SET Supervisor Workshop # 2

SET R&I approach and important changes to HDR policy & procedures

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PhD Completion Seminar

• The new policy and procedure takes effect from semester 1, 2009 and is applicable to all current and prospective PhD candidates. PhD candidates must present a summary and chapter outline, or project description in the case of a PhD degree by project, to members of a panel. Seminar presentations may be consolidated by the school into a graduate students’ conference.

The seminar panel will consist of:

• The principal supervisor of the candidate and second supervisors active in the research training of the candidate, or nominee;

• A member of academic staff in the same or cognate discipline area of the candidate (whilst this panel member would normally be an internal member of academic staff, appropriate external academics may also be used)

• The School HDR Coordinator (or equivalent) in the candidate’s School (who will also act as the panel chair). An appointee of the HDR coordinator should take this role, where the HDR coordinator is unavailable or are themselves involved in the supervision of the candidate.
PhD Completion Seminar (contd.)

The role of the panel is to:
• Provide general and specific feedback to the candidate,
• Present a report to the candidate which the candidate must take into account when finalising their work for submission.

The members of the panel must complete and sign the Completion Seminar Form and forward this to the Graduate Research Office.

PhD candidates leaving RMIT Melbourne earlier than 3 months prior to completion may apply to the Research Training Sub Committee (RTSC) for permission to present an equivalent ‘progress’ seminar prior to departure.
Research Proposal and Confirmation of Candidature

Research proposal
• A brief proposal indicating the direction the research to be presented by the candidate, approved by the supervisor and endorsed by the HDR Co-ordinator no later than 2 months after commencement.

Confirmation of candidature
• At confirmation of candidature level, a full and substantial proposal of the research will be presented by the candidate to a panel and then endorsed by the School (within 12 months for PhD & 6 months for Masters).
RMIT, APA scholarships and RTS places

- RTS Places and Australian Postgraduate Awards will be nominally allocated to Schools based on research performance – as has been the process in previous years.

- Where possible, places and scholarships should be allocated to areas/projects of strategic focus as per the designated research concentrations of the Academic Portfolios and the themes of the Research Institutes.

- Applicants will be asked to nominate a research concentration and/or theme of the Research Institute to which their research proposal is aligned. The research concentrations are those determined by the Deans R & I and will be available on the GRO website and within the APA conditions. Projects sitting within the themes of the Research Institutes will be advertised on the Institute web pages.

- Schools will consider and rank all applications for places and scholarships as per the process followed in previous years and in accordance with the timeline published by GRO.

- Portfolios will carry out a similar ranking process to the effect of creating one Portfolio ranked list for RTS Places and Scholarships.

- A University level Committee, comprising the PVC R & I, Deans R & I and Research Institute Directors will meet to consider the three Portfolio ranked lists and determine the final allocation of places and scholarships.

In addition to the APAs, approval has been obtained to fund a further round of RMIT PhD Scholarships. These sixteen (16) scholarships will be allocated equally to the Research Institutes, four each.
Guidelines for Supervisor Registration – draft proposal

- All academic staff engaged in Higher Degrees by Research supervision at RMIT must be registered as RMIT supervisors.

Eligibility

- Supervisors must be academic staff employed by RMIT, or be Adjuncts or Associates of RMIT,
- Supervisors should be 'active researchers' as defined below,
- Supervisors should normally hold a higher degree by research,
- Supervisors would normally supervise up to the level of their own qualification,
- Supervisors should maintain a high quality of supervisor performance and maintains current, knowledge of policy and procedures relating to RMIT HDR (as defined below).
Guidelines for Supervisor Registration – draft proposal

Supervisor Categories

• Primary supervisor—normally an academic will have completed one higher degrees completion as a secondary supervisor in order to act as primary supervisor;

• Secondary supervisor—all academic staff who meet the eligibility criteria.

Definition of Active Researcher

An active researcher is an academic staff member who meets at least one of the following performance requirements:

• Has published (HERDC or non-HERDC) within the previous 24 months,

• Holds a competitive grant,

• Has performed significant industry-based, funded research during the previous 24 months.
Guidelines for Supervisor Registration – draft proposal

High Quality Supervisor Performance and Current Knowledge

In order to ensure that RMIT supervisors meet this eligibility criterion, it is expected that all registered HDR supervising staff will participate in quality assurance processes and engage in supervisor development activities within the following parameters:

• Early career supervisors should participate in formal supervisor training and development programs;
• Experienced supervisors should share their experience with other supervising staff;
• All supervisors should have a sound working knowledge of current RMIT HDR policy and procedure;
• Supervisor performance should be assessed through quality processes.
Enrolments at anytime – proposal to change regulations

• RMIT regulations do not allow HDR students to enrol at any time

• Process too complicated, tied to UG students enrolments, large number of administrative units involved,

• Recommendation 1: In order to prevent competitive disadvantage to RMIT in attracting high quality postgraduate research students, **HDR students should be able to enrol at any time**. This level of flexibility enhances RMIT’s power to recruit students who are able to attract competitive funding and to appoint postgraduate students for externally funded research projects in a timely manner.

• Recommendation 2: HDR students should be uncoupled from the undergraduate and TAFE student processes and the responsibility for HDR enrolment and candidature should be managed by the Graduate Research Office (GRO).

• Recommendation 3: In order to streamline administrative requirements and workloads, HDR students should enrol once for the full term of their candidature.