

# Professional Doctorate Degrees

## Professional Doctorate Degrees General Rules

These Program Rules should be read in conjunction with the University's policies (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/policies>) and the Research Student Handbook (<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/graduatecentre/handbook/>). The Research Student Handbook explains the procedures to be followed by students and contains guidelines on research and supervision for research degrees offered by the University. All students must comply with both the Academic Program Rules and the procedures detailed in the Research Student Handbook.

The General Academic Program Rules shall apply to all Professional Doctorate awards at the University of Adelaide. Specific Academic Program Rules for Professional Doctorate awards have been developed within the framework of these General Professional Doctorate Rules and are listed under their respective Faculty / School.

### 1 Definitions and Objectives

- 1.1 A Professional Doctorate shall, in general, have the objectives of improving professional practice by extending the knowledge, expertise and skill of candidates through the application of research to current problems and issues.
- 1.2 A Professional Doctorate shall comprise a minimum of two thirds of the assessable content by research.

### 2 Academic standing

- 2.1 The academic standing required for acceptance as a candidate for a Professional Doctorate in the University shall be:
  - a. a relevant Honours degree of Bachelor of the University of Adelaide that contains a research component deemed appropriate by the University and in which the candidate has achieved at least a IIA standard  
or
  - b. a relevant Master by Research degree of the University of Adelaide  
or
  - c. a relevant Master by Coursework degree of the University of Adelaide containing a minimum of 15 credit units by research, with an overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 5.0 or higher and a GPA of 6.0 or higher in the Research Component.
- 2.2 A person who holds a relevant qualification of another university as specified in Academic Program Rule 2.1, or equivalent thereof, may be accepted as a candidate provided that the program of study undertaken and the academic standard reached are equivalent to those required of a candidate who is a graduate of the University of Adelaide.

- 2.3 In addition to the relevant academic qualifications and research training, a period of at least 3 years' relevant professional experience shall form part of the academic standing required for acceptance as a candidate.
- 2.4 The University may accept as a candidate a graduate who does not qualify under Academic Program Rules 2.1 or 2.2 but satisfies Academic Program Rule 2.3 and has demonstrated an outstanding level of academic achievement and is experienced in research as evidenced by significant research publications or written reports on research work done by the applicant.
- 2.5 Applicants for a Professional Doctorate must satisfy the minimum English language proficiency requirement as set by the University.

### 3 Credit for work previously completed

- 3.1 At the time of application, the University may grant credit towards a Professional Doctorate for research or Doctoral level coursework undertaken in another program in the University or in another university or tertiary institution. The maximum credit granted will be 1 year full-time equivalent (FTE) of the total program, inclusive of both coursework and research.
- 3.2 No candidate will be granted credit for any coursework or research that has been presented towards another award.
- 3.3 In consideration for acceptance under Academic Program Rule 3.1, the University must be satisfied that:
  - a. the applicant is of such academic standing as would be required of other candidates for the degree  
and
  - b. the work for which credit is granted is both relevant and of a satisfactory standard.
- 3.4 Any credit granted for work undertaken within a higher degree by research program will reduce the RTS and candidature expiry dates, whilst any credit granted for work undertaken within a coursework program

will reduce the candidature expiry date only. Where the candidate is a scholarship holder, the scholarship expiry date(s) will be reduced in parallel with the candidature expiry date.

- 3.5 Any application for credit must be approved by the Adelaide Graduate Centre to permit for the relevant adjustments to be made.

## 4 Enrolment

- 4.1 A person shall not be enrolled as a candidate for the degree unless:
- the applicant's proposed research topic is acceptable to the University and the School / Discipline responsible for the supervision of the candidate's work
  - there are available at least two supervisors able to provide supervision of the proposed candidacy throughout its likely duration. The principal supervisor shall be a member of the academic staff of the School / Discipline of the University in which the candidate is enrolled  
and
  - suitable resources and facilities are available (either in the University or, by arrangement acceptable to the Faculty, elsewhere) for the proposed research to be undertaken.
- 4.2 Each candidate (including those on remote candidature) will be enrolled on a provisional basis until they have satisfactorily completed:
- the first 12 months of the degree or half-time equivalent  
and
  - the major review of progress, or, where applicable, the extended major review of progress.
- 4.3 Except with the permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies, a candidate may not enrol concurrently in another academic program.
- 4.4 Except with the permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies, a candidate who is permitted to enrol concurrently in another academic program and who is granted leave must intermit all academic programs in which he / she is enrolled.

