



## Research Degrees Program Transfer

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### Context and Purpose

This procedure outlines the requirements and processes involved in the transfer of a research degree student from one research degree program to another research degree program, at the same, a higher or a lower level.

This procedure must 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 are responsible for understanding and complying with the policy and this 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](#).

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### Procedure

#### A. Transfer to another research degree program at the same program level

1. A research degree student may apply to transfer programs through the [prescribed application process](#) for approval by the Dean of Research (or delegate). A student may be permitted to transfer to a different research degree program provided that the criteria for admission have been met. Recommendations for transfer must:
  - a. state that the relevant areas agree to the transfer and that the appropriate research degree resources are available to enable the student to complete the program.
  - b. include a review of the Research Proposal or, where the student is transferring to a different Academic Unit/Institute but has the same research project, approval of the Research Proposal is provided by the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate).
2. The research degree student receives written notification by Student and Academic Services of the outcome of their application. If approved, the period of enrolment (excluding periods of deferral and leaves of absence) is counted towards the new program.

#### B. Transfer from Master of Research to a doctoral program

3. A research degree student may apply to transfer from a Master of Research to a PhD or Professional Doctorate through the [prescribed application process](#) for approval by the Dean of Research (or delegate). Recommendations for transfer must:
  - a. include a review of the Research Proposal, updated to include details of the research project of appropriate scope, level and discovery for a doctoral program, and any other requirements as provided by the Academic Unit;
  - b. state the Academic Unit the research degree will transfer to, and that the appropriate resources are available to enable the student to complete the proposed program;

- c. are accompanied by a recommendation from the Supervisory Panel outlining how the student meets the criteria for admission to a doctoral program.
- 4. If approved, the period of enrolment (excluding periods of deferral and leaves of absence) is counted towards the new program.
- 5. Extension to scholarships resulting from the change in program length requires approval from the scholarship provider. The duration of scholarship support already received is deducted from the remaining scholarship length.
- 6. The research degree student receives written notification by Student and Academic Services of the outcome of their application.

### **C. Transfer from a doctoral program to a Master of Research**

- 7. A research degree student may apply to transfer from a PhD or Professional Doctorate to a Master of Research program prior to submission of the thesis, through the [prescribed application process](#) for approval by the Dean of Research (or delegate).
- 8. A research degree student may apply to transfer from a doctoral program to a Master of Research program Recommendations for transfer must:
  - a. include a review of the Research Proposal, updated to include details of the research project of appropriate scope for a masters program;
  - b. state that the Academic Unit agrees to the transfer and that the appropriate resources are available to enable the student to complete the degree.
- 9. If approved, the period of enrolment (excluding periods of deferral and leaves of absence) is counted towards the new program.
- 10. Normally, a change from a doctoral to a Master of Research program results in a decrease in the maximum period of scholarship support for research degree students on scholarship. The duration of scholarship support already received is deducted from the remaining scholarship length.
- 11. The research degree student receives written notification by Student and Academic Services of the outcome of their application.

### **D. International students transferring between UniSA research degrees or to another institution**

- 12. An international student visa holder who wishes to transfer to another institution and has not completed six (6) calendar months of study at this University, requires a release in accordance with Policy A-48: [Enrolment](#), clause 11.6.
- 13. International student visa holders must obtain a new Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) where required and ensure that their visa covers the period in which they are enrolled in the new program.

### **E. Program changes instigated by the University**

- 14. Where the University instigates a program change, Student and Academic Services informs research degree students in writing, including the reason for the program change.

## **Definitions**

**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 and Society; & 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.

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

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

**Research project** is a peer-reviewed and University approved statement of a research program, including designated resources, and an appropriate team of research supervisors.

**Research Proposal** is a 10-20 page statement prepared by a research degree student summarising the proposed research and research methodologies. An approved Research Proposal is required to satisfy the requirements of Confirmation of Candidature.

**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 research degree 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](#)

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#### **Related Documentation:**

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

Policy A-48: [Enrolment](#)

Procedure AB-58 P1: [Research Degrees Admission and Enrolment](#)

Procedure AB-58 P3: [Research Degree Student Progression](#)

[Guidelines on Electronic Communication with Students](#)

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

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Academic Board, 26 November 2022

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Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Enterprise, 26 October 2023 (minor amendments)

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**History:** This procedure contains clauses previously referenced in clauses 4.11 to 4.15 in the Academic Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research.