

HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Governing Policy

[Higher Degrees by Research Policy](#)

Purpose

This procedure outlines the responsibilities, guidelines, and process for Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) Courses, in addition to the Master of Management (MMgt) and Graduate Certificate in Research Methodologies (GCRM) as Research pathway Courses, for AIB Staff, Supervisors, applicants and Candidates. To provide best practice supervision and research management, MMgt Candidates are supported by AIB HDR processes.

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Definitions

Unless otherwise defined in this document, all capitalised terms are defined in the [glossary](#).

Procedure

1. Candidature

- 1.1. Applicants interested in applying to an AIB Higher Degrees by Research Course or a Research Pathway Course will be subject to the admission process conducted in accordance with the AIB [Admission Policy and Procedure](#).
- 1.2. AIB will ensure each Candidate has a Research Supervisory Panel throughout the duration of their HDR Candidature ensuring the panel is suitably qualified and experienced.
- 1.3. Continuation of the Candidature is subject to satisfactory annual review as outlined in section 8 of this HDR Procedure.
- 1.4. The maximum duration of Candidature for doctoral Candidates is four years (full time) or eight years (part time), as outlined in the respective [Course Briefs](#). For Master of Management and Graduate Certificate in Research Methodologies research-pathway Candidates, the maximum duration is aligned with the coursework durations as outlined in the [Academic Progress Procedure](#), Section 3.
- 1.5. Candidates who receive a scholarship must meet all the course milestone requirements and their annual reports must demonstrate timely progression in line with sections 5 and 8 of this HDR Procedure.

2. Research Leadership and Supervisory Panel Responsibilities

- 2.1. Research leadership is undertaken by the following defined roles:
 - Associate Dean, Research
 - Research Discipline Lead
 - Research Coordinator
 - Principal and Associate Supervisors.

The collective of the Associate Dean Research, Research Discipline Lead and Research Coordinator, supported by the Research Administration Officer, forms the Research Operations Team.
- 2.2. The Associate Dean, Research's key responsibilities include but are not limited to:
 - (a) maintenance of a register of Supervisors, their Research activity and continued eligibility to supervise.
 - (b) ensuring appropriate appointments in each Research Supervisory Panel and reporting them to the Research & Higher Degrees Committee.
 - (c) identifying strategies to support Candidates and/or Supervisors to support academic progression.
 - (d) ensuring appropriate measures are in place to (i) monitor Candidate progression (e.g. through the annual progress review), (ii) identify Candidates at risk, and (iii) leadership support and oversight for Candidates at risk of not making satisfactory academic progress (i.e. not

- meeting the required course milestones as per the Research Candidate Handbook).
- (e) receiving and managing confidential feedback from Candidates and/or Supervisors to identify and address potential issues or problems as early as possible.
- 2.3. The Research Discipline Lead's key responsibilities include but are not limited to:
- (a) providing research Course and Subject content, design and pathway oversight.
 - (b) Subject Coordination of core research coursework subjects.
 - (c) interaction with Candidates through webinars and learning management system.
 - (d) providing academic coursework guidance to Research Candidates.
 - (e) monitor Candidate progression through their performance in research coursework subjects and their participation in annual research forums and events at AIB (e.g. research candidate conference).
 - (f) support Candidates at risk, particularly during the coursework stage, of not making satisfactory academic progress (i.e. not meeting the required course milestones as per the Research Candidate Handbook).
- 2.4. The Research Coordinator's key responsibilities include but are not limited to:
- (a) responding to enquiries from potential Candidates.
 - (b) identifying and recommending appropriate Supervisors for Candidates.
 - (c) being the designated official point of contact for the Candidate.
 - (d) addressing student enquiries, supported by the Research Administration Officer.
 - (e) managing processes through the Candidature life-cycle.
 - (f) monitor Candidate progression through their participation in annual research forums and events at AIB (e.g. research candidate conference).
 - (g) support Candidate, at risk, particularly through the candidature milestone stages, of not making satisfactory academic progress (i.e. not meeting the required course milestones as per the Research Candidate Handbook).
- 2.5. Research Supervisory Panels are responsible for supervising the Candidate in line with AIB Supervisor Guidelines; key duties include but are not limited to:
- (a) guiding, providing feedback, and developing Research excellence and professionalism in the Candidate towards the successful and timely completion of the Research Degree.
 - (b) regular communication between the Supervisors and the Candidate throughout their entire Candidature including any periods of absence.
 - (c) guiding the design of a quality Research Proposal, a detailed Research plan and monitoring Candidate performance in the conduct of the Research relative to meeting the agreed thesis milestones and timely completion of progression reports.
 - (d) nominating of proposal Assessment panel members and examiners.
 - (e) ensuring the Research makes a substantial contribution to new knowledge within the discipline.
 - (f) developing a publication and conference plan for dissemination of Research findings.

