



Management of Research Degree Supervision

Context and Purpose

The purpose of this Procedure is to outline the management of supervision and the supervision register.

This Procedure should be read in conjunction with [Policy AB-64: Supervision of Research Degree Students](#).

Responsibility

The Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise will ensure organisation-wide adherence to this Procedure.

Confidentiality

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

A. The Register of Research Degree Supervisors

1. The Register of Research Degree Supervisors (the Register), maintained by Student and Academic Services, identifies academic staff who may supervise research degree students as Principal Supervisor and/or Co-Supervisor.

B. Criteria for inclusion in the Register

2. Registration in the Principal Supervisor section is on the basis that the applicant:
 - a. Has a record of supervising at least one (1) research degree student to successful completion of their degree at the University or at their previous place of employment as either an Associate Supervisor, Co-Supervisor or Principal Supervisor, within the past five (5) years; and
 - b. Can demonstrate that they are active researchers in their discipline area to the satisfaction of the Dean of Research (or delegate); and
 - c. Is a University academic staff member or holds an Adjunct appointment with the University (refer to [Policy C-37 Honorary Awards and Honorary Academic Titles](#)); and
 - d. Holds a doctoral degree by research, or can demonstrate evidence of an equivalent record of scholarly achievement; and
 - e. Has undertaken the University's supervisor induction program; and
 - f. Has undertaken appropriate professional development activities, as agreed within their Performance and Development Plan, within the last three (3) years.
3. Registration in the Co-Supervisor section is on the basis that the applicant:
 - a. Is a University academic staff member or holds an Adjunct appointment with the University (refer to [Policy C-37 Honorary Awards and Honorary Academic Titles](#)); and
 - b. Holds a doctoral degree by research, or can demonstrate evidence of an equivalent record of scholarly achievement; and
 - c. Has undertaken the University's supervisor induction program; and

- d. Has undertaken appropriate professional development activities, as agreed within their Performance and Development Plan, within the last three (3) years.

C. Exemption to registration criteria

4. Exemptions may be granted in the following cases with the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) reporting the exemptions to Student and Academic Services. Student and Academic Services will maintain a record of the granted exemptions and provide it to Research Degrees Committee monthly:
 - a. **Early Career Researcher (ECR):** The relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) may grant an exemption where the ECR has not met all of the registration criteria for joining the Register as a Co-Supervisor, but where there is clear evidence of the research capability of the ECR (e.g., through the holding of a competitive Research Fellowship and a track record of publications or other research outputs which would be eligible for inclusion in a national research assessment exercise).
 - b. **Other cases:** The relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) may grant an exemption where an academic staff member who is not an ECR has not met all of the registration criteria for joining the Register as a Principal Supervisor or Co-Supervisor, but where there is clear evidence of the research capability of the academic staff member, and the capability to successfully supervise research degree students.

D. Appointment of supervisors and admission to the Register

5. Where a prospective, new or current research degree student nominates a supervisor, the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) will determine whether the nominee meets the criteria to supervise according to the membership criteria for the relevant section of the Register (refer to clauses 2 and 3). When the nominee meets the criteria, they can be admitted to the relevant section of the Register.
6. The relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) will determine whether the nominated supervision arrangement is appropriate in accordance with [Policy AB-64: Supervision of Research Degree Students](#) and [Procedure AB-58 P2: Research Degrees Supervision](#), paying due consideration to workload implications. Early formation of Supervisory Panels is encouraged.
7. A research degree supervisor will be appointed when there is a reasonable expectation that they will continue to satisfy the criteria for membership of the Register and where panel membership can provide ongoing supervision for the duration of candidature.
8. The supervisor, in addition to the criteria outlined in Section B of these Procedures, should also have either methodological or discipline expertise related to the research degree student's research.

