Infrastructure Support for Higher Degree by Research Candidates Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) Infrastructure support for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates is an integral component of the University of Canberra's (University) commitment to quality in its research degree courses. Completion rates, submission times, satisfaction with the HDR course and research outcomes are all closely related to the quality of infrastructure provision. This infrastructure includes physical facilities, financial assistance and participation in the research culture.

(2) This Policy outlines the University's minimum requirements with regard to the provision of infrastructure support for HDR studies at the level of the Faculty.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to candidates enrolled in HDR courses at the University, and to the staff involved in HDR supervision and administration at the University.

Section 3 - Principles

General Principles

(4) HDR candidates are regarded as full members of the academic research community. Their needs and requirements are considered with this principle in mind when resource allocation is negotiated.

(5) HDR candidates are provided with infrastructure, facilities and resources appropriate to their role within the research community of the University.

(6) Appropriate provision is made for the project-specific financial costs for each HDR candidate.

(7) HDR candidates are involved in relevant research communities within their discipline areas and through attendance at national and international conferences.

Faculty Responsibilities in the Provision of Infrastructure Support

(8) It is the responsibility of the supervisors and relevant Faculty to ensure that appropriate facilities are made available to candidates to undertake their research projects.

(9) It is assumed that when a Faculty recommends acceptance of a candidate into an HDR course, it has established that it has the appropriate facilities and resources to support the candidate's research project and its associated costs. The Admission Application Outcome form makes explicit reference to funding for the project.

(10) Faculties may provide infrastructure support beyond what is outlined in this Policy. They may not offer less than these minimum requirements.

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(11) With HDR courses offered across a wide range of disciplines at the University, there is considerable variability in the project-specific needs of candidates across the institution. It is, therefore, important that Faculties clearly articulate what facilities and other support (such as travel funding) will be available to HDR candidates.

(12) Each Faculty is responsible for establishing written guidelines in relation to the infrastructure support that it offers its candidates. These Guidelines will set out how candidates can access resources available and apply for funding, and list the appropriate contact in the Faculty. All Faculties must make this document available to all current candidates within the organisational unit. This document must also be provided to enrolling candidates as part of the Faculty induction program.

(13) Problems or concerns with regard to the provision of infrastructure support should be directed in the first instance to the supervisory panel then, in Faculties, to the Associate Dean, Research, followed by the Executive Dean. Concerns that are not resolved through Faculty processes may be directed to the Vice-Chancellor.

Minimum Resources

(14) All full-time HDR candidates based on campus will be provided with secure, shared office accommodation with guaranteed access to desk space. For the purposes of this Policy, 'on campus' attendance may generally be understood as a situation where a candidate conducts 70% or more of the time spent on research work on campus.

(15) This accommodation must include lockable storage space and bookshelf facilities. This may take the form of lockers, lockable filing cabinets, bookshelves or other areas for the storage of digital or constructed objects and media. Infrastructure must comply with the applicable Work Health and Safety legislation (Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (ACT); and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011) and the University's Work Health and Safety Policy, procedures and guidelines.

(16) Faculties with significant numbers of part-time and off-campus candidates should arrange to have suitably equipped desk spaces and lockable storage areas which can be used by such candidates on a short-term basis as required and as arranged with the host Faculty.

(17) Access to suitably maintained laboratory, ward or studio facilities and technical equipment appropriate to the discipline and compliant with the applicable Work Health and Safety legislation and the University's Work Health and Safety Policy, procedures and guidelines must be provided to full-time HDR candidates based on campus. Part-time and generally off-campus candidates are to be provided with laboratory, ward or studio space and time that are appropriate to their time on campus.

(18) With due regard to the applicable Work Health and Safety legislation, the University's Work Health and Safety Policy, procedures and guidelines and security procedures, there should be 24 hour access for HDR candidates to appropriate buildings and rooms, including 24 hour access to tea room and washroom facilities.

(19) Full-time HDR candidates must be provided with a desktop or laptop computer. HDR candidates must have access to on-campus computer facilities and support including networked printing; technical advice; help with academic software when required; and relevant enterprise systems. HDR candidates will have the same access as University academic staff to computer software provided by the University. Provision should be made for off-campus and part-time candidates to have guaranteed access to all the resources and support listed above, when required and as arranged with the host Faculty.

(20) HDR candidates will have the same level of access as University academic staff to communication tools such as

a. the WWW and email, including the provision of a University email account at the beginning of candidature;
b. an on campus postal address as required;
c. shared access to an internal phone extension with a reasonable level of free access; and

d. University stationery.

(21) Part-time and off campus candidates are to be provided with access to these communication tools as appropriate to their time on campus. Provision must also be made for access to an operational and regularly serviced photocopier.

(22) All candidates must be provided with full library services including appropriate access to inter-library loans, online journals and advice from liaison librarians.

Financial Support

(23) Faculties should each year determine the levels of general maintenance, project expenses and conference travel support that will be provided to support their HDR candidates and publish guidelines that inform candidates and supervisors accordingly.

(24) The dollar amounts detailed below refer to minimum expenditure provision within a Faculty budget, not a financial entitlement of HDR candidates. Faculties will detail in their guidelines the funds that candidates might access directly.

(25) The University's minimum requirements for the support of a HDR candidate for the life of the candidature are a budgeted expenditure in 2011 of:

a. $13,000 for a candidate enrolled in 'high cost' PhD course;
b. $10,000 for a candidate enrolled in a 'low cost' PhD course;
c. $6,500 for a candidate enrolled in a 'high cost' masters by research course; and
d. $5,000 for a candidate enrolled in a 'low cost' masters by research course.

(26) The University follows the allocation of high cost and low cost fields of study as per the Federal Government's Higher Education Student Data Collection. The level of financial support budgeted for the life of candidature should not be less than the requirements set out above.

(27) The total amounts listed in clause 25 may be pro-rata for the period in which a Professional Doctorate (PD) or masters by research candidate is enrolled in thesis units.

(28) HDR candidates are encouraged to present their work at appropriate national and international conferences. PhD or PD candidates should be assisted to participate in at least two national conferences or one international conference over the period of candidature. Masters by research candidates should be assisted to attend at least one national conference during candidature.

(29) It is expected that candidates will provide a comprehensive project budget in their proposal for confirmation of candidature, detailing prospective research project expenses.

Participation in the Research Culture at the University

(30) Research culture is fostered primarily within the University's Faculties. It is the responsibility of the host Faculty to provide a healthy, active research culture and to encourage their HDR candidates' participation in this culture.

(31) The University will provide a central formal induction day, twice a year, for all enrolling HDR candidates. It is expected that the Faculties also implement formal induction procedures which provide the candidate with information on:

a. Faculty guidelines and operational rules, as applicable, including infrastructure support guidelines;
b. University occupational health and safety policies and procedures, including evacuation procedures;

c. An introduction to relevant Faculty staff;
d. Tour of the work area and building;
e. Advice on accessing resources; and
f. Guidance on applying for tutoring or other employment within the Faculty.

(32) Wherever possible, and subject to satisfactory annual progress reports, suitable HDR candidates may be given the opportunity to apply to tutor, demonstrate or engage in other professional development activities.

(33) HDR candidates should be encouraged to present at least one paper per annum at the Faculty's program of research seminars, work-in-progress seminars or at Faculty HDR events.

(34) HDR candidates must be provided with reasonable access to distinguished visitors, either in group seminars or on an individual basis when possible.

Section 4 - Procedures

(35) Nil.

Status and Details

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