- (g) providing advice on the acquisition of a range of Research and other skills as appropriate to the discipline and the background of the Candidate, including encourage attendance at Research related opportunities and events run by AIB.
- (h) ensuring that the Candidate has a comprehensive understanding of their responsibilities and the expectations of the Research Supervisory Panel.
- (i) identifying strategies to support the Candidate if at risk of not making satisfactory academic progress (i.e. not meeting the required course milestones as per the Research Candidate Handbook).
- (j) advising the Candidate on wellbeing and safety support services available at AIB.
- (k) adhering to the AIB's policies and procedures supporting Research, supervision and Research Training.

Specifically, and in addition to the above:

2.5.1 The Principal Supervisor is primarily responsible for the supervisory duties outlined above and in particular is responsible for:

- (i) Decisions and processes as detailed in relevant procedures, including convening the Research Supervisory Panel to review and report on the Candidate's progress and planning for the delivery of Course milestones.
- (ii) Coordinating and keeping records of regular communication between the Supervisors, the Candidate; including the Research Coordinator, when required, for resolving any issues.

2.5.2 Associate Supervisors are responsible for:

- (i) Supporting the Principal Supervisor and replacing them as Principal Supervisor if they are absent from AIB for a period no longer than six weeks.

3. Candidate Responsibilities

- 3.1. Candidates are responsible for demonstrating a professional attitude towards the Research and are expected to engage in collegial and professional development opportunities made available by AIB, and more broadly within their field.
- 3.2. Candidates must complete orientation prior to the commencement of the first Course subject to ensure candidature progression.
- 3.3. Candidates are responsible for understanding the requirements of candidature as outlined in the Research Candidate Handbook and comply with the relevant AIB policies and procedures.
- 3.4. Candidate's Research output must be their own work with any contributions by other people clearly stated in the Research thesis/project, and any Research must be conducted ethically and in accordance with the [Research and Scholarship Policy and Procedure](#), [Managing Complaints About the Conduct of Research Procedure](#), and [Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#).
- 3.5. PhD Candidates' thesis must make a significant and original contribution to knowledge; DBA Candidates' thesis must make a significant and original contribution to knowledge in the context of professional practice. Outputs from

the MMgt project must be contributing to the development of the field of Research and/or practice.

- 3.6. Candidates must play an active part in maintaining regular contact with Supervisors, ensuring an appropriate schedule of meetings to discuss progress, identify issues and seek appropriate guidelines.
- 3.7. Candidates are expected to maintain satisfactory progress and meet relevant academic Course milestones as per AIB Research Candidate Handbook. Failure to make satisfactory progress may lead to the Candidate being asked to show cause why their Candidature should not be terminated.

4. Supervision and Appointment of Supervisors

4.1. Supervisors

- (a) Supervisors will be appointed as part of the application phase, under advisement of the Research Admissions Committee to the Associate Dean Research, and will be formalised on admission. The Candidate and Supervisors must all agree to the appointments.
- (b) All doctoral research Candidates are supervised by a Research Supervisory Panel including a minimum of two Supervisors (a Principal and Associate Supervisor) who will meet the Research needs of the Candidate and have the appropriate skill sets to enable the Research thesis and the Course to be completed in a timely manner and is of sufficient quality.
- (c) MMgt Candidates are supervised by at least one Supervisor who will meet the Research needs of the Candidate and have the appropriate skill sets to enable the Research project and the Course to be completed in a timely manner and is of sufficient quality.
- (d) The skill set AIB seeks in the Supervisors for a Candidate, through their qualifications and experience, is two-fold. The primary skill is to advise and guide Candidates through a rigorous Research thesis/project process, including: development of a quality Research Proposal; robust, relevant and valid data collection and analysis; and communication of findings through a thesis/project. The primary skill is supported by expert in-depth knowledge of the underlying disciplines of the Research, and the skill to assist Candidates to identify gaps in relevant theory and application knowledge.
- (e) Only members of AIB academic staff or approved external Supervisors who are currently registered or eligible for registration as Supervisors may supervise Candidates. The Associate Dean Research may remove a member of academic staff from a supervision panel where they are no longer eligible to supervise.
- (f) If a Supervisor ceases to be an AIB academic staff member, and if it is considered to be in the best interest of the Candidate, AIB has the discretion to retain them as a Supervisor under either:
 - an adjunct appointment; or
 - a formal contract under which they are accountable to AIB for supervisory duties.

