

Research Degrees Thesis Preparation and Examination

Context and Purpose

This procedure outlines the requirements and processes involved in preparing, examining and submitting the thesis.

Procedures relating to examination may be varied only where variations are specified in a Dual Award PhD or Jointly Badged PhD agreement and/or student schedule in accordance with Policy AB-61: [PhD Program Collaboration](#).

This procedure should be read in conjunction with Policy AB-58: [Research Degrees](#) and its Definitions.

Responsibility

Research degree students, supervisors, and staff associated with the support, coordination and leadership of research degree programs and scholarships are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy and its procedure.

Student and Academic Services are responsible for maintaining the student record. Decisions and outcomes made in accordance with this procedure must be documented and a copy provided to Student and Academic Services to be retained on the student record.

All other procedural responsibilities are detailed in this procedure.

Confidentiality

Refer to [M-1 Privacy Policy](#).

Procedure

A. Submission of the thesis

1. Each research degree student must submit a body of research work for examination that is the original work of the student conducted during enrolment. The work must not have been previously submitted to meet examination requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. This is known as the thesis.
2. Students submit their thesis and iThenticate report via the student portal in accordance with the [thesis submission and examination user guide](#) and [Guideline AB-58 AD7: Presentation of the Research Degree Thesis or Exegesis \(consolidated\)](#).
 - a. When the research degree student submits the thesis for examination, the Principal Supervisor verifies to the Dean of Research (or delegate) that:
 - i. the extent to which the work, that is data collection, data analysis, and writing of the thesis, was carried out by the student and, if an editor was used, the extent of the involvement of the editor;
 - ii. the authorship of the thesis to the best of their knowledge;
 - iii. the thesis is properly presented and is worthy of examination; and

- iv. the research has been conducted in a responsible manner and in agreement with approved research policies for human research ethics, animal ethics, or other research policies appropriate to the nature of the research.
 - b. If the Principal Supervisor is unable to advise that, in their opinion, the submission is *prima facie* worthy of examination, the Dean of Research (or delegate) will offer the research degree student the opportunity to withdraw the submission before examination, or for the student to make a case to the Dean of Graduate Studies for the examination to proceed.
 - c. Copyright in the thesis remains the property of the research degree student, pursuant to the provisions relating to intellectual property in Policy RES-22: [Intellectual Property: Ownership & Management](#).
- 3. Coursework and practice components of Professional Doctorates by Research**
- a. A Professional Doctorate by Research student is required to undertake the assessment for the prescribed coursework and/or practice in accordance with the approved program documentation, as recommended by Research Degrees Committee and approved by Academic Board.
 - b. The coursework and practice components are graded in accordance with Procedure AB-68: P6: [Final Grades and Notation](#).
- 4. Notice (for a thesis by creative practice and exegesis only)**
- a. A research degree student must notify the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) of their intention to submit a thesis for examination. Notification is provided in writing, at least one (1) month prior to submission. The notification includes an electronic summary of not more than 500 words regarding the content of the thesis. The notice indicates that the student is to present creative works within the thesis. The summary is forwarded to the examiners when they are initially invited to examine the thesis (refer to clause B).

B. Examination of the Thesis

5. Confidentiality

- a. Subject to clauses B.5.c. and B.5.d, anonymity must be maintained during the examination process, but normally all reports of examiners are made available to the research degree student, unless indicated otherwise by the examiner.
- b. A research degree student has the right to be consulted about the choice of examiners but does not have the right to nominate or veto the selection of examiners, and will not be advised of the identity of the final chosen examiners until the return of the examiner reports.
- c. Dialogue about the examination is not permitted between the supervisors and/or the research degree student with the examiners during the examination process. Any dialogue required must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- d. Confidentiality is applicable to research degree students undertaking an Oral Defence of the thesis until the initial examination of the written thesis is completed and the preliminary examiner reports are submitted to Student and Academic Services. Prior to the Oral Defence, students are provided with a copy of the written preliminary examiner reports, without the preliminary recommendation outcome.
- e. A Confidential Disclosure Deed (CDD) is required by all examiners. Each examiner must complete and return a CDD prior to the Principal Supervisor nominating the examiners online.

