

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY BY PORTFOLIO COURSE RULES POLICY AND PROCEDURE



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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy provides guidance to applicants, current candidates, supervisors and administrators on the enrolment arrangements and operation of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) by Portfolio degree at CQUniversity.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 These regulations apply to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Portfolio offered by CQUniversity.
- 2.2 Candidates in all other Research Higher Degrees should refer to either
- the Research Higher Degree Course Rules, which cover the Masters by Research, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Education, and Doctor of Professional Studies degrees; or

- b) the Research Higher Degree (Offshore) Course Rules, which cover degrees involving a substantive and/or formalised period of study outside Australia, such as cotutelle agreements and fully offshore enrolments

3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 This policy and procedure is designed to ensure that the CQUniversity's Doctor of Philosophy degree is consistent with expectations of the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#).

4 COURSE RULES AND PROCEDURE

Interpretation

- 4.1 The term 'the Committee' shall mean the Research Higher Degrees Committee, unless otherwise indicated.
- 4.2 The Research Higher Degrees Committee may delegate routine approval matters to the Chair, Research Higher Degrees Committee.
- 4.3 The Dean, Graduate Studies is given considerable duties and responsibilities in managing research higher degrees via the Course Rules. In discharging these duties, the Dean, Graduate Services may delegate such responsibility and/or consult with and refer for advice to the Deputy Dean/s - Research, supervisor/s, the candidate, and senior research staff as appropriate.

Qualifications for admission as a candidate

- 4.4 The CQUniversity will consider applications for admission to candidature for the Doctor of Philosophy by Portfolio from individuals who can clearly demonstrate existing peer-reviewed research output/s to be considered for an award of a doctoral degree. In particular, such output must be:
 - a) work for which the applicant is largely responsible (for example, as demonstrated by authorship sequence)
 - b) cogent; occurring within a unified area of study, and
 - c) of a volume and quality that aligns with the expectations of an Australian doctoral degree.
- 4.5 In addition to existing peer-reviewed outputs, an applicant is required to hold the following qualifications:
 - a) has been awarded a Masters degree either by research or with a substantial element (typically one-third) of research work within it, from a university or any other approved institution
 - b) has qualified for the award of a Bachelor degree in an appropriate discipline with first class or second class honours conferred by a university or any other approved institution, or
 - c) alternative qualification/s and/or relevant professional experience deemed by the Committee to be of equivalent scope and standard to those listed above. This may include consideration of vocational training qualifications where these are shown to have relevant research or discipline-based content.
- 4.6 In considering the above admissions criteria, the CQUniversity will have regard to the recency and duration of the applicant's formal qualifications, research outputs and/or professional experience.
- 4.7 Applicants who already hold a research doctorate, or any other award that is equivalent of the [Australian Qualification Framework Level 10](#) are not eligible for admission.
- 4.8 Where a domestic applicant presents with educational qualifications from an institution that does not instruct in English, the CQUniversity reserves the right to request evidence of English language proficiency, prior to granting admission.

Application for admission

- 4.9 An application for admission can be made at any time of the year.
- 4.10 In the course of preparing an application for admission, an applicant should consult with the Research Division to determine eligibility for admission. An applicant should also consult with the Deputy Dean - Research in the relevant School/s, on the proposed research topic, supervision and the availability of adequate resources.
- 4.11 The application for admission must be submitted on the standard pro forma which includes key information relating to:
- the existing peer-reviewed output/s to be presented for consideration and how these meet the eligibility criteria for inclusion (see section 4.13 below)
 - an indication of the unified and/or niche area in which the prior publication/s already demonstrate cogency; and how these might be supplemented with any new research pursued during the study
 - any proposed data collection or other research activities that may be required to complete the requirements for the degree. and
 - the proposed supervisory panel.

An application for admission must also contain a declaration that the work presented for consideration has not previously been submitted for the award of a degree at any other institution.