4.2. Supervisor Eligibility

- (a) Research Supervisors must have a Research Doctoral degree in order to supervise doctoral Candidates and Research Doctoral degree in order to supervise a MMgt Candidate. Degree equivalence may be approved by the Academic Dean in accordance with the [Equivalence of Professional Experience and Academic Qualifications Determination Policy](#). Supervisors must also be active in Research with relevant and recent Research experience in the Candidate's field of Research.
 - (i) Principal Supervisors must be Research Active as per the Research and Scholarship Policy, and have appropriate experience in Research supervision (e.g. have sat on at least one Higher Degrees Research Supervisory Panel to completion) and/or have completed AIB Supervisor Training, as approved by the Associate Dean, Research.
 - (ii) Associate Supervisors must be Research Active as per the Research and Scholarship Policy or have appropriate expertise as approved by the Associate Dean, Research.
- (b) Research Supervisory Panels may also include external end-user advisors as appropriate for the Research Candidate's discipline and project. External end-user advisors are not necessarily Researchers. They provide advice and expertise together with access to end-user resources and research settings which are complementary to those provided by AIB and its Supervisors. Their role is thus complementary to that of a Candidate's academic Supervisors. Advisors are not included on the supervision register.

4.3. Supervision

- (a) **Supervisor team management:** The Principal Supervisor will ensure that each Supervisor on the panel is involved in a substantive way in the Candidate's program from the commencement of that Supervisor's appointment.
- (b) **Planning and management of Candidature:**
 - (i) Supervisors will engage with Candidates to ensure they fulfil their responsibilities as detailed in the AIB Supervisor Guidelines, paying attention to the duties specified for the various phases of Candidature, i.e. before Candidature, during Candidature and towards the end of Candidature.
 - (ii) Regular contact should be maintained between Candidates and their Supervisors by appropriate means of communication, for academic supervision, guidance, and academic support and feedback. Detailed contact requirements are outlined in the AIB Supervisor Guidelines.
 - (iii) Candidates requiring non-academic wellbeing or special needs support should be referred to AIB's central services in accordance with [Support for Students Policy and Procedure](#).
 - (iv) Supervisors should support or liaise Candidates with appropriate support to ensure understanding of AIB policies and procedures.
- (c) **Principal Supervisor absence or changes:**
 - (i) Where it is anticipated that a Candidate's Principal Supervisor will be absent or where a Principal Supervisor is unexpectedly absent from duties contracted through AIB for more than six weeks, the Research Coordinator will, during that period, appoint a temporary

replacement Principal Supervisor until a replacement Principal Supervisor is appointed.

- (ii) The Research Coordinator will, after consultation with the Candidate, appoint a permanent replacement Principal Supervisor where:
 - A. The Candidate's experience will be adversely impacted if the original Principal Supervisor is no longer employed with AIB; or
 - B. There is a change in the Candidate's Research thesis such that a different Principal Supervisor would be more appropriate; or
 - C. Irreconcilable differences between the Candidate and the Principal Supervisor require a change in supervision arrangements.
- (d) **Resolving issues:** In the case of an issue between a Candidate and any member of the Research Supervisory Panel, such as difference of opinion or expectation:
 - (i) In the first instance, the concerned party should try to resolve the issue with the Candidate and the Research Supervisory Panel members.
 - (ii) If the issue is not resolved, the concerned party should contact the Research Coordinator or nominee to assist in reaching an informal resolution. Further advice may be sought from the Associate Dean Research to assist in resolving the issue.
 - (iii) If the problem cannot be resolved in this way, a Candidate can submit a formal complaint or grievance as set out in the [Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).
 - (iv) Concerned parties can access a range of support services as detailed at [Student Safety and Wellbeing](#) which lists a broader range of support services including the Employee Assistance Program.
- (e) **Supervision load limits:**
 - (i) Principal and Associate Supervisors will be limited to a supervisory load not exceeding five full-time equivalent research and research-pathway Candidates, and not more than seven individual Candidates.
 - (ii) Associate Supervisors count 50% toward the supervision load limits specified above. Workload recognition and recognition of successful completions are also shared.
 - (iii) Exceptions can be made to Clause (i) to the number of FTE Candidates supported by a Principal Supervisor, where the Principal Supervisor has demonstrated the capacity to do so. This exception must be approved by the Academic Dean, with reference to the workload allocation metrics.

4.4. Review of Supervision

- (a) AIB reviews the performance of its Supervisors on at least an annual basis, through the Candidate progress reports and performance review.
- (b) Candidates and Supervisors will have the opportunity to provide individual confidential feedback about the supervisory relationship through verbal

discussion with the Associate Dean, Research and/or Research Coordinator on a needs basis throughout Candidature.

