

Accreditation of Higher Degree Research Supervisors Policy

Section 1 - Background

(1) This Policy has been developed to address the accreditation of supervisors of higher degree by research (HDR) candidates at Australian Catholic University (ACU). This Policy sets out the requirements for accreditation as an HDR supervisor at ACU. Once accredited, a supervisor is eligible to be appointed as a Principal supervisor or a Co-supervisor.

(2) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the [Research Active Definition Policy](#) and the [Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy](#).

Section 2 - Purpose of Accreditation

(3) Accreditation is designed to provide quality assurance for research supervision at the University by:

- a. ensuring that HDR supervisors are research active;
- b. ensuring effective supervisory practice within the University;
- c. mentoring staff with little supervisory experience;
- d. providing supervisory development for academic staff; and
- e. ensuring compliance with the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(TEQSA\)](#) and Government requirements.

(4) This Policy:

- a. strives to achieve best practice and also meet the professional development needs of new and existing supervisors;
- b. is based on the staff member's current and future professional development needs regarding supervision as determined in consultation with the Associate Dean, Research;
- c. acknowledges the varying backgrounds and experience of research supervisors and values the prior experience and competence of successful supervisors;
- d. is integrated with the principles of the University's research training programs for research candidates within the wider higher education policy context; and
- e. is designed to improve the research education experience of HDR candidates at ACU.

Section 3 - Scope

(5) This Policy applies to all ACU staff who are seeking accreditation as an HDR Supervisor.

Section 4 - Levels of Accreditation

(6) There are two levels of accreditation at ACU. Staff may seek accreditation as either an HDR Supervisor (Full) or an HDR Supervisor (Provisional).

(7) To be eligible for accreditation as an HDR Supervisor (Full or Provisional), an ACU staff member must:

- a. have an appointment of at least 0.4 FTE; and
- b. meet the ACU criteria for being classified as research active as assessed by the [Research Active Definition Policy](#); and
- c. have completed the ACU supervisor training program, a similar program at another higher education institution or provide evidence of relevant professional experience; and
- d. have an appropriate qualification:
 - i. Supervisors of a Masters or Doctoral student will normally hold a PhD;
 - ii. Supervisors of a professional doctorate will normally hold a PhD, or an equivalent research degree;
 - iii. Holding a professional doctorate would not normally enable a staff member to be a supervisor of a PhD student, unless it was the accepted practice of the discipline.

(8) Staff who meet the accreditation criteria in clause (7) of this Policy, and who have supervised at least one (1) HDR candidate to completion, can apply to be accredited as HDR Supervisor (Full).

(9) Staff who meet the accreditation criteria in clause (7) of this Policy, but who have not yet supervised at least one (1) HDR candidate to completion, can apply to be accredited as HDR Supervisor (Provisional).

(10) Staff who are Honorary and Adjunct Appointments may be accredited as HDR Supervisors (Full or Provisional) at ACU on the recommendation of the Faculty Associate Dean, Research and the approval of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

(11) Following accreditation as an HDR Supervisor (Full or Provisional), a staff member can be assigned to a role on an HDR candidate's supervisory panel. Refer to the [Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy](#) for details on the roles, the responsibilities and the composition requirements of supervisory panels for HDR Candidates.

Section 5 - Applying for Accreditation

(12) Staff should discuss their potential application for supervisor status with the Associate Dean, Research of their Faculty prior to submitting a request for accreditation.

(13) Staff members who wish to apply for accreditation should submit a supervisor accreditation request via the prescribed form in Orion.

(14) A staff member who has been accredited as an HDR Supervisor (Provisional) and who supervises at least one (1) HDR candidate to completion can apply for accreditation as HDR Supervisor (Full) via the prescribed form in Orion.

Section 6 - Changes to Accreditation

(15) If an HDR Supervisor (Full or Provisional) no longer meets the requirements for accreditation as stipulated under clauses (6) – (11) of this Policy, or if they fail to comply with ACU's Policies and Procedures, their accreditation may be reviewed and amended by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

Section 7 - Roles and Responsibilities

(16) The Academic Board is responsible for maintaining and reviewing this Policy and procedures.

(17) Within the guidelines below, accreditation is approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

(18) The Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) (ODVCRE) is responsible for advising People and Capability of staff who have completed the supervisor training program at ACU and of staff who have been approved as accredited research supervisors.

(19) The Responsible Officer for this Policy, in consultation with the University Research Committee is expected to review the accreditation framework at least every five years to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of candidates, supervisors and the University in a changing higher education context.

Section 8 - Review

(20) The University may make changes to this Policy from time to time to improve the effectiveness of its operation. Review of the Policy will be initiated by the Responsible Officer or nominee within a five-year period.

(21) Unless otherwise indicated, this Policy will still apply beyond the review date.

Section 9 - Associated Information

(22) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	19th December 2023
Review Date	1st November 2025
Approval Authority	
Approval Date	19th December 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Abid Khan Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
Responsible Manager	Michelle Lopez Director, Graduate Research School
Enquiries Contact	Michelle Lopez Director, Graduate Research School <hr/> Research and Enterprise