6. Appointment of Examiners

- a. Upon receiving the nomination of examiners by the Principal Supervisor, the Dean of Research (or delegate), approves the nomination for the following:
 - i. two (2) examiners external to the University; and
 - ii. where possible, a reserve examiner, for appointment in the event that one of the appointed examiners fails to return the examination report within the required time.
- b. Any supervisor or advisor of the research degree student may not be appointed as an examiner of that student's thesis.
- c. Where creative works are included with the thesis, the same two (2) people examine both the written component and the creative work(s).
- d. Examiners must:
 - i. hold a research degree at the level (or higher) they are examining, or have equivalent professional experience;
 - ii. be of high academic standing and have an international profile in the research degree student's research field;
 - iii. wherever possible, have recent research activity in that field;
 - iv. have the capacity to arrive at an independent assessment of the thesis;
 - v. have knowledge about the standards expected for the thesis/research work/creative work;
 - vi. not have given any substantive advice on the research (except in the case of a resubmitted thesis);
 - vii. not have any conflict of interest with the student, supervisor(s) or UniSA, whether it be of a personal, professional or commercial nature (refer to the [Australian Council of Graduate Research Guidelines for Disclosing and Managing Interests in Graduate Research](#));
 - viii. not have any other conflicts of interest that, in the opinion of the Dean of Research (or delegate), make them unable to assess the thesis objectively;
 - ix. if applicable, sign and return the CDD when confirming availability and willingness to participate in the examination; and
 - x. where possible, one of the examiners should be from an overseas university or overseas research organisation.
- e. Following Academic Unit approval of examiners, Student and Academic Services dispatch the thesis and re-confirm the examiners' availability within the prescribed timeframe.
- f. Where an examiner fails to return an assessment within the required time of receiving a thesis for examination, the thesis may be dispatched to the approved reserve examiner, or additional examiners appointed by the Dean of Research (or delegate); refer to clause B.6.a.
- g. Arrangement for the examination of creative works will be made by the relevant Research Degree Coordinator and staff of the Academic Unit in conjunction with Student and Academic Services.

7. Criteria for examination

a. Doctor of Philosophy degree: Examiners examine the research degree student's thesis according to the following criteria:

- i. capacity to demonstrate critical analysis and original thought in all aspects of the study;
- ii. ability to demonstrate a comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the literature and theoretical understandings relevant to the field of study;
- iii. capacity to design and apply appropriate research methodologies;
- iv. the extent to which the thesis makes a significant original contribution to knowledge and/or the application of knowledge within the field of study;
- v. for the Doctor of Philosophy (by Portfolio of Publications), the student's ability to review critically their own work in relation to the relevant existing knowledge and demonstrate (and supported in the integrating component) a clear and sustained contribution to the discipline area;
- vi. the quality of the presentation of the thesis/exhibition, including:
 1. the clarity of expression,
 2. the accuracy and appropriateness of presentation of results,
 3. the quality and relevance of illustrative material (such as graphs, tables, illustrations),
 4. the relevance and accuracy of citations, references, etc. and
 5. the development of a coherent argument where relevant to the field of study.
- vii. the quality of creative works, if any, including:
 1. the conceptual understanding of the relevant field,
 2. the ideas and/or imagination demonstrated,
 3. the technical competence,
 4. the resolution of the creative works, and
 5. the complexity and difficulty demonstrated.
- viii. the worthiness of the thesis/exhibition for publication in any appropriate form.

b. Professional Doctorate by Research degree: Examiners examine the thesis according to the following criteria:

- i. the research degree student's capacity to:
 1. demonstrate a significant and original contribution to knowledge about professional practice and a contribution to knowledge of fact and/or theory;
 2. demonstrate a critical appreciation of the literature relevant to the research project;