5. Candidature Progression and Milestones

5.1. Onboarding: Induction and Orientation to Research

- (a) A commencing Candidate must satisfactorily complete the Orientation to Research module prior to commencement of the Course. The module addresses key matters such as research code of conduct, academic integrity, research ethics, library and software resources, intellectual property, and any additional matters necessary for the type of Research undertaken (including rights and responsibilities of Research Candidates and the role of Supervisors). The Research journey, including milestones and Assessments are outlined and built on throughout the research coursework subjects.
- (b) The Orientation also introduces Candidates to available support services including library and academic study support, safety and wellbeing support, complaints and appeals processes; and requirements for course attendance and progress.

5.2. Assessments

- (a) The coursework subjects are designed and marked in accordance with the AIB [Assessment Policy and Procedures](#).
- (b) Coursework subjects and the Research Proposal must be successfully completed before the Candidate can begin the Research component of the Course. Further details of Research and coursework subjects are outlined in the [Course Briefs](#).

5.3. Research Proposal Submission

- (a) The Research Proposal must be approved by the Research Supervisory Panel prior to submission to AIB for approval by the Research Proposal Assessment Panel. A Candidate may submit a Research proposal for Assessment against the advice of the Research Supervisory Panel only after adequate advice to resolve the matter is provided in a three-way discussion between the Candidate, Principal Supervisor and Research Coordinator (or the Associate Dean, Research).

5.4. Approval of the Research Proposal and Confirmation of Candidature

- (a) The written Research Proposal is provided to a specially convened Research Proposal Assessment Panel for approval. Candidates are also required to undertake an oral presentation of their proposal to the academic community prior to a proposal defence with the Research Proposal Assessment Panel (by video).
- (b) The Research Proposal Assessment Panel will consist of a chairperson, normally a senior academic staff member, and at least one other academic member with appropriate expertise. One of the panel members may be external. Panel membership is to take into consideration subject matter expertise and any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest. The Research Proposal Assessment Panel will be nominated by the Research

Supervisory Panel, in consultation with the Research Coordinator, and approved by the Associate Dean, Research.

- (c) The Research Proposal Assessment Panel may require the Candidate to re-present their Research Proposal if it finds that the scope of the project is inappropriate to the course in question, or if it determines that the Research Proposal, as drafted, contains serious conceptual, methodological or ethical issues that need resolving.
- (d) The written Research Proposal is to be submitted to the Research Coordinator a minimum of two weeks prior to the proposal defence.
- (e) Research Proposal Assessment by the Panel, may result in the following outcomes:
 - Approved;
 - Approved (subject to amendments and either be returned to the panel for further Assessment OR to the satisfaction of the Research Supervisory Panel); and
 - Not Approved.
- (f) If there is no consensus amongst the Research Proposal Assessment Panel, the Academic Dean will initiate the resolution process with a view to making a determination after being suitably appraised.

5.5. **Ethics Approvals**

- (a) Following Research Proposal approval, Candidates requiring research ethical approval, as per the AIB [Research and Scholarship Policy](#) (Section 1.7), under the guidance of the Principal Supervisor, are to apply using the required Ethics Application for Approval of Research form along with a copy of the approved Research Proposal.
- (b) Candidates and their Principal Supervisor are encouraged to discuss their Research project with the Ethics Committee Coordinator to assist in preparation of their ethics application.
- (c) If a Candidate's Research does not receive ethics approval, the Candidate, under the guidance of the Principal Supervisor, have the option of resubmitting an amended and approved Research Proposal with their new ethics application for ethics approval with deficiencies rectified or with another Research approach or topic, failing which, their Candidature may be terminated.
- (d) Only when the proposed Research project has been approved by the Ethics Committee can the Candidate commence the project fieldwork.

5.6. **Thesis and Research Project Milestones Requirements**

- (a) Before Candidates can enrol in DBA or PhD research thesis or MMgt research project, Candidates must complete relevant pre-requisite subjects as outlined in the [Course Briefs](#).
- (b) Research thesis and research project components consist of compulsory milestones such as oral presentations and the Annual Progress review (see Section 8 of this HDR Procedure for details). Progression from one subject to the next is dependent on the successful completion of these milestones. Further information on the course milestone requirements is available in the Research Candidate Handbook and in the relevant [Course Briefs](#).
- (c) The final thesis and/or research project is examined externally as per the requirements set out in Section 9.

6. Variations to Enrolment

6.1. Leave of Absence

- (a) When availability of subject impacts the Candidate's progression, the Candidature period will be adjusted accordingly, and the details of the adjusted end date will be communicated to the Candidate in writing.
- (b) Candidate may request Leave of Absence for a period of up to 12 months due to unforeseen circumstances. They may be eligible to apply for additional periods of Leave of Absence if there are compelling circumstances.
- (c) Where the Candidate wishes to apply for Leave of Absence, a written application with reasons and relevant supporting documentation must be addressed to the Academic Dean or nominee and submitted at rhhd@aib.edu.au.
- (d) After considering the recommendation from the Candidate's Research Supervisory Panel, the Academic Dean or nominee will determine if Leave of Absence has been granted and the outcome of the application will be advised in writing including the adjusted end date of the Candidature.