- 4.12 To be regarded as eligible for inclusion, research works must satisfy all of the following criteria:
- The applicant is the first-author, or a lead-author (for example, within the first three listed authors), and a statement of contribution describing the inputs of all authors is provided. Publications in which the applicant is not the first-author would be expected to form the minority of work to be presented for the degree;
 - The output is fully published or in press, and has passed rigorous peer-review, under standards commensurate with the specifications of the Australian Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC).
 - The output type/s is recognised as a quality output for the discipline area; for example, as demonstrated by citation data;
 - The work has not been submitted, in part or in whole, for the award of a degree at any institution;
 - The work is not the subject of intellectual property, copyright, confidentiality or other ownership issues that would preclude its use in a thesis.

Other eligibility criteria, as deemed appropriate by the Committee, may also be applied to maintain the rigour and quality of the degree.

- 4.13 All applicants for the Doctor of Philosophy by Portfolio will be required to attend a pre-admission interview (either by face to face or virtual means) together with the Dean, Graduate Studies and the Deputy Dean - Research of the intended host School. Members of the proposed supervisory panel may also participate in this interview.

Admission to candidature

- 4.14 An applicant may be admitted to the Doctor of Philosophy by Portfolio only where:
- there is a substantive body of previously published, peer-reviewed work eligible for inclusion in the thesis (refer to sections 4.12 and 4.13 above)
 - the proposed study can be pursued in an environment of research activity or other creative endeavour, inquiry and scholarship, and
 - the supervision and resources required for their project are available. Appropriate supervision, as defined in the [Supervision](#) section, must be available from the intended commencement date.

All applications for admission will be assessed by the Research Higher Degrees Executive Committee, and an outcome provided to the applicant within 28 days of receipt of the admission.

- 4.15 The CQUniversity reserves the right to refuse admission to any applicant.
- 4.16 An offer of admission will be issued from the Research Division. This will contain a formal Description of Candidature including:
- a) the date of commencement of candidature
 - b) the name of the school in which the course will be undertaken
 - c) the mode of study and campus location (for on-campus candidates)
 - d) appointment of the supervisors
 - e) the timeline by which the confirmation of candidature must be completed
 - f) approval of the proposed field of research, and
 - g) any special conditions that the candidate may be required to fulfil.
- 4.17 Candidature will be deemed to have commenced as at the date indicated on the Description of Candidature and as confirmed by the candidate when accepting the offer of admission.

Enrolment

- 4.18 Candidature may commence at any time of year, but offers of admission will be made subject to resource availability and administrative processes, and having regard to the implications of term and Census dates and any applicable tuition liability.
- 4.19 The standard course length for the Doctor of Philosophy by Portfolio at CQUniversity is one EFTSL. (Please note: one EFTSL is equivalent to one year's full-time study.)
- 4.20 This standard period will be calculated from date of commencement to date of conferral of the award, and is:
- inclusive of pre-confirmation, confirmation, thesis preparation and submission, plus any revisions as required by the Chair of Examiners
 - exclusive of any leave of absence periods, and the time during which the thesis is under examination.
- 4.21 A candidate who has consumed more than the standard EFTSL will be considered an over-time candidate.
- 4.22 A candidate will continue to be re-enrolled under the same conditions as per the previous term, unless the Research Division is formally advised in writing. In particular, an over-time candidate must formally advise the Research Division if they do not wish to continue with their research course.
- 4.23 A request for a change to the term of enrolment that is received after the applicable Census date will not be honoured unless in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.24 A candidate who is required to undertake major revisions following thesis examination shall be required to re-enrol for a prescribed period of not less than one Census period, irrespective of enrolment mode. Such enrolments will be automatically completed by the Research Division and a confirmation of enrolment forwarded to the candidate. This will occur unless a candidate has formally advised that they do not intend to perform the thesis revisions within 28 days of receipt of the examination advice.
- 4.25 Candidates are required to fully fund their enrolment in the research higher degree course, unless otherwise advised in writing by the CQUniversity.