3. present a well-designed and structured investigation (or set of investigations);
 4. present information in a manner consistent with the relevant discipline(s);
 5. demonstrate a critical appraisal of their own work relative to that of others;
 6. present evidence of independent and critical thought;
- ii. the quality of the presentation of the thesis/exhibition, including:
 1. the clarity of expression;
 2. the accuracy and appropriateness of presentation of results;
 3. the quality and relevance of illustrative material (such as graphs, tables, illustrations);
 4. the relevance and accuracy of citations, references, etc.;
 5. the development of a coherent argument where relevant to the field of study, and
 - iii. the worthiness of the thesis/exhibition for publication in any appropriate form.
- c. Master of Research degree examiners examine the thesis to determine:
- i. the research degree student's ability to demonstrate an appropriate knowledge of the literature, creative works and theoretical understandings relevant to the field of study;
 - ii. the research degree student's capacity to demonstrate critical analysis in applying research approaches and, where appropriate, interpreting results;
 - iii. the extent to which the thesis makes a contribution to knowledge and/or the application of knowledge within the field of study;
 - iv. the quality of the presentation of the written component, including:
 1. the clarity of expression,
 2. the accuracy and appropriateness of presentation of results,
 3. the quality and relevance of illustrative material (such as graphs, tables, illustrations), and
 4. the relevance and accuracy of citations, references, etc.
 - v. the development of a coherent argument where relevant to the field of study, and the quality of creative works, if any, including:
 1. the conceptual understanding of the relevant field,
 2. the ideas and/or imagination demonstrated,
 3. the technical competence, and
 4. the resolution of the creative works and the complexity and difficulty demonstrated.

8. Oral Defence of the thesis

- a. Research degree students undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy degree (including by Portfolio of Publications) who commenced after 1 January 2016 are required to undertake an Oral Defence of the thesis as part of their thesis examination. Students undertaking a Professional Doctorate by Research or Master of Research degree are not required to undertake an Oral Defence of the thesis.
- b. Research degree students who commenced prior to 1 January 2016 may elect to undertake an Oral Defence of the thesis as part of their thesis examination in consultation with their supervisors. Students who elect to undertake an Oral Defence are required to advise Student and Academic Services at least three (3) months prior to their thesis submission.
- c. The Oral Defence must be conducted in accordance with Guideline AB-58 AD8: [Oral Defence of the Thesis in Research Degrees](#).
- d. On receipt of all examiners' reports, Student and Academic Services dispatch the reports to the Supervisory Panel and research degree student, copied to the Academic Program Support Team, Research Degree Coordinator and Dean of Research (or delegate). For examinations including an Oral Defence the preliminary reports are provided to both examiners, and the Chairperson (Chair) of the Oral Defence.
- e. The Oral Defence of the thesis usually occurs via video conference eight (8) to 12 weeks after dispatch of the thesis. Research degree students are required to attend the Oral Defence in person. The Oral Defence will be facilitated by a Chair who is a senior member of academic staff, and who is not a supervisor of the student.
- f. Research degree students required to undertake an Oral Defence of the thesis, who require variation to the arrangements for their Oral Defence due to exceptional circumstances, may submit a request for variation to Exams and Results: Student and Academic Services including any supporting documentation for consideration. Exams and Results: Student and Academic Services will collate all relevant documentation and provide this to the Chair of the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel for a decision. Requests for variation must be submitted as soon as circumstances supporting the request for variation are known and must be prior to submission of the thesis. Variations may include an exemption from undertaking the Oral Defence, only in extenuating circumstances.
- g. Where one or both examiners indicate that the thesis is not of the standard required for the PhD, through the return of a recommendation of 5 - Award of a Master of Research or 6 - Fail, the Oral Defence will not proceed as scheduled. Nevertheless, the research degree student retains the right to have an oral defence by request to the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel.
- h. The Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel may determine that a research degree student may not progress to the Oral Defence, or that a variation to arrangements be made, at their discretion.