6.2. Change of full time/part time status

- (a) When the Candidate wishes to change their study load status from full time to part time, or vice versa, they must discuss the change with their Research Supervisory Panel in the first instance and then submit written application to rhhd@aib.edu.au.
- (b) After considering the recommendation from the Candidate's Research Supervisory Panel, the Academic Dean or nominee will determine if change of study load status has been granted and the outcome of the application will be advised in writing including the adjusted end date of the candidature.

6.3. Substantial changes to the Research

- (a) Substantial changes of the Research to the approved Research Proposal may have impact on supervision arrangements and Candidature duration.
- (b) substantial changes to the Research require approval from the Associate Dean, Research who will consult with the Research Supervisory Panel regarding the assurance that:
 - (i) the degree can be completed within the maximum Candidature period,
 - (ii) the revised Research plan is well developed and realistic, and
 - (iii) any funding and/or resourcing implications are identified.
- (c) The Candidate and Research Supervisory Panel will be advised in writing the outcome of their request for substantial changes to the Research.

6.4. Withdrawal from Candidature

- (a) If a Candidate wishes to withdraw from their studies, they are encouraged to discuss options with their Research Supervisory Panel and the Research Coordinator. Should this discussion reveal any issues with the study environment, efforts will be made to address and resolve these concerns.
- (b) If the Candidate decides to withdraw, they must notify the Research Coordinator of the withdrawal in writing, giving the reasons for and the effective date of the withdrawal. The Candidate may first need to

withdraw from Subjects in accordance with section 1 of AIB [Withdrawal and Deferral Procedure](#).

- (c) AIB may at its own discretion withdraw a Candidate from a Subject or a Course:
 - (i) If a Candidate is not showing sufficient progress in the Subject or a Course, and has not responded to AIB's contact or support; and/or
 - (ii) Where there are concerns for the wellbeing of a Candidate.
- (d) The Research Coordinator will confirm the date on which the withdrawal is effective and take any action necessary to suspend any scholarship and/or instigate any refunds, if applicable, in accordance with the [Student Refund Policy and Procedure](#).
- (e) A Candidate who has withdrawn and who subsequently wishes to re-enrol must apply to AIB for re-admission in accordance with the [Admission Policy and Procedure](#). AIB will determine whether the Candidate will be re-admitted and whether the period of Candidature will be adjusted to take account of the previous Candidature.

6.5. Extensions to Course Registration Duration

- (a) Each Course has a specified maximum Course registration duration during which Candidates are expected to complete the Course. Duration periods for Research Courses are outlined in the Course Briefs:
 - [Doctor of Business Administration](#)
 - [Doctor of Philosophy](#)The maximum course duration for the Research pathway courses, Master of Management and Graduate Certificate in Research Methodologies, align with the coursework durations outlined in the Academic Progress Procedure, Section 3.
- (b) To request extension of the PhD or DBA Research Course registration period beyond the maximum limits set in the [Course Briefs](#), written requests with relevant supporting documentation must be addressed to the Academic Dean or nominee and submitted to rh@aib.edu.au.
- (c) Upon Review of the written request, the Academic Dean or nominee may, in its sole discretion, grant an extension of time for such period as it deems appropriate. Candidates should note that there may be financial implications of any extension of time to the Candidature.
- (d) Extensions to the maximum Course duration will not exceed six calendar months for PhD and DBA Candidates. Any approved extension may be subject to strict conditions. Failure to meet those conditions may lead to termination of the Candidature. Multiple extensions to Candidature will only be approved in exceptional circumstances.
- (e) The decisions on extensions of maximum Course duration will be reported at the Research & Higher Degrees Committee.

7. Transfer between Degrees

7.1. New applicants or applicants returning to study with AIB

- (a) Applicants returning to study with AIB or transferring from another institution, if approved, will be assessed for subject Credit where previous study was undertaken within 10 years from the application date. If it is more than 10 years, the applicant will not be eligible for Credit in

accordance with AIB [Articulation, Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure](#).