E. Maintaining the Register

9. A biannual report containing information on each criterion for inclusion in the Register and the academic staff currently supervising, and/or eligible to supervise in each category of supervision will be made available by Student and Academic Services to the Deans of Research (or delegate), for the purposes of determining membership of the Register.
10. A supervisor who no longer meets one or more criteria for registration will remain listed in the Register section where they commenced supervision of the research degree student/s only for the duration of that student's candidature. They will only be able to supervise a new research degree student when they meet the criteria for the relevant section of the Register.

11. Persons on the Register are normally expected to undertake appropriate supervisor professional development activities, as agreed within their Performance and Development Plan, at least once every three (3) years. Deans of Research (or delegates) will monitor participation in supervisor professional development activities annually. Non-participation in supervisor professional development activities may lead to removal from the Register.
12. Deans of Research (or delegates) will advise Student and Academic Services of staff who should be added to, or removed from the Register, and the appropriate level of supervision for each staff member biannually, or as changes occur.
13. Relevant data are made available to staff in Academic Units responsible for management of research degree students to facilitate the process of assigning academic staff to Supervisory Panels.
14. Academic staff members are responsible for ensuring they are aware of the criteria for admission to each section of the Register and the type of supervision they may undertake for new research degree student/s.

F. Appeals against exclusion from the Register

15. An academic staff member who wishes to appeal against a decision not to approve their registration or against their deregistration on the basis of not meeting membership criteria should submit an appeal in writing to the relevant Executive Dean, whose decision will be final. If the appeal is not upheld, an academic staff member may re-apply for registration at any time they consider that the conditions for membership have been met.

G. Appointment of supervisors external to the University to Supervisory Panels

16. Persons nominated for inclusion in Supervisory Panels who are not academic staff, nor Adjuncts, of the University may be appointed as external associate supervisors.
17. External associate supervisors will usually be researchers, who may work in other academic institutions or research organisations, in Australia or overseas.
18. External associate supervisors can be added to a research degree student's Supervisory Panel through submission of the appropriate form (recommendation or change of supervisor form, refer to [Procedure AB-58 P2: Research Degrees Supervision](#)).
19. External associate supervisors do not require an exemption from the registration criteria to be appointed and are not included on the Register.
20. Reports on external associate supervisors will be made available to staff in Academic Units responsible for management of research degree students.
21. When the University has signed a Dual Award or Jointly Badged PhD Agreement in accordance with [Policy AB-61: PhD Program Collaboration](#), a researcher who is an academic member of staff at the Partner Institution and meets their criteria to be a supervisor may be appointed as an external Principal Supervisor or Co-Supervisor. Supervisory arrangements for each PhD student admitted to a Dual Award or Jointly Badged PhD program are detailed in the Research Student Schedule and are approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies at the time of admission of the student to the program. Student and Academic Services will maintain a record of external Principal and Co-Supervisors.

H. Appointment of advisors to Supervisory Panels

22. Advisors are not necessarily researchers. They provide advice and expertise together with access to resources and research settings which are complementary to those provided by the University and its supervisors. Their role is complementary to that of a research degree student's academic supervisors.

23. Advisors will usually be external to the University and may hold an Adjunct appointment with the University. Where appropriate, advisors may occasionally be academic staff.
24. Advisors can be added to a research degree student's Supervisory Panel through submission of the appropriate form (recommendation or change of supervisor form).
25. Advisors do not require an exemption from the registration criteria to be appointed and are not included on the Register.
26. Reports on advisors are made available to staff in Academic Units responsible for management of research degree students.