9. Examination report

- a. The examiners assess the thesis in accordance with the criteria for the research degree and, through the Oral Defence process, recommend to the Research Degrees Committee one of the following assessments:
 1. Pass forthwith.
 2. Pass, following minor corrections (including typographical errors) being completed and certified by the Dean of Research (or delegate).
 3. Pass, following major corrections:
 - 3a. I delegate authority to the University's Research Degrees Committee or nominee the responsibility of being satisfied that the amendments have been made in line with the examiners' reports,
 - OR
 - 3b. I would like to see the thesis again in order to be satisfied that the amendments have been made in line with my recommendation.
 4. Revise and resubmit for re-examination (by the same examiners where possible) after a period of further research.
 5. For PhD examinations only, that the thesis is not of PhD standard, but is worthy of the awarding of a Master of Research degree following any corrections indicated in my report. I delegate to the Research Degrees Committee or nominee the responsibility of being satisfied that the corrections have been made.
 6. Fail.

C. Thesis assessment options

10. Passed thesis – assessment option 1

- a. Where a thesis has been assessed as passed forthwith, the final thesis must be submitted online within four (4) weeks of the notification of the examination outcome.
- b. The submission requires the research degree student, Principal Supervisor, Research Degree Coordinator and the Dean of Research (or delegate) to confirm that the thesis is satisfactory for the award of the degree. Student and Academic Services will arrange reporting of the completion to Research Degrees Committee.

11. Minor corrections – assessment option 2

- a. In the case that a thesis has been assessed as passed following minor corrections, the revised thesis must be submitted online within six (6) weeks of the notification to the research degree student of the requirement for revision.
- b. The submission requires the research degree student, Principal Supervisor, Research Degree Coordinator and the Dean of Research (or delegate) to confirm that the revisions have been made, or addressed, and that the thesis is satisfactory for the award of the degree. Student and Academic Services will arrange reporting of the completion to Research Degrees Committee.

12. Amendment – assessment options 3(a) and 3(b)

- a. Where a thesis has been assessed as passed following major corrections, the revised thesis is required to be submitted online within three (3) months of the notification of the need for revision.

- b. In the case where the examination report has recommended assessment option 3(a), the submission requires:
 - i. the research degree student;
 - ii. the Principal Supervisor;
 - iii. an independent reviewer as nominated by the Dean of Research (or delegate); and
 - iv. the Dean of Research (or delegate)

to confirm that the revisions have been made and that the thesis is satisfactory for the award of the degree, before the final submission is reported to Research Degrees Committee.

- c. In the case where the examination report has recommended assessment option 3(b), the revised thesis is required to be submitted together with a summary of amendments, and confirmation by:
 - i. the research degree student;
 - ii. the Principal Supervisor;
 - iii. an independent reviewer as nominated by the Dean of Research (or delegate); and
 - iv. the Dean of Research (or delegate)

that the revisions have been made. The thesis is reviewed by the examiner(s), as specified in the examination report, before the final submission is reported to Research Degrees Committee.

13. Re-submission and re-examination – assessment option 4

- a. Where a thesis is to be re-submitted for examination after major revision:
 - i. the thesis may be submitted once only in the revised form;
 - ii. the written component must be submitted online within six (6) months of the notification to the research degree student of the requirement for revision;
 - iii. the submission is accompanied by a summary of amendments and confirmation by:
 - 1. the research degree student;
 - 2. the Principal Supervisor;
 - 3. an independent reviewer nominated by the Dean of Research (or delegate); and
 - 4. the Dean of Research (or delegate)

that the revisions have been made and the thesis is worthy of re-examination.

- iv. Re-examination of the written component of the thesis is arranged by Student and Academic Services, and the results reported to Research Degrees Committee.
- v. Re-examination of creative works is conducted within the relevant Academic Unit in conjunction with Dean of Research (or delegate), and the results reported to Research Degrees Committee.
- vi. Normally, the same examiner(s) are appointed.