7.2. **Current AIB Candidates: Degree transfer**

- (a) Current Candidates can only apply for a transfer after the completion of their course Research Proposal. DBA Candidates are required to apply before the final year of full-time candidature. Transfers from MMgt to DBA or PhD must meet the requirements of the pathways outlined in the relevant [Course Briefs](#). Candidates should discuss the option of transfer between degrees with their Research Supervisory Panel in the first instance.
- (b) A written application from eligible Candidates and written endorsement from the Research Supervisory Panel must be submitted to the Associate Dean, Research via rdh@aib.edu.au.
- (c) The transfer application from MMgt to a doctoral degree or from DBA to PhD will be assessed by a Research Proposal Assessment Panel. The Transfer Assessment Panel, comprising three academic subject matter experts, will be nominated by the Research Supervisory Panel, in consultation with the Research Coordinator, and approved by the Associate Dean, Research.
- (d) The Research Coordinator, on behalf of the Associate Dean Research, will notify the applicant in writing of the outcome of an application. The Candidate may lodge an appeal in accordance with the Stage of AIB [Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Procedure](#).
- (e) Decisions made by the Assessment Panel will be reported at the Research & Higher Degrees Committee.

8. **Monitoring Candidate Progress**

8.1. **Annual Progress Review**

- (a) The annual planning and Review cycle is to assist the Candidate to plan ahead and work towards the final thesis submission, along with monitoring the progress of each Candidate's research project. This regular cycle assists Candidates, Supervisors and the Research Operations Team (comprised of the Associate Dean, Research, Research Discipline Lead and Research Coordinator).
- (b) to identify strategies to support Candidates at risk of not making satisfactory academic progress (i.e. not meeting the required course milestones as per the Research Candidate Handbook).
- (c) Each year the Candidate and the Principal Supervisor, commencing 6 months after the Course enrolment and annually thereafter, in consultation with Research Supervisory Panel members, complete a Progress Report that facilitates monitoring of Candidate's progress.
- (d) The Candidate and the Supervisor should submit their respective completed Progress Report Forms to the Research Coordinator.
- (e) Candidates and/or Supervisors may provide confidential feedback about the supervisory relationship to the Research Coordinator or the Associate

Dean, Research either through the review or, in case of urgency, at any other time.

- (f) The Research Coordinator will communicate in writing the approved course of action to the Candidate and Research Supervisory Panel. The outcomes may be as follows:
 - (i) **Confirmation of continuation**
For Candidature to be confirmed, the Candidate must demonstrate satisfactory completion of relevant course milestone requirements set out in the Research Candidate Handbook.
 - (ii) **Extension of provisional Candidature**
Candidature period may be extended for a specified period to give the Candidate a further opportunity to meet the conditions for continuation of candidature. Strategies, supported by the Research Operations Team, will be identified to support students at risk of unsatisfactory progress.
 - (iii) **Termination of Candidature**
Candidature will be terminated if the Candidate has failed to comply with the course milestone requirements after having been advised in writing that failure to comply within the required time will result in termination of candidature. Candidate will be provided with an opportunity to submit a 'show cause' as detailed in section 8.3.
- (g) All Candidates must undertake their Reviews of Progress, including Candidates who are on leave.
- (h) Candidates who fail to participate in the Review of Progress will be deemed to have made unsatisfactory progress.

8.2. **Unsatisfactory Progress**

- (a) The Research Supervisory Panel are expected to monitor the performance of the Candidate relative to the standard for the degree throughout the period of the candidature, and to ensure that the Candidate is made aware if the Candidate's progress is unsatisfactory or if the work is below the standard generally expected. The Research Operations Team is available to assist in identifying strategies to support Candidates at risk of unsatisfactory progress.
- (b) Where the Supervisor Panel perceives that it may become necessary to recommend that a Candidature be terminated because of unsatisfactory progress, the Principal Supervisor must give the Candidate a preliminary warning in writing to that effect, stating the reasons why the Candidate's progress is unsatisfactory. The Principal Supervisor is required to inform the Candidate's other Supervisor(s) of the preliminary warning and work with the Candidate to improve the Candidates' progress.

8.3. **Show Cause Process**

- (a) In case of the decision to terminate the Candidature, the Candidate will be requested to submit a 'show cause' within 10 business days to rh@aib.edu.au to explain why their Candidature should not be terminated.
- (b) Failure to submit the show cause within the required timeframe will be deemed as acceptance of the decision to terminate the Candidature.
- (c) The Show Cause must describe the factors which led to the Candidate's unsatisfactory progress, provide reasons why AIB should not make the

decision to terminate their Candidature, and should attach relevant evidence.

- (d) The Research Operations Team will review the details of the show cause, and determine whether the Candidature be terminated, or permit the Candidate to continue under specified conditions.
- (e) The Research Coordinator must inform the Candidate of the decision, including the reasons for the decision and the procedures for appeal, within 10 business days from the date when the decision has been made.
- (f) If the Candidate does not meet the condition set out in the successful show cause, the Research Operations Team may at their discretion provide the Candidate with a letter or email that their candidature has been terminated.
- (g) Students have the right to lodge an appeal when they think that the applicable policy/procedure was not followed and/or natural justice had not been applied, in which case they should follow the Stage 2 – Internal Appeal of the [Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).

