

FACULTY OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

Procedure for the confirmation of candidature seminar and research proposal

Background

HDR candidates are provisionally enrolled and will have their candidature confirmed at the successful completion of their probation requirements. A major part of the probationary requirements is the confirmation seminar and submission of a written research proposal. This usually occurs within 12 months of enrolment for full-time candidates, and 2 years for part-time doctoral candidates and within the first 6-9 months of enrolment for full-time, and within 12–18 months of enrolment for part-time Masters candidates. To finalise their probationary period and have their candidature endorsed, HDR candidates will be required to successfully complete the following tasks as identified by the supervisory team at the time of admission, and in line with each school's conventions:

1. Participate in an online HDR induction workshop;
2. Complete any specified coursework subjects
3. Complete a draft literature review
4. Submit a research proposal
5. Present a seminar based on their proposed research
6. Complete any other additional requirements as specified during Admission, including but not limited to: completion of a meta-analysis of existing research, completion of a pilot study, development of a test battery, development of software, learning a programming language
7. Revise the proposal, if needed, following consideration of the confirmation panel's feedback.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with Section 6 of the CSU [Higher Degree by Research Policy - Enrolment and Progress](#).

Objectives

A panel of experienced academics will evaluate the confirmation seminar and research proposal and recommend final endorsement of each HDR candidate. Specifically, the panel will:

- Evaluate the quality of all research proposals; offering useful insights and timely feedback on the feasibility of the proposed research.

- Confirm that the topic, scope, research questions, and objectives of the research project are clearly articulated, that the study methodologies are in accord with discipline conventions, and the standard of writing is acceptable.
- Consider whether the research direction is appropriate, and that the project is not designed beyond the scope of the resources available to support its accomplishment.
- Assess the candidate's likelihood of fulfilling the degree requirements within the normal candidature period.
- Identify and resolve any impediments associated with the proposed research project or make necessary recommendation for terminating the candidature if there is a likelihood of failure.

Responsibilities for confirmation

HDR supervisors are expected to:

- Advise their candidate on probationary requirements
- Meet with the candidate to discuss progress, and / or any issues or challenges
- Provide the candidate with guidance and feedback in preparing their research proposal
- Advise the candidate as to their readiness to undertake the confirmation process
- Distribute the candidate's research proposal to the appropriate review panel
- Form part of the confirmation panel
- Provide feedback on the seminar presentation
- Support the candidate with any changes / revisions to their endorsement documentation and / or presentation.

Candidates are expected to:

- Advise their supervisor(s) of their intention to confirm at least four weeks in advance of their preferred date
- Prepare a research proposal and oral presentation in accordance with the Faculty of Arts & Education Research Proposal Guidelines of endorsement of candidature
- Submit their research proposal to the supervisor(s) at least three weeks in advance of the seminar date
- Provide any revisions within the requested time period
- Advise their supervisor of all proposed activities, during their candidature.

Confirmation procedure

1. Before the end of the first year of enrolment, (two years for part-time enrolments) each candidate will present a formal endorsement of candidature seminar (usually 20 minutes presentation time + 10 minutes question time) of their proposed research to the host school.
2. The final research proposal, which should not exceed 20,000 words, will be submitted to the Principal Supervisor at least three weeks prior to the seminar for review.
3. The Principal supervisor and candidate will liaise with the School HDR coordinator or nominee, and organise an appropriate time for the seminar. (Candidates located off-campus or off-shore are able to present via Skype for Business).
4. An appropriate panel will be convened to review the proposal before the candidate presents. The panel will comprise the HDR coordinator (or nominee), the principal supervisor and two academic reviewers (subject experts). Each panel member will complete a reviewer's report (See form attached).
5. The school HDR coordinator, or the Principal supervisor, will organise the review process and arrange an appropriate person to chair the review panel. The School HDR co-ordinator will invite an appropriate audience of Staff, students, professionals and other participants who are encouraged to engage with the review process. Participation from outside the school research community is also encouraged.
6. Reviewers' comments will be provided to the candidate at the conclusion of the seminar or shortly thereafter by the candidate's research supervisor.
7. The seminar and subsequent discussion are used to provide feedback to the candidate, both informally and formally after the seminar.
8. Based on the evaluations, the following recommendations may be made:
 - a. The research proposal may be acceptable as it stands.
 - b. The research proposal may be acceptable subject to minor revisions. In such cases, the revised proposal may be sent to the reviewers for re-evaluation.
 - c. The research proposal may need major revision and will need to be presented again at another seminar presentation.
 - d. The research proposal may be deemed unacceptable, and the candidate required to undertake further work to develop a new [or considerably revised] proposal. In such cases, the candidate will be required to undertake a further research proposal seminar.
 - e. The research proposal may be deemed unacceptable, and the candidate asked to show cause as to why their candidature should not be terminated.
9. Following presentation of the proposal seminar, candidates will usually have approximately 2-3 weeks to make any required revisions to their proposal, before re-submitting it for final approval.