- vii. The examiner(s) may recommend only that the thesis be:
 - 1. passed forthwith; or
 - 2. passed with specified amendments required but the award process may proceed; or
 - 3. for PhD examinations only, a recommendation that the thesis is not of PhD standard, but is worthy of the awarding of a Master of Research degree; or
 - 4. failed.
- b. The research degree student may be required to pay fees for the period required to undertake corrections.

14. For PhD examinations only, awarding a Master of Research degree – assessment option 5

- a. In the case of a thesis which has been assessed as not of PhD standard, but worthy of awarding a Master of Research degree following any corrections indicated in the examiners' reports, the revised thesis is submitted within three (3) months of the notification of the need for revision.
- b. The submission is accompanied by a statement from:
 - i. the Principal Supervisor;
 - ii. an independent reviewer as nominated by the Dean of Research (or delegate); and
 - iii. the Dean of Research (or delegate);

each confirming that the revisions have been made and that the thesis is satisfactory for the award of a Master of Research degree. Student and Academic Services will arrange reporting of the completion to Research Degrees Committee.

15. Failed thesis and appeal - assessment option 6

- a. Where both examiners recommend that the thesis be failed, the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel will deem the thesis to have failed.
- b. Where one examiner recommends that the thesis be failed and the other recommends that the thesis be passed (or passed with corrections or amendments, or revised and re-submitted), a research degree student may submit an appeal to the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel (refer to clause D).
- c. A thesis which has been failed may not be resubmitted for the award of the degree and the enrolment will be terminated, except as provided in clause D.

16. Completion of corrections and submission of the thesis

- a. If a case is made by the research degree student and the Principal Supervisor that amendments and/or submission of the thesis cannot be completed satisfactorily within the prescribed time according to the assessment outcome provided in clauses C.10-14, the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) may grant an extension. Student and Academic Services will record the extension on the student record.
- b. A thesis which is not re-submitted within the prescribed time according to the assessment outcome will, in the absence of evidence of exceptional circumstances, be deemed by the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel to have failed.

- c. If the Principal Supervisor is unable to advise that, in their opinion, the thesis is *prima facie* worthy of final submission or re-examination, the Dean of Research (or delegate) will offer the research degree student the opportunity to make a case to the Dean of Graduate Studies for the final submission or re-submission of the thesis to proceed.
- d. Final thesis submission, or revised thesis for re-examination, is submitted via the student research portal. Research degree students will be advised by Student and Academic Services once the thesis has been approved, and next steps including the process for re-examination (where applicable), and conferral of the award.

D. Appeal to the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel (refer to Figure 1)

17. A research degree student may submit an appeal to the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel (Panel) to have the thesis re-examined, provided that evidence is submitted to the satisfaction of Panel that:
 - a. one or more of the examiners was unqualified to examine the work; or
 - b. one or more of the examiners substantially misinterpreted the work; or
 - c. one or more of the examiners was prejudiced or biased in the assessment of the thesis; or
 - d. the oral defence was not conducted in accordance with D.9 of Guideline AB-58 AD8: Oral Defence of the Thesis in Research Degrees.
18. Where a research degree student is appealing to have the thesis re-examined, the student, and where possible the Principal Supervisor, provide documentation and a recommendation as to the proposed course of action to the Dean of Research (or delegate) within six (6) weeks of receipt of the examiners' reports. All examiners' reports are to be taken into account when preparing a recommendation.
19. The Panel considers the appeal and determine a course of action.
 - a. The Panel may determine that:
 - i. dialogue be conducted with all or any one of the examiners, or between the examiners;
 - ii. another examiner be appointed;
 - iii. an independent adjudicator be appointed; or
 - iv. any other action as deemed appropriate.
 - b. The Panel will not approve an alternative result to that provided by the examiners.
 - c. The Panel will provide a written record of the discussion and agreed actions to the Dean of Research (or delegate) for action.
 - d. The research degree student may, within 20 working days, lodge an appeal against of the course of action decided by the Panel with the Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise (DVC: R&E), for the appeal to be heard by the Student Appeals Committee (refer to clause E). The decision of the Student Appeals Committee is final.
20. Where an independent adjudicator is required, the Dean of Research (or delegate) appoints the adjudicator, who is normally external to the University.
 - a. The adjudicator is not an additional examiner, but a judge requested to make a decision on the relative soundness, correctness and appropriateness of the initial two (2) examiners' recommendations.

