

 BOND UNIVERSITY	HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH PROGRAMS POLICY
Policy owner	Chair of Graduate Research
Contact officer	Chair of Graduate Research
Endorsement authority	Academic Senate
Date of next review	November 2027

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Bond University is registered by TEQSA to self-accredit and offer award programs as prescribed by the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) (AQF). In compliance with all relevant national regulatory requirements and standards, this Policy describes:

- the titles and classification of higher degree by research (HDR) programs of study offered by Bond University;
- minimum program entry requirements; and
- the duration of programs and other essential characteristics.

2. AUDIENCE AND APPLICATION

This Policy governs all HDR programs at Bond University. Coursework doctorates are governed by the Academic Programs Policy.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
Vice Chancellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approves HDR programs and policy ▪ May waive the requirements of this Policy as considered appropriate
Provost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Receives and considers advice and recommendations from the University Research Committee
Academic Senate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommends approval of HDR programs and policy to the Vice Chancellor ▪ Receives and considers advice and recommendations from the University Research Committee
University Research Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides advice to Academic Senate and the Provost on HDR programs and policy ▪ Makes recommendations to Academic Senate and the Provost on the award of degrees to HDR candidates, extensions of candidature, terminations of candidature, and related matters
Chair of Graduate Research	Delegate of the Provost with authority to make decisions relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer of enrolment, including exceptional circumstances where the applicant does not meet the qualifications or experience for admission to the program ▪ Approval of non-standard start date ▪ Approval of off-campus study including off-campus study prior to confirmation of candidature ▪ Confirmation of candidature ▪ Conversion of degree ▪ Approval of HDR supervisors ▪ Extension of enrolment ▪ Credit for prior studies ▪ Teaching load in excess of maximum hours per week ▪ Award of scholarships ▪ Progress reports ▪ Suspension of candidature ▪ Oral examination process ▪ Award of degree ▪ Termination of candidature ▪ Other matters referred by the Faculty
HDR Subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delegate of the University Research Committee for decisions relating to award of degree ▪ Appoints examiners to assess Higher Doctorate candidates
Executive Dean of Faculty or delegate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Responsible for delivery and administration of HDR program within their Faculty under the guidance of the Chair of Graduate Research

4. PROGRAMS OFFERED

Bond University offers the following HDR programs:

Masters Degree by Research (AQF Level 9)

- Master of Philosophy
- Master of Arts by Research
- Master of Laws by Research
- Master of Science by Research (Health Sciences)

Doctoral Degree by Research (AQF Level 10)

- Professional Doctorate Degree
- Doctor of Legal Science
- Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work
- Doctor of Philosophy

Higher Doctorate (AQF Level 10)

5. HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH

Higher degree programs that have a research component of not less than two-thirds of the sum of the work for the degree are considered HDR programs.

These degrees may be awarded by thesis, by thesis and coursework, or by published work, subject to individual program requirements.

Candidates may be required to complete such subjects, projects and practical work, and pass such assessments, as determined by the Executive Dean or delegate in the supervising Faculty.

5.1. Requirements for Admission

5.1.1. Masters Degree (Research)

- An applicant must have a degree in a relevant subject area from a recognised tertiary educational institution, with a Cumulative Percent Average (CPA) of at least 65 percent in the major studies area at AQF Level 7 or higher;
- At the discretion of the Executive Dean or delegate, the applicant may also be required to provide documented evidence of prior successful completion of a research exercise or course of study sufficient to convince the Executive Dean or delegate that the candidate has the appropriate level of experience in research methodology and relevant research skills.

5.1.2. Professional Doctorate (Research)

- An applicant will normally have a research degree at AQF Level 8 or higher in a relevant subject area from a recognised tertiary educational institution, normally with a CPA of at least 75 percent in the major studies area (Honours Class 1 or Honours Class 2A);
- An applicant will also normally have a minimum of five years professional experience in the field or an allied field of the doctoral research program.

5.1.3. Doctor of Legal Science (SJD)

- An applicant having achieved a CPA of at least 75 percent in an LLB (Hons) or JD from a recognised tertiary educational institution may, at the discretion of the Executive Dean or delegate in the Faculty of Law, be admitted to the SJD program;
- At the discretion of the Executive Dean or delegate, the applicant may also be required to provide documented evidence of prior successful completion of a research exercise or course of study sufficient to convince the Executive Dean or delegate that the candidate has the appropriate level of experience in research methodology and relevant research skills.