## 5 Duration of candidature and mode of study

- 5.1 A candidate may proceed to the degree by full-time study or, if the Head of the School / Discipline concerned is satisfied that the candidate has adequate time to pursue supervised research under the control of the University, by half-time study.
- 5.2 The normal program duration of a professional doctorate will comprise a minimum of 3 years FTE study and a maximum of 4 years FTE study.

- 5.3 Except in circumstances approved by the University, the work for the degree shall be completed and the thesis submitted:

- in the case of a full-time candidate in a professional doctorate with a 3 year program duration, not less than 2 years and not more than 3 years from the date of commencement of candidature
- in the case of a half-time candidate in a professional doctorate with a 3 year program duration, not less than 4 years and not more than 6 years from the date of commencement of candidature
- in the case of a full-time candidate in a professional doctorate with a 4 year program duration, not less than 2 years and not more than 4 years from the date of commencement of candidature
- in the case of a half-time candidate in a professional doctorate with a 4 year program duration, not less than 4 years and not more than 8 years from the date of commencement of candidature
- in the case of a candidate granted credit under Academic Program Rule 3.1 the candidature shall normally expire:
  - in the case of a full-time candidate, not less than 1 year and not more than 3 or 4 years from the date the candidate commenced work in the other program, depending on whether the professional doctorate in which enrolment is sought has a 3 year or 4 year program duration respectively  
or
  - in the case of a half-time candidate, not less than 2 years and not more than 6 or 8 years from the date the candidate commenced work in the other program, depending on whether the professional doctorate in which enrolment is sought has a 3 year or 4 year program duration respectively.

## 6 Work for the degree

- 6.1 A candidate shall pursue an approved program of study and research under the control of the University and under the general guidance of supervisors appointed by the University leading to the generation of a thesis.
- 6.2 Candidates must at all times abide by the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and associated policies of the University of Adelaide.
- 6.3 A professional doctorate will comprise a maximum of one third of the assessable content by (doctoral level) coursework.
- 6.4 Where a candidate is enrolled in a professional doctorate which does not

contain a formal coursework component, any courses taken by the candidate will not be considered in the assessment for the degree. Such courses will not be formally enrolled in or assessed, or, will be completed on a non-award basis.

- 6.5 Where a candidate is enrolled in a professional doctorate with a formal coursework component, any courses undertaken by the candidate will be assessed against the University's standard grading scheme; however, coursework marks, with the exception of a failing grade, will be officially withheld until thesis submission.
- 6.6 Courses cannot be repeated or replaced in the case of failure except on a fee paying basis.
- 6.7 Where the professional doctorate contains a formal coursework component, the candidate shall be required to pass both the coursework and thesis components independently and all coursework requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the Faculty / School before the thesis is submitted to the Adelaide Graduate Centre for examination.
- 6.8 A professional doctorate thesis will be prepared in accordance with the University's *Specifications for Thesis* for the current year.
- 6.9 All work presented in the thesis (including any publications) must have been undertaken during the period of candidature.
- 6.10 Irrespective of the format of the thesis, its content, in part or in total, must not have been accepted for any other degree in the name of the candidate at the University of Adelaide or other academic institution.
- 6.11 There is no exit point to a coursework outcome e.g. Graduate Diploma or Certificate, or transfer of coursework credit from a Professional Doctorate to a Coursework Program. Candidates who seek these options must enrol in a Coursework Program from commencement.
- 6.12 The candidate shall present the context and importance of the research at a School / Discipline seminar prior to thesis submission.

## 7 Academic Progress Milestones

- 7.1 Each candidate's academic progress will be formally reviewed at least once every twelve months.
- 7.2 Each candidate will complete a series of milestones, the core content and timing of which will be in accordance with the details and schedule specified in the Research Student Handbook; Schools may include additional discipline specific requirements.
- 7.3 Milestones will normally include:
  - a. the Adelaide Graduate Centre induction program and area induction