- b. The following material is sent to the adjudicator:
 - i. original thesis;
 - ii. examiners' reports (anonymised);
 - iii. rejoinder from the research degree student;
 - iv. criteria for examination; and
 - v. a statement from the oral defence chair and examiners (if applicable)
- c. The adjudicator evaluates the above material and advises the Panel about whether the examiners have:
 - i. fully grasped the substance of the research degree student's thesis/research work, and/or
 - ii. erred in their judgement of the thesis, and/or
 - iii. assessed the thesis at the appropriate level (refer to clause B.9), and/or
 - iv. for appeals related to the conduct of the oral defence, assesses whether examiners have adhered to the process outlined in clause D.9 of Guideline AB-58 AD8: Oral Defence of the Thesis in Research Degrees.

E. Lodging an appeal on a decision made by the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel
(refer to Figure 1)

- 21. Research degree students are entitled to lodge an appeal against a decision made by the Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel to the Student Appeals Committee in accordance with Student Appeals Committee Procedure.

F. Final grades and transcript notations

- 22. The final grades and transcript notations for research degree students are outlined in Procedure AB-68 P6: Final Grades and Notation.

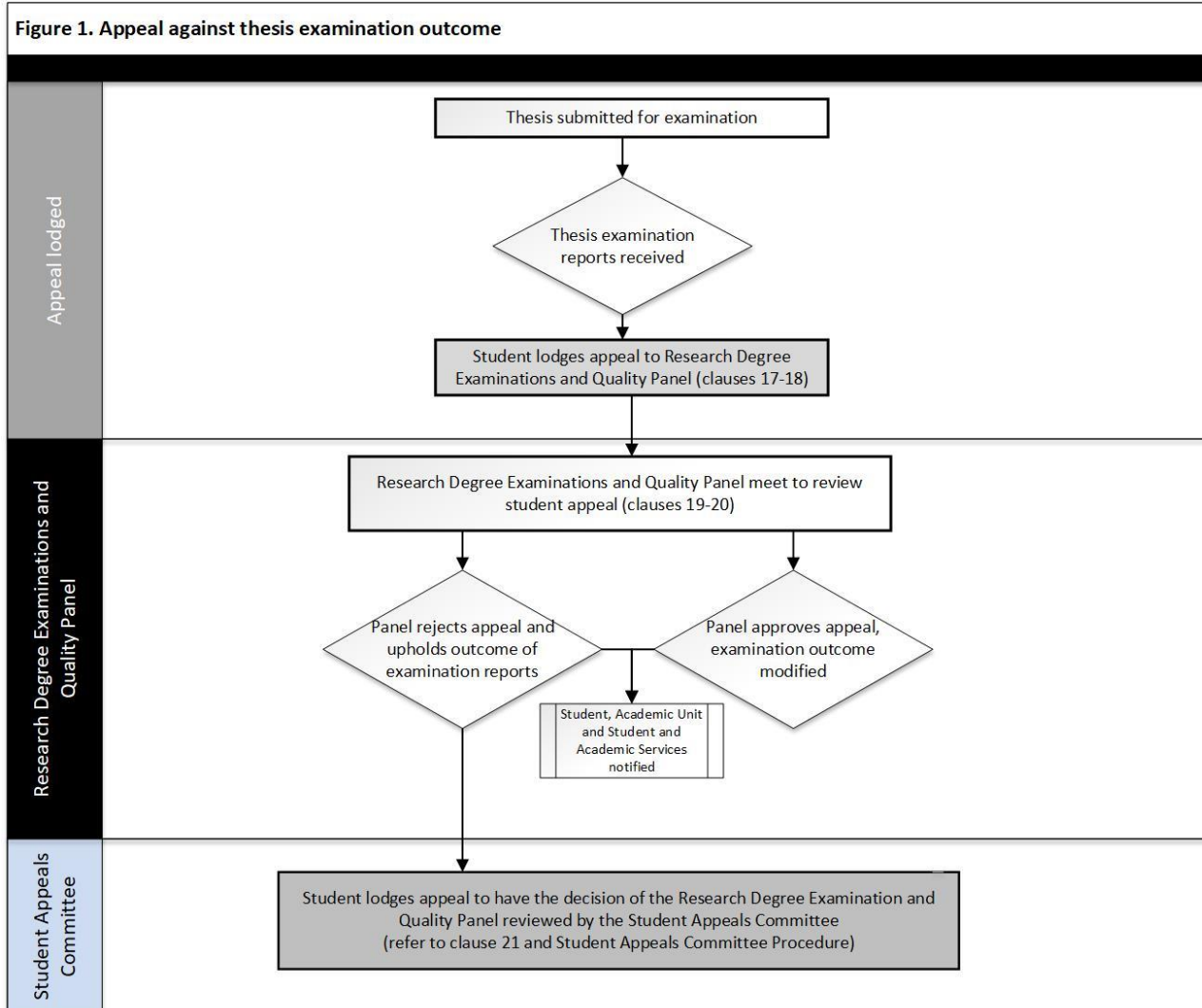
G. Lodgment of the thesis with the University Library

