it is acknowledged in the examinable work and does not conflict with the requirement that the intellectual content of the research and examinable work is the candidate's own
g. commenting within a mutually agreed time frame on drafts of the examinable work as the candidate prepares it for submission
h. providing general support and encouragement to the candidate
i. ensuring that they understand the difference between legitimate supervision and constructive comments on a student's work and improper supervision or editing that may be considered research or academic misconduct, and
j. encouraging the candidate to disseminate the research, including the production of publications and/or creative works, in consultation with the rest of the supervisory team.

Absence or departure of supervisors

(35) If a principal supervisor is unable to supervise a candidate for an extended period, either:

a. preferably, another member of the supervisory team, who is on the register of supervisors as a principal supervisor, will act as the candidate's principal supervisor for that period, or
b. the relevant Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) will nominate another principal supervisor for the period.

(36) If a candidate's principal supervisor leaves the University:

a. the principal supervisor may be granted an adjunct position and approved by the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services to continue as principal supervisor, or
b. the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) will act as principal supervisor until the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services appoints a replacement principal supervisor on the recommendation of the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies).

(37) A principal or co-supervisor can resign from a supervisory team but must discuss this with their Head of School (or equivalent) or their delegate and Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) first.

(38) If a candidate's co-supervisor is unable to provide supervision, the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services may appoint a replacement co-supervisor on the recommendation of the relevant Sub Dean (Graduate Studies).

(39) If the University is unable to provide adequate supervision of a candidate:

a. the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services will approve leave of up to 12 months for the candidate, and
b. during this period the faculty and Office of Research Services will, in consultation with the candidate, make alternative arrangements for the candidature at the University or, if necessary, at another institution.

Leave

Recreation leave

(40) Candidates are entitled to 20 working days recreation leave each year, in addition to any public holidays or compulsory University closures. Taking recreation leave does not result in candidature periods being extended.

(41) A candidate should only take recreation leave at a time that has been agreed with their supervisory team.

Sessional leave

(42) During a candidate's leave, they are not expected to be working on their research or thesis preparation, so support from their supervisory team will be limited.

(43) The 'Calculating the period of candidature' section in this procedure states the effect of sessional leave on the calculation.

(44) Candidates who are studying on an Australian student visa will not normally take sessional leave, because they must complete their course within the duration of their visa. Such students can, however, apply to the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services for sessional leave where there are exceptional circumstances. If sessional leave is approved for these candidates, the Office of Research Services will administer it in collaboration with Student Administration.

Applications for sessional leave

(45) To request sessional leave, a candidate must submit the application for leave form to the Office of Research Services at least 10 working days before the census date of the session for which they are seeking leave. They must continue working on their research and/or thesis preparation until the leave has been approved.

(46) Where a candidate applies for sessional leave later than the census date for the relevant session, sessional leave will only be granted if the candidate provides satisfactory evidence that:

a. there has been an administrative error by the University that prevented them from applying earlier or which now necessitates the leave, or
b. circumstances outside their control prevented them from applying earlier, or
c. a late withdrawal (LW) grade is requested up to four weeks before the end of the session.

(47) Other than in exceptional circumstances, a candidate may not apply for sessional leave:

a. before their candidature has been confirmed, or
b. once they have completed the maximum period of candidature.

(48) Candidates who are receiving an Australian Government Research Training Program–funded scholarship that pays them a stipend must apply for the relevant type of paid leave described in the Higher Degree by Research Scholarships Procedure - Australian Government Research Training Program Funded Scholarships. Such applications can be made on the standard HDR candidates leave application form.

(49) Sessional leave will only be approved for a single session per application unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Normal reasons for sessional leave and exceptional circumstances

(50) Acceptable reasons for leave of absence include:

a. parental leave
b. illness, injury or carer's responsibilities for someone who is ill or injured
c. employment commitments, and
d. personal financial reasons.

(51) Exceptional circumstances that may be grounds for sessional leave beyond normal limits are severe, unusual circumstances outside the candidate's control and/or combinations of multiple circumstances outside their control.

(52) For requests for sessional leave because of exceptional circumstances, the candidate must provide supporting documentation such as a medical certificate that states the severity and period of the illness or injury. The Charles Sturt University medical certificate is recommended for this purpose.