9. Thesis or Research Project Examination

9.1. Appointment of Examiners

- (a) When the Principal Supervisor is satisfied that the thesis will be ready for Examination within the next three months, the Candidate and their Principal Supervisor shall:
 - (i) complete and sign an 'Intention to Lodge' form including a summary of the thesis; and
 - (ii) shortlist the names of potential external examiners, as per examiners requirements set out in 9.1(b), in consultation with the Candidate.
- (b) The criteria for the appointment of examiners depend on the degree. Irrespective of the degree, AIB will appoint two examiners, plus one reserve. All examiners must be familiar with the Candidate's discipline and research approach, who are independent of the conduct of the Research, competent to understand the Assessment.
 - (i) For PhD — examiners will be external to AIB, have PhD's, and of international academic standing.
 - (ii) For DBA — examiners will be external to AIB, have a doctoral degree, and of international academic standing.
 - (iii) For MMgt – at least one examiner must be external to AIB, have a doctoral degree, and of national academic standing.
- (c) All examiners will be independent from AIB and free of potential conflict of interest. That is, examiners will not have:
 - (i) any current or previous involvement in the Candidate's Research; or
 - (ii) been a co-author on any part of the work; or
 - (iii) a substantial publication history with the Supervisors; or
 - (iv) a close personal relationship with the Candidate or Supervisors; or
 - (v) any substantial contact with the Candidate or Supervisor that would jeopardise the Examination process.
- (d) The information provided on each potential examiner should include his or her academic qualifications (and/or professional qualifications if appropriate), institutional affiliation and rank, details of any relevant published work in the field of the thesis, and a statement of their

independence from AIB. The Research Supervisory Panel should ensure that, inter alia, the potential examiners are free from bias about the Candidate, the Research Supervisory Panel or the research method adopted, and that they are still active in the field of Research pertaining to the thesis.

- (e) The Research Coordinator presents the 'Intention to Lodge' form with the names of the proposed examiners, CVs and justification to the Research & Higher Degrees Committee of the proposed examiners for approval.
- (f) Upon approval of the proposed examiners is received from the Research & Higher Degrees Committee, the Research Coordinator will officially write to the examiners to advise the name of the Candidate, the title of the thesis/dissertation and invite them to act as examiners.
- (g) If an examiner is unable to accept an invitation or fails to respond to an invitation within six weeks including being sent reminder notifications, an invitation will be sent to the person approved as a reserve examiner.

9.2. **Prior to thesis/project submission**

- (a) Candidates will be required to conduct an oral presentation of their Research and thesis summary to AIB's wider academic Research community.

9.3. **Submission of thesis/project**

- (a) Only an enrolled Candidate may submit work for Examination for the award of a Higher Degree by Research.
- (b) The Candidate must lodge an electronic copy of the final thesis/project with the Research Coordinator. Recommended format guidelines of the thesis or project guidelines are provided in the Research Candidate Handbook. The Candidate must sign a declaration that the thesis does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text or footnotes.
- (c)
 - (i) When the Candidate submits the thesis/project for Examination, the Principal Supervisor verifies in writing to the Associate Dean Research (or delegate) that:
 - A. the extent to which the work, that is data collection, data analysis, and writing of the thesis/project, was carried out by the Research Candidate and, if an editor was used, the extent of the involvement of the editor;
 - B. the authorship of the thesis/project to the best of their knowledge;
 - C. the thesis/project is properly presented and is worthy of Examination, with appropriate permission received from the copyright holder if third-party material (e.g. photographs, maps or drawings) has been reproduced; and
 - D. the Research has been conducted in a responsible manner and in agreement with approved research policies for human research ethics, or other research policies appropriate to the nature of the Research.
 - (ii) If the Principal Supervisor is unable to formally advise that, in their opinion, the submission is *prima facie* worthy of Examination, the Associate Dean Research (or delegate) will offer the Candidate the opportunity to withdraw the submission before Examination, or for

the Candidate to make a case to the Associate Dean Research for the Examination to proceed.

- (d) On receipt of the thesis/project, the Research Coordinator will forward a copy of the thesis/project to each examiner together with the following:
 - (i) Examiner's Report and Guidelines for Examination;
 - (ii) information on the Examination processes including matters in relation to the disclosure of the examiner's report to the Candidate;
 - (iii) timelines for the completion of the Assessment process (turnaround period on receipt of the thesis is normally eight weeks); and
 - (iv) information in relation to payment for Examination.
- (e) Thesis/project content will remain confidential during the Examination period and AIB reserves the right to request examiners to sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement if deemed necessary.
- (f) The identity of examiners will not be revealed to Candidates until the Examination process has been completed and then not if an examiner has expressed a desire to remain anonymous.

