

Graduate Research and Supervision Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Graduate Research and Supervision Policy (the policy) outlines expectations and responsibilities for managing research undertaken as part of a graduate research program at UTS.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all UTS graduate research students, and to all staff and affiliates of the university acting in a supervisory capacity.

3. Principles

- 3.1 UTS is committed to the principles outlined in the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (the Code).
- 3.2 This policy is drafted in line with the [Student Rules](#) (in particular, [section 11](#) on graduate research) and the [Delegations](#).
- 3.3 The UTS Graduate Research School Board will ensure that all UTS graduate research students are provided with appropriately qualified and trained supervisors. Where supervisory arrangements end or change, the university will work with the student to minimise any impact to their work.
- 3.4 In addition to a final thesis, the development of research skills and research integrity is considered part of a graduate research student's training at UTS.
- 3.5 A graduate research degree is a period of supervised research. Supervision is continuous throughout a graduate research student's candidature.
- 3.6 Faculties are responsible for establishing their own internal authorities, for example, faculty research committees and faculty-specific procedures for setting limits on the number of students allocated to a supervisor at one time. All supervisors must comply with their faculty's supervision requirements and procedures.
- 3.7 The Graduate Research School is responsible for developing and publishing procedures for the management of graduate research degrees. Supervisors and students must comply with these procedures.
- 3.8 Theses will be managed, stored and published in line with the [Open Access Policy](#), [Records Management Policy](#) and the [Delegations](#) (delegation 4.9).

4. Policy statements

Supervision

4.1 UTS recognises four graduate research supervisor titles:

- principal supervisors
- co-supervisors
- assistant supervisors
- external supervisors.

4.2 All supervisors (including external supervisors) must be registered on the UTS graduate research supervisor register (the register), managed and maintained by the Graduate Research School.

4.3 Supervisors may be registered in one of five categories as detailed in the [Supervisor Register Protocol](#) (approved by the Graduate Research School Board and published online) as follows:

Category 1	Can undertake all principal or co-supervisory roles for masters degree (research) or doctoral candidates.
Category 2	Can undertake principal supervisor role for masters degree (research) candidates. Can undertake principal supervisor role for doctoral candidates so long as a category 1 supervisor is on the panel. If on a limited term appointment with the university, can undertake principal supervision roles so long as their contract covers the duration of an individual graduate research student's candidature. Can undertake co-supervisor roles for masters degree (research) or doctoral candidates.
Category 3	Can undertake assistant supervision roles.
Category 4 and 5	Can undertake external supervision roles.

4.4 All UTS graduate research students will be supervised by a panel that includes at least two supervisors. Supervisory panels for masters degrees (research) and doctoral degrees must have the following composition.

Course type	Supervisory panel
Masters degree (research)	At least one principal supervisor and one co-supervisor. The panel may also include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an additional co-supervisor(s) • one or more assistant or external supervisors.
Doctoral degree	At least one principal supervisor and one co-supervisor. At least one supervisor who is registered as a Category 1 supervisor on the university's graduate research supervisor register. The panel may also include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an additional co-supervisor(s) • one or more assistant or external supervisors.

- 4.5 All graduate research students and supervisors (including any person acting in a supervisory capacity) must read and comply with the Code and all UTS research-related policies.
- 4.6 Supervisors must provide advice to students on complying with:
- the [Code](#)
 - [Student Rules](#) and relevant [UTS policies](#)
 - legislation relevant to the research area
 - any agreements associated with the student's candidature and/or research project
 - Graduate Research School procedures for the management of graduate research degrees (refer [supervisor register protocol](#)).
- 4.7 Supervisors will support and monitor students by:
- encouraging engagement with the research community
 - providing timely and critical feedback on written drafts, including theses
 - working with students to design a graduate research study plan (GRSP)
 - providing guidance in all research-related activities
 - overseeing all stages of the student's candidature
 - ensuring frequent and continuous communication
 - assisting students in developing the necessary skills to complete their graduate research degree and future research activities, and
 - supporting students through the thesis writing and examination processes.
- 4.8 In addition to the responsibilities listed in policy statements 4.4 and 4.5, principal supervisors must:
- liaise with and make recommendations to the appropriate faculty Responsible Academic Officer (RAO) on any matters relevant to the student's candidature
 - act as a primary liaison point with students
 - liaise with panel members as appropriate
 - provide fair and accurate progress reports to the RAO, and
 - organise candidature assessments.
- 4.9 The Dean, Graduate Research School is responsible for approving all supervisory arrangements. A supervisor may only be appointed to a supervisory panel when they satisfy UTS conditions for supervisor registration in accordance with the procedures approved and published by the Graduate Research School Board (refer [supervisor register protocol](#)).
- 4.10 Changes to a supervisory panel are permitted but must be made in consultation with all parties. Changes to the supervisory panel are recommended by the faculty and approved by the Dean, Graduate Research School.
- 4.11 Supervisors should comply with the [Code of Conduct](#) in relation to conflicts of interest ([section 4.4](#)).

Student rights and responsibilities

4.12 Students must be aware of and comply with:

- the [Code](#)
- [Student Rules](#) (in particular, [section 11](#))
- the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#)
- [research-related policies](#), and
- any other documents or procedures required as part of a student's candidature.

4.13 Students who are also UTS staff members must comply with the [Code of Conduct](#) as a normal condition of their employment.

4.14 Students are responsible for maintaining the progress of their work in accordance with their GRSP and ongoing arrangements with the supervisory panel.

4.15 In order to fulfil the period of candidature in accordance with [Rule 11.7](#), it is expected that students dedicate at least 35 hours a week to their graduate research program (if enrolled full-time) or a minimum of 17.5 hours a week (if enrolled part-time).