Administrative leave

(53) A candidate may be granted administrative leave of absence for one session where their progress is being held up by reasons such as a change of supervision or waiting for approval of a change to their program of research. Supervisory support may be limited during administrative leave.

Withdrawing after census

(54) A candidate may withdraw without academic penalty after census if they apply for:

a. late withdrawal (LW) up to four weeks before the end of the session, or
b. approved withdrawal (AW)

AW must be approved by the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services, and will only be granted for exceptional/adverse circumstances with appropriate supporting documentation. Applications and supporting documents are submitted via the approved withdrawal form.

(55) Where a candidate withdraws after census:

a. they will receive a late withdrawal (LW) or an approved withdrawal (AW) temporary grade for their subject enrolments for the session.
b. Students may apply for refund of fees because of exceptional circumstances: the Enrolment and Fees Policy and Enrolment and Fees Procedure state the process and conditions for this.

Research overseas

(56) The Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services may approve a request from a candidate currently residing in Australia to conduct research overseas, that is candidates wishing to conduct fieldwork/research for a set period and not candidates intending to be based overseas, subject to the following conditions and restrictions:

a. The principal supervisor and the relevant Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) confirm that the candidate needs to conduct the research overseas in order to complete their research project.
b. Quality supervision and support of the candidate will continue while they are overseas.
c. The candidate has given a written undertaking to return to Australia immediately after the overseas research to

continue their candidature. This is not mandatory for overseas students.

d. A scholarship recipient will not normally be allowed to undertake overseas research in the first six months of holding the scholarship, although any period of candidature for the award before the candidate accepted the scholarship may be taken into account in deciding the earliest date on which the candidate may depart. Domestic full-time scholarship holders are expected to reside in Australia unless the research program includes a requirement for activity overseas.
e. The candidate must maintain their current enrolment mode (full-time or part-time) at the University while conducting their overseas research.

Research at other organisations

(57) The Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services may approve a candidate's request to conduct research at an organisation outside the tertiary education system, where:

a. the request is made well in advance
b. the candidate's principal supervisor and Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) endorse the request, and
c. the candidate's principal supervisor and Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) confirm that the candidate will have adequate support, supervision, training and research freedom to conduct the external research.

Thesis requirements

(58) Where candidature is on the basis of research conducted during the period of candidature, the thesis must be consistent with the approved research proposal.

(59) For all candidates, the language of the thesis must be English. However, the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services may, in exceptional circumstances, give approval for a thesis to be written in another language where the relevant Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) recommends this.

(60) The thesis must not include as its substantive content any work or material that the candidate has previously submitted for another degree or another professional activity. Such work may, however, be quoted or be included in appendices.

(61) The candidate must have written permission from the principal supervisor before obtaining paid or professional editorial assistance in preparing the thesis. Such assistance must be specifically acknowledged in the thesis: see the 'Thesis content and style' section in this procedure.

(62) Professional editing of a candidate's thesis must be limited to formatting, grammar and style (Australian Standards for Editing Practice (ASEP) standards D – Language and Illustrations, and E – Completeness and Consistency). The editor must not alter or improve the substantive content or conceptual organisation of the thesis. Where a professional editor provides advice to a candidate on matters of structure (ASEP Standard C – Substance and Structure), they must give examples only.

(63) All theses must be submitted for similarity checking, as required by the Academic Integrity Policy.

Written theses

(64) Where the thesis is entirely written, it can either be a printed thesis or a series of publications, or a combination of the two.

Non-written works

(65) Where a thesis is not primarily a written work, it must include a piece of critical writing or exegesis which:

a. describes the development of the non-written component over the period of candidature
b. explains how each of the non-written components addresses the objectives of the approved research proposal
c. justifies the research hypotheses with a literature review, and
d. ties the non-written components together by introducing them and proposing conclusions.

(66) Where part of the thesis is a body of work in a physical location, such as an exhibition, installation or performance, the candidate will, in consultation with their principal supervisor, notify the Office of Research Services of the nature, scope and timing of the work at the time of submitting the appointment of examiners form.