Study load

- 4.26 Applicants to research higher degree courses may be accepted as either full-time or part-time candidates.
- 4.27 Research studies may be undertaken in either on-campus or flexible (distance) mode. Permission to enrol as a flexible (distance) candidate shall only be granted where:
- a) appropriate supervision arrangements are available, and

b) access can be guaranteed to laboratories, equipment, research literature and resource materials as necessary for the successful completion of the research.

- 4.28 A candidate may transfer from one mode to another on such terms as approved by the CQUniversity.
- 4.29 Full-time candidates would normally be expected to contribute between 35 to 40 hours per week to their research and thesis. Part-time candidates would normally be expected to contribute between 17.5 to 20 hours per week to their research and thesis.
- 4.30 Candidates may participate in forms of paid or unpaid employment, voluntary positions and other duties, provided that this does not impede satisfactory academic progress.

Thesis proposal milestone

- 4.31 Admission to the Doctor of Philosophy by Portfolio shall initially be offered as provisional candidature.
- 4.32 Provisional candidates are required to undertake a Thesis Proposal Milestone within 0.40 EFTSL of their commencement. Please note that this is the maximum time at which the milestone must be achieved, and candidates are strongly encouraged to complete their seminar well ahead of this timeframe.
- 4.33 During the period of provisional candidature, the candidate will develop, in consultation with the supervisors, a detailed Thesis Proposal. This shall include:

Section A: Thesis Topic and Contribution:

- A thesis title, of no more than 25 words, which should be descriptive and unambiguous
- A thesis abstract of no more than 250 words
- A statement describing the aims, objectives and research questions
- A statement of the candidate's existing contribution to the field of research (that is, the contribution made by the previously published outputs)
- A statement of the candidate's proposed contribution to the field of research (that is, the contribution that will be made by the work undertaken during the period of candidature)
- A thesis plan (chapter outline and identification of previous as well as any prospective publications arising);

Section B: Prior Outputs:

- A list of all prior outputs to be tendered for inclusion in the thesis document, together with relevant materials to establish their quality, authorship and eligibility for inclusion
- Statements regarding necessary human and ethics clearance, intellectual property disbursements, and any other permits or licences that are (or were) relevant to the research

Section C: Supplementary Research Plan:

- A statement describing any further data collection that may be required to finalise the thesis as a cogent body of work. As appropriate, this would include full details of the proposed methodology, methods and/or research design
- A detailed description of the physical or other resources required to complete the research
- A Gantt chart demonstrating the milestones and timelines for the proposed project
- An itemised project budget (in the format prescribed by the Division of Research) indicating funding sources either secured or proposed
- A risk profile summary (in the format prescribed by the Division of Research).

- 4.34 The thesis proposal milestone shall be submitted to the Research Higher Degrees Committee Executive, via the Dean, Graduate Studies for consideration. The Executive shall review the candidate's progress and milestone documentation and provide one of the following recommendations:

- Full candidature status be granted
 - Full candidature status be provisionally confirmed, subject to the appropriate ethics, risk and any other certifications being secured, or
 - Candidature to remain provisional (with specific advice regarding action/s required to progress to full candidature).
- 4.35 The RHDC Executive may invite the candidate to conduct a short oral presentation to support their written submission and/or participate in an interview relating to the thesis proposal milestone.
- 4.36 All conditions imposed on candidature as outlined within the attachment to offer of admission should be fulfilled by the candidate at the time of confirmation. Full candidature would not normally proceed until all requirements are met.
- 4.37 The CQUniversity reserves the right to terminate candidature if the candidate does not demonstrate satisfactory completion of all prescribed conditions as well as successful completion of the thesis proposal milestone, by the required date. Where it is determined that a provisional candidature shall be terminated, the candidate shall be given the opportunity to show cause why such action should not be taken.
- 4.38 Approval of a candidate's transition to full candidature is a decision made by the RHDC Executive. The Committee may require changes to the course of research and study, confirm the candidature or take such other action as is deemed appropriate.
- 4.39 A candidate who has successfully completed the thesis proposal milestone will be advised in writing by the Research Division.

Course of study

- 4.40 All research, thesis preparation and administrative tasks undertaken within these Course Rules must be conducted in English.
- 4.41 On admission to candidature, a candidate is required to pursue a supervised and approved course of research and study leading to the submission of a thesis in not less than 0.75 EFTSL or more than two EFTSL.
- 4.42 The above EFTSL reflects total consumption, exclusive of any periods of approved leave.
- 4.43 A change to the focus of the research that represents a significant departure from the approved course of research and study will not be permitted.
- 4.44 A candidate shall prepare under supervision a thesis based on the thesis proposal milestone. The thesis shall constitute a substantial investigation into a selected field of research.
- 4.45 In the course of the approved course of research and study, a candidate may be required to:
- a) attend the CQUniversity for consultation and other purposes as deemed necessary
 - b) participate in lectures and seminars and perform such practical work as prescribed by the Committee, and/or
 - c) present their research at an appropriate scholarly or professional venue as an unassessed component of the candidature.
- 4.46 Candidates are not permitted hold enrolment in any other research higher degree courses at either Australian or international institutions, during their period of candidature.
- 4.47 A candidate may not engage in any other academic course of study leading to a higher education or vocational qualification without the approval of the Dean, Graduate Studies.
- a) Such approval will granted to full-time candidates only in exceptional circumstances, or where this is a requirement of the Description of Candidature
 - b) Approval may be granted to part-time candidates where it can be clearly demonstrated that the external studies will not impact on timely progress in the research higher degree course.

- c) Approval will not be provided unless the candidate has demonstrated strong progress in their research degree.
- 4.48 Candidates are encouraged to participate in research training offered by the Research Division. This training would normally enhance a candidate's research skills and contribute to their graduate attributes but would not be deemed as an academic course.

Attendance at the University

- 4.49 The CQUniversity encourages candidates to attend its campuses (including regional and metropolitan campus locations, study hubs, and virtual spaces as appropriate) and to be part of the CQUniversity community.
- 4.50 The CQUniversity reserves the right to vary the agreed arrangements to require the candidate to attend on-campus for certain periods, if such attendance is felt to be necessary for the successful pursuit of the study course. Such variations will be discussed initially with the candidate's supervisory panel and the Deputy Dean - Research.

Leave of absence

- 4.51 On application by the candidate, the Dean, Graduate Studies may grant leave of absence from the course of research and study for a period of not less than three days and not exceeding 12 months. Periods in excess of 12 months will be considered only in exceptional circumstances and will require supporting documentation.
- 4.52 The period of leave of absence will not be counted as part of a candidate's EFTSL consumption.
- 4.53 Candidates should note that liability for tuition fees may still apply, where the period of leave is less than one Census period in duration. Candidates should seek advice from the Research Division regarding tuition liability, prior to applying for a leave of absence.
- 4.54 During a leave of absence, the candidate will not be afforded access to University facilities and resources including office and laboratory space, supervision, training opportunities and any applicable candidate funding allocations. A candidate will, however, be able to maintain access to CQUniversity email and associated information technology systems, including standard library services.
- 4.55 Candidates resuming from a leave of absence must formally notify the Research Division, in writing, of their return to study date. Candidates resuming from an extended leave of absence (30 days or more) may also be required to supply a revised project timeline, and/or candidate-supervisor memorandum of understanding, upon returning to study.
- 4.56 The CQUniversity reserves the right to refuse re-enrolment to a candidate returning from an extended leave of absence (30 days or more) in the event that the university is unable to provide adequate resources, facilities or supervision for the approved project, at the proposed time of resumption.

Supervision

- 4.57 An applicant or candidate will be deemed to have appropriate, continuing supervisory arrangements only when:
- a) there is a principal supervisor who holds a doctoral degree, and who is active in research and publishing in, or otherwise making original contributions to, a relevant field or discipline
 - b) there is at least one associate supervisor with relevant research expertise, and
 - c) the principal supervisor is a member of the staff of CQUniversity, or has a relevant adjunct appointment, or is otherwise formally contracted and accountable to the CQUniversity for supervisory duties.
- 4.58 The supervisory panel (principal plus one or more associate supervisors) will be appointed by the Dean, Graduate Studies in consultation with the Deputy Dean/s - Research and relevant line managers, in accordance with the [Research Higher Degrees Supervision Policy and Procedure](#).

- 4.59 A candidate shall consult the supervisory panel regularly during the course of developing and undertaking the prescribed course of research and during preparation of the thesis, and must, as the supervisors may require, submit drafts of the thesis for advice and comment prior to its submission for examination.

Progress reporting

- 4.60 PhD by Portfolio candidates are exempt from the mandatory six-monthly progress reports that are a usual requirement of other research higher degrees. However, the Dean, Graduate Studies may request a progress report in circumstances where the candidate has failed to progress towards examination in the expected timeframes. A candidate will be informed in writing of any such requirement, and will have 28 days in which to respond.
- 4.61 Where the Committee, through the Dean, Graduate Studies, determines that the candidate has failed to make satisfactory academic progress in the work, or meet the conditions of candidature imposed by the Committee, then the candidature may be terminated. However, as a matter of normal practice, candidature shall not be terminated on the basis of unsatisfactory progress unless the Committee is satisfied that a reasonable attempt has been made to ensure that the candidate has been:
- clearly warned of shortcomings in research performance
 - advised of means of overcoming these shortcomings and of obtaining a satisfactory standard of performance in the research, and
 - provided the opportunity to take action as directed.

Submission and examination of the thesis

- 4.62 The candidate shall give notice, through the principal supervisor, of the intention to submit a thesis no less than four weeks prior to the proposed date of submission.
- 4.63 A candidate who is recommencing study after a period of leave, or withdrawal from study, will be required to enrol for a minimum period of four weeks, prior to submitting a thesis for examination. This will allow sufficient time for lodgement of the Intention to Submit, as well as perusal of the final thesis draft by the supervisory panel and/or professional editor, as appropriate.
- 4.64 Where, following consultation with the other supervisors, the principal supervisor has any doubt as to whether the thesis is in a suitable format and/or of examinable quality, the supervisor is not required to endorse the notice. The principal supervisor is required, however, to advise the candidate and the Committee of the reasons why support has not been forthcoming.
- 4.65 Where the principal supervisor refuses to endorse the notice for reasons other than failure to complete prescribed studies, the candidate may appeal to the Committee, through the Dean, Graduate Studies, to submit the thesis for examination.
- 4.66 The candidate shall ensure that the thesis follows the directions for thesis preparation and submission as set out on the [Research Higher Degree Theses Policy and Procedure](#).
- 4.67 Upon notification that the candidate is about to submit a thesis, the Committee shall appoint the requisite number of examiners and proceed with the examination in accordance with the relevant examination policy.
- 4.68 An examiner's report shall conclude with one of the following recommendations:
- a) that the thesis be accepted as satisfactory for the award of the degree
 - b) that provided the listed minor revisions are corrected to the satisfaction of the chair of examiners, the thesis be accepted as satisfactory for the award of the degree
 - c) that provided the major revisions are completed to the satisfaction of the examination panel and the chair of examiners, the thesis be accepted as satisfactory for the award of the degree
 - d) that although the thesis does not meet the standard expected for the degree, the candidate be required to carry out additional work as directed and resubmit the thesis for re-examination
 - e) that the thesis be rejected and that the degree not be awarded.

- 4.69 A candidate who has revised a thesis in terms of section 4.68d and who fails the re-examination shall not be eligible for any further examination.
- 4.70 In the event that an examined thesis must be resubmitted as in section 4.68d the candidate shall be required to re-enrol for a prescribed period of not less than six months and no longer than 12 months. These are set time periods and are irrespective of enrolment mode.

