

HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH ASSESSMENT AND ASSESSMENT APPEALS POLICY

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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the approach of the Australian National Institute of Management and Commerce (IMC) to ensuring the academically rigorous, transparent, fair and timely assessment of research outputs relevant to a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) course.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Higher Degree by Research Assessment and Assessment Appeals Procedure*.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to candidates enrolled in HDR courses, and to academic and administrative staff, and any persons external to IMC, such as examiners, involved in the assessment of theses, including appeals regarding such assessment.

3 DEFINITIONS

Candidate means a student enrolled in a higher degree by research course.

Examination means the examination of a thesis as the basis for the award of a higher degree by research.

Examiner means a person appointed to examine a higher degree by research thesis. An examiner may be internal to IMC or external to IMC.

Principal Supervisor means a staff member who meets the requirements for, and has been approved for inclusion on, the Register of Supervisors as a Principal Supervisor, has primary oversight of a HDR candidate's research, and who, in conjunction with an Associate supervisor, is responsible for the guidance and supervision of that candidate's research.

Research means the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings (*TEQSA Guidance Note: Research and Research Training*, December 2024). In a HDR course this culminates in the production of a thesis that is formally examined.

Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) means a committee of the Academic Board that is both a managerial and governance committee responsible for the oversight of HDR courses, research training, research ethics and other research activities.

Thesis means the major assessable research output relevant to a HDR course presented for examination to demonstrate a candidate's original contribution to knowledge.

4 PRINCIPLES

IMC's approach to the assessment of theses:

- ensures that the assessment is academically rigorous, transparent, fair and timely;
- requires the appointment of two examiners for an HDR course at master level, at least one of whom is external and neither of whom has been involved in the supervision of the relevant candidate;
- requires the appointment of at least two external examiners for a HDR course at doctoral level, none of whom has been involved in the supervision of the relevant candidate;
- utilises external examiners who are experts in the relevant field of study;
- provides for, in instances of disagreement between examiners, the appointment of an additional external examiner;
- ensures that candidates have the right to appeal against examination outcomes on procedural grounds;
- ensures that appeals must be handled fairly and in accordance with principles of natural justice;

- preserves the confidentiality of the examination process;
- avoids actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest in all aspects of the examination process;
- ensures the provision of clear guidelines for the format and submission of theses;
- ensures that appropriate data retention practices are followed.

5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

5.1 Internal Documents

- Higher Degree Research Assessment and Assessment Appeals Procedure*
- Higher Degree, Research and Scholarships Committee Terms of Reference*
- Higher Degree Research Confirmation of Candidature and Progression Review Policy and Procedure*
- Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy*
- Research Human Research Ethics Policy*
- Research Materials and Data Management Policy*

5.2 External Documents

- Australian Council of Graduate Research, Graduate Research Good Practice Principles.*
- Australian Qualifications Framework (2nd ed), 2013*
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards), 2021*
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018*
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority, Guidance Note: Academic and Research Integrity, February 2024*
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority, Guidance Note: Research and*
- Research Training, December 2024.*

6 VERSION CONTROL

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2026.04	Academic Board	16 April 2026
2024.11	Academic Board	20 November 2024
2019.08	Academic Board	14 August 2019
2015.10	Academic Board	22 October 2015

7 STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP/MAINTENANCE

The Research and Scholarship Committee oversees the implementation of, and compliance with, this Policy. For any enquiries or clarification, please contact policy@imc.edu.au.