(67) The candidate will ensure that additional items such as a video of a performance, visual presentation of artwork, or recording are supplied to examiners either with the written thesis or as soon as the items are available.

(68) Where the thesis includes bodies of work that can only be reproduced physically, the candidate will provide four copies of these to the Office of Research Services along with the written thesis.

Thesis requirements for the doctor of philosophy: thesis by publication

(69) Candidates who plan to submit a thesis by publication should obtain their principal supervisor's endorsement for their undertaking this thesis format more than 12 months before they submit the thesis. The candidate must have this endorsement at latest by six months before they submit the thesis.

(70) In considering a candidate's request to undertake the thesis by publication, the principal supervisor will guide the candidate on the appropriate quantity and quality of papers, and on realistic peer review and publication time-frames for work in the discipline.

(71) A doctor of philosophy thesis by publication will contain papers by the candidate that have either been published or submitted for publication. The publication or submitted publication must be in a peer-reviewed journal or by a scholarly publisher.

(72) The candidate's supervisory team will advise the candidate on journals and other publication outlets that are of sufficiently high repute that examiners will likely consider that the publications meet the standard for the award:

a. Journals, where possible, should be published in high quality or high impact peer reviewed journals or other locations that are discipline appropriate.
b. Books or book chapters should be from recognised publishers.

(73) The works must have been researched and written during the period of candidature.

(74) The number of papers may range from a single long monograph to six papers. Additional papers may be approved on the recommendation of the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies) to the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services.

(75) The bulk of the publications in the thesis will be published work, unless the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services approves an exception on the recommendation of the relevant Sub Dean (Graduate Studies).

(76) Candidates who intend to include their published work in their thesis must ensure their agreements with the publisher permit this.

(77) The Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services may approve submission in an alternative format, on the recommendation of the relevant Sub Dean (Graduate Studies). Such a thesis may also include video recordings, film or other works of visual or sonic arts, computer software, digital material or other non-written material.

(78) A thesis by publication must include a declaration by the candidate that specifies:

a. title, authorship and publication outlet of each paper
b. the current status of each paper or work not already published (in press, accepted, under review).
c. A statement must be provided about the candidate's contribution to specific elements of the published papers, including: (1) percentage contribution to the writing of each section of each paper, and (2) percentage contribution of each of the analyses or experimental procedures in the paper. This statement must be verified by each of the co-authors of each paper.

(79) The thesis may include appendices of other papers not related to the main themes of the thesis, raw data, programs, questionnaires and other material appropriate to the discipline.

(80) The thesis will be formatted as stated in the 'Thesis content and style' section of this procedure, although journal formatting can be preserved for journal articles included.

(81) Works included in the thesis should be presented as individual chapters or, where two or more works are closely linked, may be combined in one chapter.

(82) As well as the published works, there must be a comprehensive introduction and final review to link the work and establish their broad academic context. Each work must also have a brief introduction to place it in the context of the whole thesis.

(83) The thesis should constitute an integrated account that:

a. introduces the field of study and the hypothesis or research questions, and how these are addressed in the ensuing chapters, giving a general account of the theory and methodological components of the research where these components may be distributed across separate papers or chapters
b. links texts to establish the relationship between one chapter and the next, such as an introduction to each chapter
c. draws together the published works in a conclusion, addressing how the individual works are linked to the theory and methodology adopted, and evaluating the contribution of the research in the publications to advancing the area of research, and
d. provides further discussion if necessary where restrictions of journal publication or exhibition have limited full exposition of the findings and their significance and/or shortcomings.

Thesis requirements for the doctor of philosophy: thesis by prior publication

(84) The requirements for a doctor of philosophy thesis by prior publication are as follows. The thesis must:

a. comprise one or more prior publications or creative works that have been:
    i. published or otherwise made accessible to the public following peer review or a similar level of peer scrutiny
    ii. approved for submission for the thesis at the time of the candidate's admission, and
b. include an essay that integrates the prior works and:
    i. sets out how the works make a significant original contribution to knowledge in the discipline or field
    ii. contains a substantial theoretical component relevant to the discipline or field, and
    iii. may involve additional introductory and concluding chapters.

Thesis length

(85) The following recommended and maximum word counts for a thesis apply to the texts of the thesis excluding footnotes, references and appendices.

Award	Recommended word count	Maximum word count
Doctor of Philosophy	80,000	100,000
Professional Doctorate	50,000	60,000
Master by Research	40,000	50,000

(86) For a doctor of philosophy thesis by publication or a doctor of philosophy thesis by prior publication, the maximum length for the integrating essay and any other text in support of the publications is 20,000 words.

(87) The length of the written component of a thesis that supports a body of creative work will depend on the approved proportions of both the creative and written components. As a guideline, the written component will not exceed:

a. for a doctor of philosophy, 40,000 words, or
b. for a master by research, 25,000 words.

(88) A thesis can only be longer than the maximum word counts if the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services approves the exception.

Thesis format

(89) Any written component of a thesis must be a word-processed document submitted in an electronic format such as a PDF file.

(90) The text and any footnotes must be in a clearly legible 12-point font.

(91) Page text will be spaced one-and-a-half lines, except for quotations, footnotes, references and captions of tables and of figures, which will use single-line spacing.

(92) Thesis pages will be numbered consecutively.

(93) Pages must have the following minimum margins:

a. gutter margin (that is, spine-side margin), four centimetres
b. all other margins, two centimetres.

(94) Any written work that is required to be printed for examination will be printed double-sided on International Standard Organisation (ISO) A4 size white bonded paper. If diagrams, maps, tables and similar materials do not fit readily on this sheet size, ISO B4 size may be used. B4 size pages will be folded and bound so as to open out at the top and right.

(95) Non-written materials will be presented for examination in a format that enables them to be stored and retrieved as a durable record. They may be presented in a digital format. Photographs, sounds, interactive and visual material may be presented as a digital media file.

Thesis content and style

(96) The table below sets out requirements for the sections of a thesis. The sections should be in the order shown in the table.

Section	Requirements
Title page	The first page of the thesis. Will identify the thesis as a thesis submitted to Charles Sturt University for the award (the full name of the award). Will state: 1. the candidate's name and qualifications they already hold 2. the full title of the thesis, and 3. the month and year of submission. Where the thesis contains confidential material, will include the following statement: 'This thesis contains confidential material as described on page [page number]. This thesis must not be shared with anyone who is not directly involved in examining it.'
Table of contents	Will list the sections in the table and the thesis chapter titles, in the order in which they occur, with the page numbers at which each begins.
Certificate of authorship	Will be signed by the candidate. Will use the following text: 'I declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge and belief, understand that it contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in this submission, as appropriate. Any contribution made to this submission by any person at Charles Sturt University or elsewhere is fully acknowledged. I declare that this submission contains no material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other qualification at Charles Sturt University or any other educational institution. I declare that I have made all reasonable efforts to obtain copyright permission for any third-party content included in this submission and I have not included such content in this submission without the copyright owner's permission. I agree that this submission be accessible for the purpose of study and research in accordance with normal conditions established by Charles Sturt University for the care, loan and reproduction of submissions subject to confidentiality provisions as approved by the University. I certify that appropriate ethics and other compliance approvals have been sought where required and the ethics approval number is ... [or] I certify that ethics and other compliance approvals were not required for this research project. The thesis complies with University requirements for a thesis as set out in the related University policies and procedures (see Policy Library)'
Acknowledgement of assistance	Where the candidate has received substantial assistance with their research from others, the thesis will include a separate page acknowledging this. Examples of assistance may include: 1. sponsorship of the research by industry, government or Charles Sturt University internal research funding 2. collection of data 3. processing of data including selecting and using particular statistical techniques 4. interpretation of results of the statistical analysis 5. use of graphics 6. word processing 7. artifical intelligence 8. editing (which must be acknowledged separately: see 'Professional editorial assistance'). The acknowledgement will list the names of those who provided assistance and the nature of the assistance. If any of the assistance was provided for a fee, this will be stated. If the candidate was supported by a scholarship funded by the Australian Commonwealth Government Research Training Program, then this section should include the following text: 'This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship doi.org/10.82133/C42F-K220.'
Professional editorial assistance	Where the candidate has had their principal supervisor's approval to employ a professional editor to edit for format, grammar and style, and has used such an editor, the thesis must include a statement to this effect as a separate page. If the professional editor's current or former area of academic specialisation is similar to the field of research of the thesis, this must also be stated.