4.16 In fulfilling their ethical responsibilities, students must:

- be aware of the university's position and policies in relation to research ethics
- make regular contact with supervisors and respond to contact and feedback
- ask for support when needed, in particular where there are factors that might impact their research studies or candidature
- raise difficulties arising from their research with their principal supervisor in an effort to seek resolution as soon as practicable
- seek to participate in peer review processes where a research project receives public funding
- be familiar with conflicts of interest, and disclose any as soon as they become apparent
- comply with all agreements as outlined in policy statement 4.10.

4.17 In addition to the rights outlined in the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#), students have a right to participate in:

- the negotiation of their research topic (within the constraints of faculty resources and expertise)
- the development of their GRSP and negotiation of the stages of their research degree.

4.18 Changes to candidature are permitted (for example, course transfer, full-time to part-time attendance mode, leave of absence, end of or changes to supervisory arrangements) and must be discussed with supervisors or an appropriate staff member as soon as any issues arise. Changes to candidature must be managed in line with [section 11, Student Rules](#) and any procedures approved and published by the Graduate Research School Board.

Progress, theses and examination

- 4.19 The GRSP must be drafted and agreed between supervisors and students in line with procedures approved and published by the Graduate Research School Board.
- 4.20 Continuation and/or completion of a graduate research student's candidature is conditional on the student maintaining satisfactory progress at all stages of the research program, in line with the [Student Rules](#) and the goals outlined in the GRSP.
- 4.21 Procedures on thesis presentation, submission and examination are approved and published by the Graduate Research School Board, in line with [section 11, Student Rules](#).

Conflict management

- 4.22 The university acknowledges that, from time to time, issues may arise between the supervisor and the graduate research student. Where students have any issue they should:
- advise their principal supervisor immediately with any concerns regarding the role or potential role of any person as their supervisor or examiner
 - contact the faculty RAO where the concerns are about a principal supervisor, and
 - contact the Graduate Research School where an issue persists or is not addressed by the processes above.
- 4.23 Supervisors must report any potential research misconduct by a graduate research student to the relevant RAO, in accordance with [Rule 11.21](#). Where the graduate research student is also a staff member, supervisors must report any potential research misconduct in accordance with the [Research Ethics and Integrity Policy](#).
- 4.24 The Graduate Research School Board will approve procedures for the management of conflict under this policy, the provisions outlined in the [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Student Rules](#).

5. Policy ownership and support

- 5.1 **Policy owner:** The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) is responsible for policy enforcement and compliance, ensuring its principles and statements are observed, and approval of any associated university-level procedures.
- 5.2 **Policy contact:** The Dean, Graduate Research School is responsible for implementing this policy, developing any associated university-level procedures and acting as a primary point of contact for advice.
- 5.3 Supervisors are responsible for providing guidance and advice to students throughout their candidature as outlined in this policy and any associated procedures.
- 5.4 Graduate research students are responsible for meeting professional standards in conducting research by adhering to all relevant university rules, policies and guidelines, as well as national codes and statements on research conduct and practice. Students are responsible for seeking guidance and training as required, as outlined in this policy.

5.5 The Graduate Research School is responsible for the approval of the graduate research supervisor register.

6. Definitions

These definitions apply for this policy and all associated procedures. Definitions in [Schedule 1, Student Rules](#) also apply.

Assistant supervisor means a UTS salaried professional staff member who may be appointed to the supervisory panel to provide specialist support and advice to the student.

Co-supervisor means the supervisor who contributes to the academic guidance and supervision of a graduate research student. The co-supervisor may sometimes act in the role of principal supervisor for administrative responsibilities associated with candidature management. A co-supervisor is a UTS salaried academic staff member or holds an honorary title with UTS that includes a defined responsibility for the supervision of graduate research students.

External supervisor means a person external to the university (ie not a UTS salaried staff member) who may be appointed to the supervisory panel to provide specialist experience and advice to the student.

Graduate research study plan (GRSP) means a formal study plan agreed between supervisors and graduate research students; identifying structures, stages, supports, development needs and tracking progress from enrolment to completion.

Principal supervisor is the lead (first) supervisor who takes primary academic and administrative responsibility for the graduate research student's candidature. The principal supervisor is a UTS salaried academic staff member or holds an honorary title or emeritus professorship with UTS that includes a defined responsibility for the supervision of graduate research students.

Student, for the purposes of this policy, means graduate research student.

Supervisory panel is a group of supervisors appointed by the Dean, Graduate Research School on the recommendation of the faculty in line with the provisions outlined in this policy. Supervisory panels oversee the progress of graduate research students in line with the [Delegations](#) (delegation 4.6).

Approval information

Policy contact	Dean, Graduate Research School
Approval authority	Academic Board
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Superseded documents	Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Degree Students (2014, UR14/442)

Version history

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Effective date	Sections modified
1.0	Academic Board (AB/17-2/36)	07/06/2017	29/06/2017	New instrument.
1.1	Academic Board (AB/19-3/51)	31/07/2019	26/08/2019	Amendments to supervisory titles, panel composition and reference to the graduate research supervisor register.
1.2	Academic Board (AB/20-1/10)	25/03/2020	07/04/2020	Addition of supervisor categories and amendments to supervisor definitions.

Web version

[Graduate Research and Supervision Policy](#)

References

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (the Code)

[Code of Conduct: section 4.4](#)

[Delegations](#)

[Open Access Policy](#)

[Records Management Policy](#)

[Research Ethics and Integrity Policy](#)

[Research-related policies](#)

[Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#)

[Student Rules: section 11, Rule 11.7, Rule 11.21](#)

[Supervisor register protocol](#)