23. Requirements

- a. The final electronic thesis submitted to Student and Academic Services will be lodged with the University Library. The digital copy of the thesis is made available in the University's institutional repository, Research Outputs Repository.
- b. The final digital version should include an appropriate record of creative works, e.g. photographs, video recording. Personal information such as addresses of the research degree student, supervisors and other parties should be removed from the final digital version submitted online.
- c. In order to protect intellectual property rights, a research degree student may request a restriction on access to the thesis (refer to Policy RES-22: [Intellectual Property: Ownership and Management](#)).

24. Electronic access to thesis

- The research degree student, as author, is asked to consent in writing to full text access to the digital thesis. Student and Academic Services will send a digital copy of the aforementioned notice of consent with the copy deposited in the Library. The digital copy will be made available on open access through the institutional repository, except where a restriction is imposed by the Dean of Research (or delegate), as provided for in clause G.23.c.
- If the Dean of Research (or delegate) approves a restriction on access, the digital thesis becomes available following completion of the restriction period.
- Student and Academic Services reports to Research Degrees Committee on those theses where a restriction on access has been approved.



Definitions

Academic Program Support Team is the team of professional staff located in the Academic Unit, who provide support for research degree administration.

Academic Unit is a major organisational unit with responsibility for academic programs. At UniSA, there are seven Academic Units: UniSA: Allied Health & Human Performance; UniSA: Business; UniSA: Clinical & Health Sciences; UniSA: Creative; UniSA: Education Futures; UniSA: Justice & Society; and UniSA: STEM.

Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) is a form issued by the University to international students studying in Australia on a student visa, for student visa purposes.

Dean of Research is the research leadership role in each Academic Unit who enacts the University's research strategy and is responsible for the oversight of research degree programs in their Academic Unit. The Dean of Research may delegate the leadership and management of research education and related activities to a Professorial Lead with portfolio responsibility for the research degrees in the Academic Unit.

Enrolment is the process by which persons who have been admitted to a University program are formally registered to undertake one or more courses within their program as either commencing or continuing students.

Enterprise Agreement/Collective Agreement is the current University of South Australia Enterprise Agreement and the University of South Australia Senior Staff Collective Agreement.