Once approval has occurred, and all other probationary requirements have been completed, final endorsement will be confirmed by the Research Office, via the [Research Proposal Approval Form](#)

Variations to this endorsement procedure may be permitted for Online and International candidates. The Sub Dean must be consulted for each eventuality.

PhD Probation Schedule

First 3 weeks of candidature

- Induction to research process
- Induct to host School, meet Supervisors, HDR co-ordinator.
- Allocation of resources.

3-5 months F/T, 9 months P/T

- First progress report
- Candidate and Principal supervisor complete independent reports. The report should be forwarded to Sub-Dean.

6 months F/T, 12 months P/T

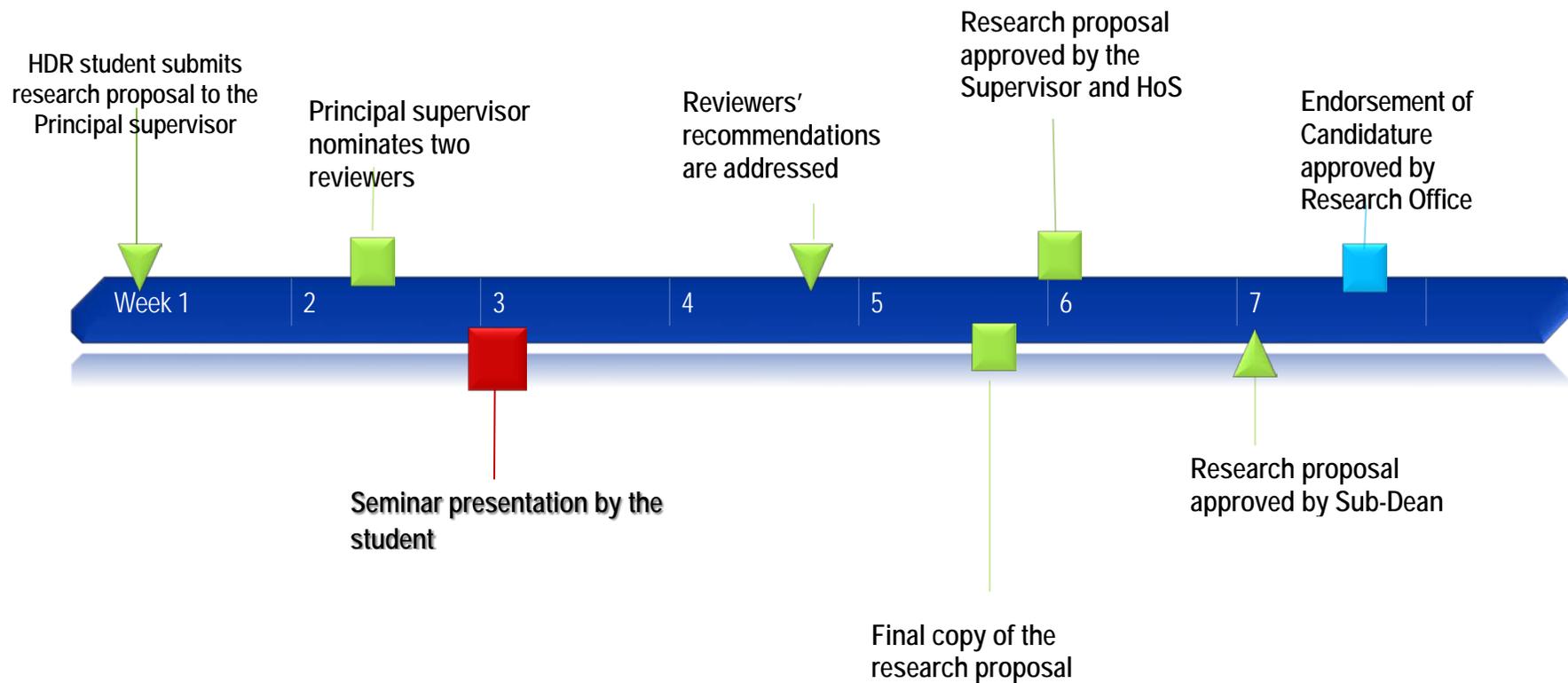
- Complete draft literature review to the satisfaction of the principal supervisor.

9-12 months F/T, 18-24 months P/T

- Research proposal and Endorsement of Candidature seminar
- Completion of any specified coursework subjects.
- Complete endorsement seminar
- Other probation conditions completed, final endorsement of candidature communicated to Research Office.

** These are the usual timelines and there can be flexibility with these dates

Timeline for Research proposal presentation



FACULTY OF ARTS & EDUCATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

A research proposal is an important plan for your research. It helps the writer/researcher to focus their thoughts and to ensure that the research has been justified and is designed properly. Each Faculty has its own requirements relating to the type and amount of information which needs to be presented. The proposal will provide a justification for the proposed research. The justification should demonstrate that candidates are familiar with the key literature in their chosen area, can critically evaluate the literature and use the literature to connect with their research question(s) and proposed methodology. In addition, the proposal should demonstrate that each candidate has the necessary methodological knowledge and skills needed to carry out the research successfully.