Section	Requirements
Intellectual property rights	If the thesis contains material that could or does have implications for the intellectual property rights of the candidate, the University, a sponsor of the research or some other person or body, those implications will be stated under the heading 'Intellectual property rights', either on the same page as the acknowledgment of assistance or on the following page.
Ethics approval	If the thesis reports on research involving humans, human biological materials or animals, this section will be included and will state, for each ethics approval: 1. the name of the relevant Charles Sturt University ethics committee or the name and organisation of the relevant external ethics committee, and 2. the approval date and approval number(s).
Artificial intelligence assistance acknowledgement	I acknowledge the use of [e.g. ChatGPT 4.0 (https://chat.openai.com/) / Google Gemini (https://Google Gemini.google.com/chat/)] to complete my thesis and research. I used these tools to [e.g. identify limitations in past research, uncover potential measures, identify, but not correct, writing errors, conception and design of the project or output, analysis or interpretation of research data, drafting significant parts of the research output or critically revising it so as to contribute to its interpretation]. I did not insert any output generated by these tools verbatim—but instead used their output to inspire ideas.
Confidential material	If the thesis contains material that is confidential for commercial or other reasons, either for a specified period or indefinitely, this section will identify the material, the period of its confidentiality and the reasons for its confidentiality. The title page must also warn readers of the confidential material.
Publications resulting from the research	If any publications have resulted from the research, the citations of these publications should be listed on a separate page. If these publications were co-authored, those citations should include a statement that makes clear the extent of the candidate's contribution to those works.
Abstract	An abstract of the work should be approximately: 1. for doctor of philosophy and professional doctorate thesis, 500 words, or 2. for a master by research thesis, 350 words.
Body of thesis	The chapters and other substantive contents of the thesis, including footnotes.
References	A list of references which lists all sources acknowledge in the body of the thesis. Will use a single referencing style appropriate to the discipline. The principal supervisor can advise the candidate on bibliographic standards.
Appendices	An appendix is where the candidate may include supplementary material that is related to the research but does not contribute directly to the argument of the thesis. Material in appendices is examinable unless written entirely by authors other than the candidate. Appendices may include: 1. data sets 2. software code 3. examples of surveys or other instruments used to gather research data 4. handbooks and manuals 5. publications arising from the research that are not directly relevant to the arguments of the thesis 6. recordings of exhibitions or installations mounted during the candidature but not part of the thesis 7. archival and primary texts, and 8. other material as considered necessary by the student and principal supervisor.

Integrity and confidentiality of the examination process

(97) Before the Office of Research Services provides the thesis to examiners, where it contains material that is either confidential or commercially sensitive, each examiner must confirm in writing that they will not release the confidential or commercially sensitive material.

(98) Only the Office of Research Services may communicate with examiners during the examination process.

(99) Examiners must not collaborate in preparing their reports or deciding their recommendations.

(100) Examiners' names will be included when their reports are released to the candidate, unless an examiner asks that their name not be included.

(101) An examiner may be informed of the final outcome of the examination process if they request this.

Honoraria for examiners and arbiters

(102) The University will pay each examiner and each arbiter an honorarium, unless they are a salaried academic staff member of the University. The honorarium will be paid at the rate recommended by Universities Australia at the time they were sent the thesis for examination, once the Office of Research Services has received the examiner's report. The school or institute identified as hosting the candidature in the recommendation for admission will bear the cost of the honorarium.

Submission of final thesis

(103) The Higher Degree by Research Policy requires the candidate to upload a digital copy of the final version of a thesis that has been graded pass, to the University's research output repository. Any theses containing previously published material must have written approval of the copyright owner to include materials in the electronic copy.

(104) If the candidate has not uploaded this digital copy, the Office of Research Services may ask Student Administration to withhold their testamur or refuse them permission to attend a graduation ceremony until they have uploaded it: see the Conferral and Graduation Policy.

(105) The thesis will be openly available for open access unless the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services approves an embargo or restriction.