Intellectual property

- 4.71 Where research projects are conducted in cooperation with, or under the sponsorship of industry, or where the intellectual property may have commercial significance, the CQUniversity requires that negotiations with respect to the ownership of any intellectual property arising from or associated with the research project, be formalised prior to the confirmation of candidature.
- 4.72 In the event that details of any intellectual property or process improvement are contained within a thesis, and where the candidate does not seek to restrict public access to that thesis, the principal supervisor may seek to protect the interests of the University and/or sponsor and apply through the Committee for such restriction to be approved.
- 4.73 Consistent with CQUniversity's [Intellectual Property and Moral Rights Policy](#) (especially relating to patents, royalties and proprietary information which are still being formulated), the candidate shall normally hold copyright in any thesis associated with or arising from their research candidature. Ownership of intellectual property may be negotiated between the candidate, University and any funding partners.

Award of the degree

- 4.74 The Committee shall determine whether or not the candidate has satisfied the requirements for the degree and recommend its award to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), who may confer the award.

Responsibilities of the candidate

- 4.75 It is the candidate's responsibility to regularly monitor official university correspondence, communication channels and their enrolment dashboard to keep abreast of information and requirements relating to their candidature, particularly with regard to student accounts.
- 4.76 At any point during their candidature, the CQUniversity reserves the right to require the candidate to make contact with the Research Division. Failure to make contact within the prescribed period will result in the candidate being asked to show cause as to why their candidature should not be terminated.
- 4.77 Candidates have responsibility to inform the Research Division of matters relating to their enrolment, attendance at the CQUniversity and academic progress. Candidates also have responsibility to address requests for information or actioning from their supervisors, Deputy Dean - Research and/or the Research Division.
- 4.78 Show cause notices and/or funding restrictions may be placed on any candidate who has:
- a) failed to supply a progress report in a timely manner
 - b) failed to respond to conditions arising from the progress report in a timely manner, or
 - c) failed to respond to any other formal administrative request of the University in a timely manner.

Appeals

Internal appeals

- 4.79 The CQUniversity shall ensure that all students are advised of their options for internal appeal at the time they are notified in writing of the decision and reasons for the decision.
- 4.80 A candidate who has reasonable grounds for dissatisfaction with any formal decision made under these Course Rules may lodge an appeal by written request to the Dean, Graduate Studies, within 28 days of date of issue of the decision.
- 4.81 Students may appeal a decision made under these Course Rules by submitting an appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee, in accordance with the grounds for appeal, timelines and processes in the [Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).

External appeals

- 4.82 Any student not satisfied with the outcome of their internal appeal may appeal the decision by referring the matter to the [Queensland State Ombudsman](#) or to a court or tribunal with an appropriate jurisdiction.
- 4.83 The CQUniversity shall ensure that all students are advised of their options for external appeal at the time they are notified in writing of the decision and reasons for the decision.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1 The Research Higher Degrees Committee is responsible for ensuring these course rules are followed.

Reporting

- 5.2 Regular reporting on research higher degree candidates is presented through the Research Higher Degrees committee.

Records management

- 5.3 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy and procedure in a recognised University recordkeeping system.

6 DEFINITIONS

- 6.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University's [glossary](#).

Terms and definitions

Over-time candidate: a candidate who has exhausted the standard EFSTL in their course; such candidates will be liable for additional tuition liability.

EFTSL: Equivalent full-time student load, one EFTSL is equivalent to one year of full-time study.

7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#)

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015](#) (CwIth)

[Research Higher Degree Thesis Examination Policy and Procedure](#)

[Research Higher Degree Supervision Policy and Procedure](#)

[Research Higher Degree Theses Policy and Procedure](#)

8 FEEDBACK

University staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing the policy office at policy@cqu.edu.au.

9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	Research Higher Degrees Committee
Administrator	Dean, Graduate Studies
Next Review Date	26/06/2020

Approval and Amendment History	Details
Original Approval Authority and Date	Executive Committee of Academic Board 26/06/2017
Amendment Authority and Date	Administrator Approved – Dean, Graduate Studies 20/04/2018.
Notes	