- b. the core component of the structured program, including, the completion and presentation of the research proposal and, in the case of international research students, the integrated bridging program - research
  - c. a major review of progress
  - d. annual reviews of progress in each calendar year following the year of enrolment
  - e. minor reviews of progress in each calendar following the year of enrolment (remote candidates only)
  - f. a pre-submission review (where required by the Faculty) and
  - g. the development component of the structured program, including at a minimum any courses, activities and skills training deemed necessary the School / Discipline. Where completion of courses, up to the value of 15 units, is required by the School / Discipline, or desired by the candidate, the courses will not be formally enrolled in or assessed, or, will be completed on a non-award basis.
- 7.4 Candidates whose provisional candidature is extended following a major review of progress (for up to six months in total) will undergo an extended major review at the end of this period.
  - 7.5 The major review of progress referred to in 7.3c above will recommend confirmation of candidature, or, a further period of conditional candidature not exceeding 6 months, or termination.
  - 7.6 Candidates granted a further period of conditional enrolment will undergo an extended major review at the end of this time period. No further periods of conditional enrolment will be permitted.
  - 7.7 Milestones may be varied from time to time by approval of the Research Education and Development Committee.
  - 7.8 Re-enrolment and the continuation of scholarship payments (where applicable) are conditional upon:
    - a. satisfactory progress being achieved in all reviews of progress undertaken in the preceding year and
    - b. completion of all required milestones.
  - 7.9 A University of Adelaide Master by Research candidate who is qualified and permitted by the University to transfer into a professional doctorate will be deemed to have completed academic progress milestones 7.3a-c and transfer will confirm candidature in the degree.

## 8 Remote candidature

- 8.1 If permitted in the Specific Academic Program Rules for the degree, initial enrolment as a remote candidate may be permitted on academic grounds where the School / Discipline concerned can ensure the provision of external supervision, facilities and affiliation to the satisfaction of the University.
- 8.2 Unless otherwise exempted, a remote candidate will normally be required to complete a period(s) of residence in the University of Adelaide as determined by the University in consultation with the School / Discipline concerned.
- 8.3 Notwithstanding Academic Program Rule 8.2, a remote candidate will normally be required to undertake his / her candidature in an internal attendance mode until such time as the Core Component of the Structured Program has been completed.
- 8.4 In accordance with Academic Program Rule 5.1, a remote candidate may proceed to the degree either by full-time or half-time study.
- 8.5 If permitted in the Specific Academic Program Rules for the degree, on the recommendation of the School / Discipline, the University at any time may permit an enrolled candidate to study as a remote candidate subject to the conditions specified in Academic Program Rules 8.1-8.4 above.
- 8.6 A remote candidate may be permitted to convert to an internal mode of attendance at any time and shall be subject to the conditions normally applied.
- 8.7 Notwithstanding Academic Program Rules 8.1-8.6 above, remote candidates are also required to abide by the other Academic Program Rules and guidelines for their degree.

## 9 Joint candidature

- 9.1 Enrolment as a joint candidate may be permitted where a program of cooperation has been formally agreed between the University of Adelaide and another institution for jointly-awarded degrees.
- 9.2 When it is proposed that the candidate spend the majority of candidature away from Adelaide, the University must approve conditions as in Academic Program Rule 8.1.
- 9.3 Upon successful completion of the work for the degree, the badges of both institutions may appear on the parchment awarded.

## 10 Absence from the University

Except for remote candidates, the University, on the recommendation of the School / Discipline concerned, may permit a candidate to pursue away from the University work connected with the research for the degree.

Such permission may only be granted under special circumstances during provisional candidature.

## 11 Leave of absence

- 11.1 Subject to Academic Program Rule 11.3, a candidate whose work is interrupted for a period of time may be granted cumulative leave by the University of up to 12 months. If an application for leave is approved, all study (both research and coursework where applicable) must be intermitted. The minimum and maximum periods specified in Academic Program Rule 5.3 will be adjusted accordingly by adding the length of the approved leave.
- 11.2 Except in exceptional circumstances, candidates may not take leave:
- during the twelve months immediately prior to their candidature expiry date or
  - during an extension of candidature or
  - during a candidature that has been reactivated for 12 months, following determination by the University that the candidate be not awarded the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form.
- 11.3 In exceptional circumstances, the University may grant a candidate cumulative leave in excess of 12 months. Where a candidate is granted this exceptional leave, the University will endeavour to ensure, but cannot guarantee, that appropriate supervision and resources will be available to support the candidate on return from leave.
- 11.4 In some fields of study, time plays a critical role in the currency of the research. In such cases, the research project may no longer be current following leave and the University may not be able to secure supervision in an area where currency is compromised. Additionally, the University may not be able to accommodate an amendment to the research project. Under these circumstances, continuation of candidature may not be possible and the only options will be:
- withdrawal by the candidate or
  - termination of candidature by the University.
- 11.5 The candidature of a student who takes leave from the University without approval will be suspended immediately, on notification of the Adelaide Graduate Centre.
- 11.6 A candidate granted leave must inform the Adelaide Graduate Centre in writing of resumption of candidature within 2 weeks of the approved date of return.