Restricted Access

(106) The Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services may approve a full or partial embargo on the circulation, copying and electronic access of a thesis, on the recommendation of the Sub Dean (Graduate Studies), where the thesis contains content that:

a. if released, would affect national or industrial security
b. is commercial in confidence or culturally sensitive
c. if released, would breach copyright laws or licensing agreements (such as where an agreement with a publisher restricts access), or
d. if released, would pose a risk to the author, the University or any third party.

(107) The embargo will last for two years, unless the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services approves an embargo for a longer period or a permanent restriction.

Joint and dual HDR awards

(108) The following additional rules apply to candidature for a dual or joint award.

a. A candidate's supervisory team must include at least one 'partner supervisor'. That is, a co-supervisor who is a staff member of the partner university and either:
    i. meets the partner university's requirements to be a principal supervisor, or
    ii. meets the Charles Sturt University criteria to be added to the register of supervisors as a co-supervisor.
b. A candidate's supervisory team must include a least one Charles Sturt University academic staff member who is listed on the University's register of supervisors.
c. The Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services will consult their counterpart at the partner

university about the appointment of the nominated supervisors.

d. Where the principal supervisor is unable to supervise the candidate for an extended period, a partner supervisor may act as principal supervisor.
e. Where the candidate asks to change their research focus so that the dual or joint award candidature is no longer feasible, the change will require the endorsement of the relevant officer of the partner university as well as the normal endorsers, for approval by the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services.
f. Where a candidate is approved to change their research focus and, as a result, their dual or joint award candidature is no longer feasible, their candidature will revert to a standard candidature for the Charles Sturt University award.

(109) For candidates undertaking a joint award, any temporary or ongoing replacement of either the candidate's principal supervisor or a partner supervisor requires, in addition to the normal endorsements and approval, the written approval of the counterpart of the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services at the partner university.

(110) For candidates undertaking a dual award, the following applies:

a. A candidate will normally complete at least one full-time year of candidature, or part-time equivalent, at each partner university. During this time they will be subject to the higher degree by research policies and procedures of the enrolling university unless an exception is approved as part of the approval of the dual award partnership agreement.
b. The candidate will incur tuition fees and other relevant charges for their enrolment period at each partner university, unless the dual award partnership agreement states otherwise.
c. Where a dual award candidate, during their enrolment at Charles Sturt University, fails to meet the University's policy or procedure requirements, the Dean, Graduate Research or Director, Research Services will notify their counterpart at the partner university of this, unless the dual award partnership agreement states otherwise.
d. The dual award partnership agreement will state clearly how each partner university will ensure adequate supervision continues if the principal supervisor at that university resigns, retires, takes extended leave, or is otherwise unable to continue supervision for an extended period.
e. Exclusion of a dual award candidate for misconduct or termination of their candidature by either partner university will normally result in termination of their dual award candidature. Termination of the candidature at Charles Sturt University does not preclude the partner university from allowing the student to continue their enrolment at the partner university as a standard HDR candidate.
f. The requirements for presentation, submission and examination of each candidate's thesis will be determined:
    i. at the time the candidate is admitted, and
    ii. will be consistent with any requirements for these matters in the dual award partnership agreement.
g. Candidates will normally be required to submit a single thesis and this will normally be examined by a process administered by the university at which the candidate is enrolled when they submit the thesis.
h. The dual award partnership agreement will define requirements for:
    i. format of the thesis
    ii. examiners
    iii. confidentiality of the examination process
    iv. examination criteria and examination
    v. consideration of examiners' reports
    vi. resubmission
    vii. appointment of an arbiter
    viii. a failed thesis
    ix. submission of the final thesis, and

x. intellectual property and confidentiality aspects of the final thesis.

i. The dual award partnership agreement must not remove the Charles Sturt University requirement that candidates' theses will be examined.

j. Where a candidate is conferred the dual awards, each partner university's testamur will record the fact that it is a dual award.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(111) Nil.

Section 5 - Glossary

(112) See the glossary section of the Higher Degree by Research Policy for definitions of terms used in this procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	16th April 2025
Review Date	8th December 2028
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research)
Approval Date	16th April 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
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