I. Privileged relationships

27. Privileged relationships can pose conflicts of interest and must be managed in accordance with [Policy C-36 Management of Conflict of Interest](#) and associated University policies.
28. A privileged relationship may occur between a supervisor and research degree student or between supervisors on the same Supervisory Panel.
29. Any privileged relationship must be disclosed to the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) at the time of panel formation, or as soon as practicable for emerging relationships.
30. Privileged relationships between supervisors on the same Supervisory Panel:
 - a. Where the privileged relationship is between supervisors, an additional supervisor who is not under the line management of the other supervisors, must be appointed to the Supervisory Panel.
 - b. Where the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) determines that there is a conflict of interest on the Supervisory Panel due to a privileged relationship, a management plan for the supervisors engaged in the privileged relationship is required. A copy of the management plan will be retained in the supervisors' personnel files and should be reviewed annually.
 - c. Where the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) determines there is no conflict of interest between the supervisor (or advisors), a management plan is not required.
 - d. The relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) will communicate all disclosures, including those that do not result in the development of a management plan, to the research degree student and the Supervisory Panel. A copy of correspondence will be retained on the research degree student's record in Student and Academic Services.
 - e. Where the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) does not believe that the conflict of interest can be managed in the best interests of the research degree student, different supervisory arrangements will be made. If any party wishes to dispute this decision, they may appeal to the relevant Executive Dean.
 - f. Where the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate) has a conflict of interest (with the exception of a line management relationship) with the responsibilities outlined under Section I. Privileged Relationships, the role will be delegated to the relevant Executive Dean.

Definitions

Adjunct is any person who is not a member of the University academic staff and who has an honorary academic title conferred under Policy C-37: Honorary Academic and Honorary Academic Titles Policy.

Associate Supervisor is a researcher external to the University who has been chosen for the role because of expert knowledge or scholarship in the designated area of research.

A conflict of interest can be actual, potential or perceived and may arise where the direct or indirect personal interests of a UniSA employee conflicts with, is in opposition to, or appears to or actually does inappropriately influence how they undertake their obligations to UniSA. It can be time limited or on-going.

Co-Supervisor is an academic staff member who provides support to the Principal Supervisor in guiding the postgraduate research undertaken by the research degree student.

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.

Advisor is a member of a Supervisory Panel who is not an academic supervisor, and who has been chosen for the role due to their position in a relevant industry, and/or their capacity to provide expertise relevant to the student's research. A research end-user is a type of advisor who is external to academia and affiliated organisations and will directly use or directly benefit from the output, outcome or results of the research.

Postgraduate research is the research that is conducted as part of the requirements for research degrees. It does not include research projects conducted as part of Honours, Graduate Diploma, Professional Doctorate by coursework, or Masters by coursework degrees.

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.

Privileged relationship is an existing or emerging personal relationship (such as familial or romantic), or a professional line management relationship between:

- supervisors or advisors on the same Supervisory Panel; or
- a supervisor (or an advisor) and a student.

Register of Research Degree Supervisors (the Register) is maintained by Student and Academic Services and identifies academic staff who are currently supervising research degree students and/or who are eligible to supervise at the University of South Australia. It does not include external associate supervisors or advisors.

Relevant Executive Dean refers to the Executive Dean for the Academic Unit in which the research degree student is enrolled and to the Executive Dean for the Academic Unit in which the University academic staff member (including Adjunct) is located. If the staff member is located in a unit external to the Academic Units, an exemption to the eligibility criteria will be considered by the relevant senior portfolio manager on the recommendation of the Director of the unit.

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

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.

Supervisor induction program is Supervising@UniSA or other program as specified by the Research Degrees Committee.

Supervisory Panel is the 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.

Supervisor professional development refers to a range of activities that will include supervisor development specific material. Potential activities include:

- participating in workshops or seminars on supervision including the Supervisor Professional Development Program;
 - presenting at, or facilitating, seminars and workshops in the University's support programs for Research degree students and supervisors;
 - presenting and publishing papers about the pedagogy of supervision;
 - participating in conferences or workshops where the pedagogy of doctoral education or the practice of supervision is a focus of the event.
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Related Documentation

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

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

Policy AB-64: [Supervision of Research Degree Students](#)

Policy C-36: [Management of Conflict of Interest](#)

Policy C-37: [Honorary Awards and Honorary Academic Titles](#)

Procedure AB-58 P2: [Research Degrees Supervision](#)

Guideline AB-58 AD9: [Supervisory Panels in Research Degrees at UniSA](#)

Guideline AB-58 AD10: [Key Responsibilities in Research Degrees Management and Supervision Code of Conduct for Students](#)

[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
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