9.4. Examination process

- (a) From the time of the submission of the thesis/project, a Candidate must not initiate contact with their examiners on any matter concerning the thesis/ project.
- (b) From the time of the appointment of examiners, there must not be any direct contact between an examiner and a Supervisor in relation to the thesis/project. If an examiner has a query, it must be directed to the Research Coordinator who will refer it to the Candidate or the Supervisors.
- (c) Consultation between examiners will not be permitted prior to submission of the initial report.
- (d) The Examination criteria for each Course will reflect the learning outcomes of the Course.
- (e) Examiners must provide AIB with a report on the prescribed form with the recommendation for one of the following Examination outcomes:
 - (i) that the thesis/project be accepted without revision; or
 - (ii) that the thesis be accepted subject to minor amendments as specified, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor (where minor amendments refer to corrections involving typographical or other spelling errors, errors in grammar and/or syntax, etc. and not require additional data collection or analysis); or
 - (iii) that the Candidate be required to undertake more substantial revisions to the thesis/project, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor, and Chair of Research & Higher Degrees Committee or their nominee; or
 - (iv) that the Candidate be required to undertake substantial revisions to the thesis/project and that the thesis/project be re-submitted for Examination; or
 - (v) that the thesis/project be rejected and the Candidate not be permitted to re-submit it for Examination.
- (f) In the case of a disagreement between examiners:
 - (i) In the event that examiners are not unanimous in making any one of the recommendations above, and their recommendations are at least two levels apart, the Principal Supervisor and the Candidate are

provided with copies of the examiners' reports and are invited to comment. In this process, the examiners' identities are not revealed to the Candidate.

- (ii) The Research & Higher Degrees Committee will then consider all the documentation presented and recommend an Examination outcome or recommend that a third examiner be appointed.
- (iii) Where a third examiner is appointed, the examiner will independently examine the thesis/project and provide a recommended result. The Research & Higher Degrees Committee will consider all three examiners' reports, together with the Candidate and Supervisor response to the initial examiners and recommend an Examination outcome.
- (g) If revisions are required, the Candidate will be asked to undertake the revisions in the following timeframes:
 - (i) Minor revisions – 1 calendar month
 - (ii) Major revisions – 2 calendar months
 - (iii) Resubmit for Examination – 6 calendar months.Candidates may apply in writing for an extension on these timelines to the Academic Dean and Associate Dean, Research at least 7 business days prior to the due date. Applications for extension must be accompanied by a letter of endorsement from the Principal Supervisor.
- (h) In the event that an allegation of academic dishonesty has been made during the Examination process, the [Managing Complaints About the Conduct of Research Procedure](#) will apply.

9.5. Outcome of the Examination

- (a) When the Examination result, including approved revisions, has been determined, the following procedures will apply:
 - (i) the Research Coordinator will advise the Research & Higher Degrees Committee of Examination outcome, and
 - (ii) In case of successful outcome from the Examination, the Research & Higher Degrees Committee will be advised to recommend to the Academic Board the approval of the HDR award for the Candidate.

10. Candidate Conferral and Record Keeping

10.1. Certification of the Award

- (a) Candidate conferral will be conducted in accordance with the AIB [Awards and Graduation Policy and Procedure](#).
- (b) When the award is approved by the Academic Board, the Research Coordinator will provide a letter to the Candidate advising them they may now start using their post nominal, notify the Candidate of the degree conferral procedures, and provide the Candidate with a copy of the examiners' reports.

10.2. Record Keeping of Theses/Projects

- (a) The Research Coordinator will arrange copies of the final form thesis/project to be stored in the Library as a bound hard copy and an electronic copy, which will serve as the authoritative version. Copies of the theses/projects will also be sent to the Research Supervisory Panel.

11. Student Appeals and Complaints

11.1. Candidates who have a grievance and wish to make a complaint or appeal regarding an academic or non-academic matter should refer to the [Student Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).

11.2. Grievances related to responsible Research conduct, should be referred to [Managing Complaints about the Conduct of Research Procedure](#).

Related Forms and Documents:

Candidate / Supervisor Progress Report Form

Ethics Annual Report Extension Project Completion Form

Ethics Application for Approval of Research

Examiner's Report Form

[Formal Grievance Form](#)

Guidelines for Examinations

Intention to Lodge Thesis / Research Project for Examination Form

[Internal Appeal Form](#)

Research Candidate Handbook

Research Proposal Evaluation Form

Research Supervision Guidelines

Responsibility:

Academic Dean

Associate Dean, Research

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