Examiner is an academic from another University or research organisation appointed to assess and evaluate a research degree thesis, Oral Defence and any accompanying creative or published work on the basis of criteria specified by the University.

Exceptional circumstances are unexpected and beyond the control of the student. These circumstances have a significant impact on the progress of the student's research project and/or the student's well-being. Exceptional circumstances may include: medical (serious illness or injury), family, personal, employment or program-related circumstances, and major political upheaval or natural disaster in an international student's home country requiring emergency travel.

Form refers to all online and paper-based forms and applications.

Oral Defence of the thesis is part of the PhD examination process whereby research degree students discuss their work in depth with their examiners, defend their thesis and reply to challenges to their arguments while enabling examiners to clarify issues in the thesis. The examiners provide the research degree student with an agreed single set of corrections or revisions required before the award of the qualification can be made.

Principal Supervisor is a university academic staff member or adjunct who has primary responsibility for guiding the postgraduate research undertaken by a designated research degree student and for overseeing the progress of that student towards completion of their research degree. The Principal Supervisor is normally responsible for decisions and processes as detailed in relevant procedures, including convening the Supervisory Panel for reviews of research degree student progress, and consultation on the research project.

Research Degree Coordinator is a member of academic staff, appointed by the Dean of Research in an Academic Unit, who has responsibility for pastoral care of research degree students. The Research Degree Coordinator convenes Confirmation and Reviews of Progress, and acts in accordance with Policy AB-58 Research Degrees and associated procedures.

Research Degree Examinations and Quality Panel is the panel convened by the University's Research Degrees Committee to assess and determine complex academic matters with regard to research degree students.

Research degree student is an individual enrolled in a research degree.

Research Degrees Committee is a sub-committee of Research Leadership Committee and has delegated authority in matters relating to the research education and training strategy and the management and administration of research degrees. This includes responsibility for making decisions on each candidate's completion of all requirements for the award of a research degree and for recommending to the University Council that the degree be awarded.

Staff member is an individual employed by the University under its Enterprise Agreement or Collective Agreement, and also includes adjuncts, visiting academics and guest lecturers, and volunteers, whether they are paid or unpaid.

Supervisors are members of the University Community who have oversight and/or direction of the work of staff or students.

Supervisory Panel is a team, usually comprising three (3) to five (5) members, who are responsible for providing supervision to a research degree student. The Panel must include a minimum of two (2) UniSA supervisors, one (1) of whom will be the Principal Supervisor. Supervisory Panels can also include experts from other disciplines and advisors, where appropriate for the research project.

Thesis is a body of research work that is submitted by students for examination. Research work means any combination of a thesis, dissertation, portfolio of work, exegesis, creative work, published articles or written project in accordance with the relevant research degree requirements.

University Community refers to all students and staff members of the University including honorary title holders, adjuncts, visiting academics, guest lecturers and volunteers who are contributing to the work of the University but who are not staff members.

Further Assistance:

[Student and Academic Services](#)

Related Documentation:

Policy AB-58: [Research Degrees](#)

Policy AB-61: [PhD Program Collaboration](#)

Policy RES-22: [Intellectual Property: Ownership and Management](#)

Guideline AB-58 AD7: [Presentation of the Research Degree Thesis, or Exegesis \(Consolidated\)](#)

Guideline AB-58 AD8: [Oral Defence of the Thesis in Research Degrees](#)

Procedure AB-68 P6: [Final Grades and Notation](#)

[Student Appeals Committee Procedure](#)

[Australian Council of Graduate Research Good Practice Guidelines for Disclosing and Managing Interests in Graduate Research](#)

Officer Responsible for Update and Review: Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise

Approved by: Academic Board, 27 November 2020

Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Enterprise, 20 August 2021 (minor amendments)

Academic Board, 25 February 2022

Academic Board, 26 November 2022

Academic Board, 24 November 2023

Commencement Date: 1 January 2021

Review Date: 2026

History: This procedure was previously referenced as clauses 16 and 17 in the Academic Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research.