- 11.7 A candidate seeking to extend a period of leave must apply in writing for an extension of leave at least 1 week prior to the originally approved date of return.

## 12 Withdrawal from candidature

A student may withdraw from candidature at any time. Candidature may be re-instated at a future date without academic consequences, subject to the continuing currency of the research undertaken prior to withdrawal and the currency of the research skills of the candidate. The approval of the Head of School and the on-going availability of appropriate supervision and resources are also required.

## 13 Suspension of candidature

- 13.1 Candidature may be suspended for failure to comply with any formal requirement of candidature, including:
- failing to abide by the responsibilities of research candidates as detailed in the Research Student Handbook
  - failing to undertake a required review of progress by the due date or extended due date
  - failing to respond to any University correspondence sent to the nominated mailing address or campus email address by the requested date of response
  - failing to accept reasonable offers of supervision facilitated by the University
  - taking leave without prior approval
  - failing to return from leave on the agreed date
  - failing to notify the Adelaide Graduate Centre of return from leave within 2 weeks of return and
  - non-payment of University fees and charges.
- 13.2 Re-instatement of a suspended candidature will only be permitted with the approval of the Head of School where:
- the reason for the suspension has been addressed as specified in the Research Student Handbook
  - the research undertaken prior to suspension remains current and
  - appropriate supervision and resources are available to support the re-instated candidature.

## 14 Termination of candidature

- 14.1 The University may review the progress of a candidate at any time during the program of candidature and, if the candidate's progress is unsatisfactory, may terminate the candidature.
- 14.2 The University may terminate the candidature following a 12 month period of suspension for any of the reasons outlined in Academic Program Rule 12 above.
- 14.3 Candidature may be terminated when the University at its sole discretion, reserves the right to decline to appoint a supervisor where to do so would not be appropriate. Without limiting this discretion above the University may consider the following in making a determination: supervisory eligibility and capacity, the quality of the research project and compliance with the responsibilities of research candidates as detailed in the Research Student Handbook.
- 14.4 A terminated candidature may only be re-instated following a successful appeal.

## 15 Extension of candidature

A candidate may be granted by the University one extension of candidature only of 12 months beyond the maximum period specified in Academic Program Rule 5.3. If the thesis has not been submitted by the end of the extended period the candidature will lapse.

## 16 Completion of thesis outside the University

A candidate who has completed the equivalent of 2 years of full-time work under the control of the University, who has completed the experimental work (where appropriate) and whose progress is sufficiently well advanced to permit the satisfactory completion of the thesis outside the University, may be granted permission by the University to complete the writing-up of the thesis outside the University. If such permission is granted the candidate will be allowed either 12 months or until the end of candidature, whichever is the lesser, to submit the thesis. If the thesis has not been submitted by the end of the writing-up period the candidature will lapse.

## 17 Lapsed candidature

- 17.1 Candidature shall be deemed to have lapsed on the candidature expiry date where the candidate has not submitted for examination the thesis required under Academic Program Rule 6.1
- 17.2 A candidature, which has lapsed for not more than 12 months, may be resumed if the completed thesis, which has not departed

from the field of study that was being pursued before the candidature lapsed, is subsequently submitted to the Director of the Adelaide Graduate Centre. The thesis will only be accepted for examination if the School / Discipline certifies that it is satisfactory to that School / Discipline.

- 17.3 Approval of the University is required for the resumption of a lapsed candidature under any other conditions.

## 18 Intention to submit the thesis

A candidate shall notify the Director of the Adelaide Graduate Centre, in writing, approximately 3 months before he / she expects to submit the thesis for examination. A summary of the thesis, together with the proposed thesis title and abstract, shall be submitted prior to submission of the thesis.