Research proposals typically require several drafts before they reach an acceptable standard. This needs to be taken into consideration when preparing the proposal, especially to allow time for the supervisor to review drafts, and time for the candidate to undertake any required revisions. Supervisors and candidates are encouraged to attend Research Office Professional Development workshops designed to help with the development of the proposal and literature review.

SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR WRITTEN RESEARCH PROPOSAL

- For the type of research conducted in the Faculty of Arts and Education, **no more than 20,000 words** should be sufficient. The document should be double-spaced (12 point font size) to allow notation by members of the Confirmation Review Panel and numbered on each page.

A research proposal should contain the following headings (***You may add additional headings to allow for the provision of background information or any other relevant details if you wish.***)

TITLE PAGE

Include title of research proposal, candidate name and number, School/Research Centre affiliation, supervisor's names, date of submission.

ABSTRACT

A brief summary (200-250 words) of the research to be undertaken. Include the research question, key design and methodologies and the significance of the research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the key ideas and references from the literature that underpin the proposed study, and leads to the statement of the research question and objectives. Candidates are encouraged to use Research Office on-line resources and Professional Development workshops designed for developing the literature review.

RESEARCH QUESTION /SUB -QUESTIONS

Your overall research question/ and sub-questions should identify the significant issue or problem that your research project will investigate.

AIMS/OBJECTIVES

This should set out the key aims of your research and outline the objectives for achieving these aims.

GAP IN KNOWLEDGE/SIGNIFICANCE

In this section you should identify the current gaps in knowledge and the contribution to new knowledge that your research will aim to make.

HYPOTHESIS /PROPOSITION

If applicable, state briefly and clearly the hypotheses or propositions that underpin the research. Your research proposal may have a number of hypotheses or propositions.

METHODOLOGY

A description of how the research will be undertaken through specific research methods and strategies that fit within a methodological framework. Clearly describe the research design, provide rationale of why the methods have been chosen and the procedure/technique that you will follow to conduct the research. References should be required for all the selected research methods.

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

Describe the type of data your research will produce, justify why the unit of analysis you have determined will be appropriate and how you plan to analyse it. If statistical analysis is part of the project, indicate whether the designs have been discussed with a statistician.

BUDGET

A detailed budget is not necessary but a statement is needed that indicates whether or not the funding required to conduct this research (all of it) has been secured.

TIMETABLE/GANTT CHART

Provide an outline of the major activities and a timetable for their completion. This should be in the form of a GANTT chart (best presented landscape). You will need to show how this project can realistically be completed within the timeframe for the specified degree.

REFERENCES

References that you have identified in the literature review and in developing the proposal need to be presented using the referencing style appropriate to the discipline, as advised by the Supervisor.

Name:

Program:

1. Title Page _____
2. Brief Introduction _____
3. Theoretical framework _____
4. Literature review _____
5. Statement of the problem/identification of research gap/need for the current study _____
6. Research questions/Sub-questions _____
7. General aims and specific objectives _____
8. Gaps in Knowledge/Significance _____
9. Hypotheses/ Proposition _____
10. Methodology (for example qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, study population, sampling strategy, design, data collection, data analysis procedure, creative practice) _____
11. Limitations and delimitations of the study _____
12. Research outcomes (Including publication strategy) _____
13. Study period - Timetable for completion of the study _____
14. Ethical considerations _____

15. [Data management and storage plan](#)

16. [Technical, equipment, facilities, studio requirements](#)

17. [References](#)

Appendices (copy of questionnaire, etc.)

Faculty of Arts & Education Research Proposal - Reviewer's Report

Reviewer's Name:	
Student's Name:	
Student ID:	
Course: (e.g. PhD)	
Title of Study:	
Date of Seminar:	
Recommendation: (Please check recommendation with X)	
1	The research proposal is acceptable as it stands
2	The research proposal is acceptable subject to minor revisions
3	The research proposal needs major revision as indicated below and will need to be presented again at another seminar presentation
4	The proposed research is not viable and the student will have to develop a new research proposal
5	The research proposal is not acceptable and the student's candidature should be terminated
1. Is the student working on a significant/important research issue?	
Comments:	
Recommendations:	
2. Has the student demonstrated a critical and detailed knowledge and understanding of the relevant literature, and theoretical framework, where appropriate?	
Comments:	
Recommendations:	
3. Has the student developed a clear and focused research question, and hypothesis, where appropriate?	
Comments:	
Recommendations:	
4. Has the student chosen a suitable research approach and methods, and justified the choice convincingly?	
Comments:	

Recommendations:	
5. Has the student demonstrated that the research will make a substantial contribution to theory/professional practice?	
Comments:	
Recommendations:	
6. Has the proposal been written in scholarly academic English & consistent with a recognised referencing style?	
Comments:	
Recommendations:	
7. Are there any ethical risks inherent to the project not considered by the candidate?	
Comments:	
Recommendations:	
8. Has the student outlined a clear and realistic timeline for the project?	
Comments:	
Recommendations:	
9. Are there any other issues with the proposal or proposed research that you consider need to be addressed at this stage?	
Comments:	
10. Are you confident that the student has the capacity to complete in the minimum period?	
Comments:	

Signature:

Date: