

Appointment of Examiners and Examination Policy

Section 1 - Policy Statement

(1) This Policy, and the associated [Appointment of Examiners and Examination Procedure](#), set out the requirements of the examination process for a Higher Degree Research (HDR) thesis and provide a framework to support such requirements.

Section 2 - Policy Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

- a. all candidates who are enrolled in an HDR program at ACU;
- b. supervisors of HDR candidates at ACU;
- c. all ACU staff involved with or supporting the HDR examination process; and
- d. all examiners of HDR theses.

(3) This Policy, and associated [Appointment of Examiners and Examination Procedure](#), should be read in conjunction with policies stipulated under clause (24) of this Policy.

(4) Cotutelle and Double-badged doctoral candidates should refer to the [Joint \(Cotutelle\) Doctoral Enrolment Policy](#).

Section 3 - Definitions

(5) The [Glossary of Student and Course Terms](#) provides guidance on the meanings of terms used in the University. In this Policy, the following terms will have the meanings set out below.

Term	Definition
Associate Dean, Research (ADR)	is a person responsible to the Executive Dean of the Faculty to assist the Executive Dean in their role of providing academic and research leadership in the Faculty, in particular, research, research training and research partnerships.
Joint (Cotutelle) and Double-Badged Doctoral candidates	Cotutelle is the French word commonly used to describe joint doctoral enrolment. Joint Doctoral Enrolment is the simultaneous enrolment in a research doctoral degree at ACU and at least one other university.
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) (PVCR)	is the person who supports the work of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), to ensure commitment to the highest standards of research and research training.
Supervisor	used generically, includes the Principal Supervisor, Co-Supervisor and/or Associate Supervisor, as appropriate according to the context.
University Research Committee (URC)	is a standing committee of the Academic Board, which administers research higher degrees.

Section 4 - Application of Policy: Appointment of Examiners

(6) A candidate's research project will be examined by the submission and assessment of a thesis based on research conducted during candidature. The format of the thesis should comply with the [Preparation and Presentation of a Higher Degree Research Thesis for Examination Guideline](#).

(7) Examiners who are nominated to participate in the examination process should be, at a minimum:

- a. external to the University;
- b. free from potential conflicts of interest; and
- c. nominated for approval as outlined in the [Appointment of Examiners and Examination Procedure](#).

Section 5 - Application of Policy: Examination of thesis

(8) Each thesis must be examined by a minimum of two (2) Examiners who have been nominated and approved as outlined in clauses (6) - (7) of this Policy, and the [Appointment of Examiners and Examination Procedure](#).

(9) Each Examiner must recommend one of the examination outcomes detailed in clauses (12) - (16) and provide a supporting report to the University, using the prescribed format.

(10) If either Examiner recommends defer, award minor degree or fail, the thesis must be examined by a third Examiner.

(11) The URC is responsible for adopting final examination outcomes.

Examination Outcomes

(12) Pass: The thesis should be classified as PASSED and the candidate awarded the degree of (name of degree) without amendment or further examination. For the PhD, examiners may also recommend that the degree be awarded Pass (Summa Cum Laude) where the thesis is judged to be of outstanding merit.

(13) Pass with amendments: The thesis should be classified as PASSED and the candidate awarded the degree of (name of degree) without further examination but subject to the amendments detailed in the Faculty Associate Dean, Research Report being successfully completed. The candidate will be required to complete amendments in either 3 or 6 months (full-time equivalent).

(14) Defer: The thesis should be classified as DEFERRED and the candidate be given up to twelve months (full-time equivalent) to revise and re-submit the thesis for examination.

(15) Award a minor degree: If the thesis does not meet all of the criteria and standard of doctoral research, the candidate may be awarded a lesser degree.

(16) Fail: The thesis should be classified as FAILED and the candidate should not be awarded the degree of (name of degree), nor can the thesis be re-submitted for examination.

Section 6 - Application of Policy: Submission of Final Copy of Thesis

(17) A final copy of the thesis must be submitted by the candidate to the University as outlined in the [Appointment of Examiners and Examination Procedure](#).

Section 7 - Review

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

Section 8 - Associated Information

(19) 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	18th December 2023
Review Date	31st July 2024
Approval Authority	
Approval Date	18th December 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Abid Khan Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
Responsible Manager	Michelle Lopez Director, Graduate Research School
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