## 19 Submission and examination of thesis

- 19.1 On completion of the approved program of study and research, including all coursework requirements, a candidate shall submit a thesis for examination in accordance with the University's *Specifications for Thesis* for the current year.
- 19.2 The University recognises that a thesis may be prepared in a variety of formats that are influenced by the Discipline or field of study. Approved thesis formats are detailed in the University's *Specifications for Thesis*. Candidates should consult their supervisor(s) before selecting an appropriate format.
- 19.3 The candidate's School must notify the Adelaide Graduate Centre at the time of thesis submission whether the thesis submitted comprises 100% or 67% of the assessable content of the degree.
- 19.4 The Head of School / Discipline shall certify that the thesis is worthy of examination.
- 19.5 Examiners of a Professional Doctorate thesis will assess whether the candidate has produced a thesis that both satisfies the objectives of a professional doctorate (as per Academic Program Rule 1) and:
- displays original and critical thought
  - is a significant contribution to professional knowledge and / or practice
  - relates the professional problem or issue to be investigated to the broader framework of the Discipline within which it falls  
and
  - is clearly, accurately and cogently written and suitably illustrated and documented.

## 20 Appointment of examiners

- 20.1 Candidates shall have the right, prior to the commencement of the examination process, to identify people they do not wish to examine their thesis. Any such objections should be submitted to the Director of the Adelaide Graduate Centre, at the same time as the notification of intention to submit required under Academic Program Rule 18. Such objections do not serve as a veto.
- 20.2 Taking account of any objections raised under Academic Program Rule 20.1 and the recommendations of the Head of the relevant School / Discipline the University shall appoint two examiners who are external to the University. At least one examiner shall be an academic member or affiliate of a tertiary institution.
- 20.3 The candidate's supervisors shall not be eligible to act as examiners.
- 20.4 The examiners shall be requested to report in English and in such form as the University will determine and to recommend one of the alternatives listed in Academic Program Rule 21.1.
- 20.5 After consideration of the reports of the examiners, the University may appoint a third external examiner and / or an external arbitrator.

## 21 Examination results

- 21.1 After consideration of the reports of the examiners and such other information as it thinks fit, the University shall determine that:
- the candidate be awarded the degree unconditionally  
or
  - the candidate be awarded the degree subject to the amendments specified in the examiners' reports  
or
  - the candidate be not awarded the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis for re-examination in a revised form  
or
  - the candidate be not awarded the degree.
- 21.2 In the case of a thesis presented for re-examination as provided for in Academic Program Rule 21.1(3), the thesis will, as far as possible, be assessed by the original examiners.
- 21.3 A thesis submitted for re-examination must be presented in the same format as the thesis presented for the original examination.
- 21.4 A thesis presented for re-examination will not be submitted for further re-examination.

## **22 Thesis amendments following examination**

- 22.1 The time limits for revision of the thesis are:
- a. 3 months where the examination result is to award the degree subject to the amendments specified in the examiners' reports (see Academic Program Rule 21.1(2))  
and
  - b. 12 months where the examination result is not to award the degree but to permit re-submission of the thesis in a revised form (see Academic Program Rule 21.1(3)).
- 22.2 Candidates who require additional time to complete revisions must apply to the Dean of Graduate Studies for permission, stating the reasons for the request. The request should be endorsed by the principal supervisor and the Head of School / Discipline or the Postgraduate Coordinator.

## **23 Deposit of thesis**

Such number of copies of a thesis and any other material on which the degree is awarded shall be deposited in the University Library or elsewhere as determined by the University. Unless otherwise determined by the University, the copies shall be available for loan and photocopy.

## **24 Loan or photocopy of thesis**

A candidate who does not wish to allow the thesis to be lent or photocopied when it is deposited in the Library under Academic Program Rule 23 shall make a written application to the Director of the Adelaide Graduate Centre, at the same time as he / she notifies his or her intention to submit under Academic Program Rule 18. The withholding of such permission and the period of time involved shall be determined by the University.

## **25 Graduation**

Subject to Chapter 89 of the Statutes, candidates who have satisfied the requirements for any award of the University shall be admitted to that award.

## **26 Posthumous award**

If a person dies after completing, or in the opinion of the University, substantially completing the requirements of the award, the University may confer the award posthumously.

## **27 Revoking the award**

If the University is satisfied that, when the Doctorate was conferred on a person, the person

- a. did not possess the relevant qualifications,  
or
- b. had not completed the necessary requirements,

the Vice-Chancellor and President with authority devolved to him / her by Council may revoke the award.

Upon revocation, the person is taken never to have received the award.

## **28 Return of documents**

If requested by the Dean of Graduate Studies, the recipient of a Doctorate must deliver to the University the documents certifying or evidencing the award.

## **29 General**

When, in the opinion of the University, special circumstances exist the University, on the recommendation of the relevant School / Discipline in each case, may vary any of the provisions in Academic Program Rules 1–28 above.