5.1.4. Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work

- An applicant for admission to candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work must comply with clause 5.1.5 and, in addition must have graduated from a recognised tertiary educational institution with a Bachelor degree in the relevant discipline not less than six years previously;
- A candidate for a Doctoral Degree by Research, whether by thesis or by thesis and coursework, who is qualified for candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work, whose candidature has not been less than 12 months and who has not submitted a doctoral thesis, may, on the recommendation of the Executive Dean or delegate of the Faculty of HDR enrolment, apply to transfer to candidature for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work.

5.1.5. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

- An applicant will normally have a research degree at AQF Level 8 or higher in a relevant subject area from a recognised tertiary educational institution, with a CPA of at least 75 percent in the major studies area (Honours Class 1 or Honours Class 2A);
- At the discretion of the Executive Dean or delegate, the applicant may also be required to provide documented evidence of prior successful completion of a research exercise or course of study sufficient

to convince the Executive Dean or delegate that the candidate has the appropriate level of experience in research methodology and relevant research skills.

5.2. English Language Proficiency

Enrolment is conditional upon documented proficiency in English and the Executive Dean or delegate must be satisfied that the applicant's language skills are adequate for the demands of the program of intended enrolment.

In order to satisfy the Executive Dean or delegate, the applicant must minimally demonstrate English language proficiency at the equivalent overall level of IELTS 7.0 with no sub-component less than 6.5, consistent with the Admissions Policy.

5.3. Admission

The processes for expression of interest in admission to a HDR program, application for admission and approval of admission are outlined in the HDR Programs Procedure.

5.4. Supervision

The Faculty will provide a HDR Supervision Team, in accordance with the Higher Degree Research Student Supervision Policy, which will comprise a Principal Supervisor and at least one Associate Supervisor.

5.5. Duration of Candidature

The total period of candidature for each full-time HDR enrolment is:

Masters Degree (Research)	minimum 12 months	maximum 24 months in accordance with AQF Level 9 Volume of Learning standards
Professional Doctorate (Research)	minimum 36 months	maximum 48 months in accordance with AQF Level 10 Volume of Learning standards
Doctor of Legal Science	minimum 36 months	maximum 48 months in accordance with AQF Level 10 Volume of Learning standards
Doctor of Philosophy	minimum 36 months	maximum 48 months in accordance with AQF Level 10 Volume of Learning standards
Doctor of Philosophy by Published Work	submission required within 24 months of enrolment for the degree in accordance with AQF Level 10 Volume of Learning standards	

The total period of candidature for half-time HDR enrolment is double full-time enrolment periods.

5.6. Regular Progress Reporting

The candidate and Principal Supervisor will submit regular reports as required to the Executive Dean or delegate regarding the candidate's progress.

The Chair of Graduate Research will review Progress Reports for all candidates who are 'at-risk'. Scholarships of candidates who are 'at-risk' may be suspended in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Scholarship.

5.7. Confirmation of Candidature

Enrolment of all HDR candidates is probationary until successful completion of a confirmation of candidature process. Confirmation must normally be held before the expiry of one third of the candidate's projected maximum period of candidature.

The Faculty will convene a Confirmation Panel which will comprise, as a minimum, one academic external to the HDR supervision team, at least one member external to the University from the relevant discipline and exclude any current or past supervisors. The Confirmation Panel will normally be chaired by the Executive Dean or delegate.

The Confirmation Panel will report in writing, with a recommendation, to the Chair of Graduate Research to:

- confirm candidature;
- extend probationary candidature to a specified date and set conditions that must be met before candidature can be confirmed.
- seek approval from the Chair of Graduate Research to downgrade a Doctoral candidate to a Masters by Research program (where relevant); or
- seek termination of candidature.

5.8. Examination

The Faculty will identify suitably qualified independent examiners with international standing in the field of research to examine the thesis. The nominations must include:

- For Masters Degrees (Research) – three examiners who must be external to the University; or
- For Doctoral Degrees – five examiners who must be external to the University.

The Executive Dean or delegate will appoint a suitably qualified independent panel of external examiners from nominated eligible examiners. The panel must include:

- For Masters Degrees (Research) – two examiners;
- For Doctoral Degrees – two examiners.

The supervisor/s, including former supervisor/s, of the candidate may not act as examiner/s of the thesis.

The performance of the candidate in any formal coursework subject must be assessed in accordance with the Assessment Policy.

From January 2025, Oral Examinations will be required for commencing HDR Students, and optional for currently enrolled students.

The Faculty will convene an Oral Examination Panel which will comprise, as a minimum, one academic external examiner, the current primary supervisor or proxy, the Chair of Graduate Research or proxy, and an independent academic staff member from another discipline to chair the panel. The process that is followed is outlined in the HDR Handbook and occurs after written reports are received by Faculty.

5.9. Award of Degree

After considering the Examiners' Reports, the Executive Dean or delegate may submit a recommendation to the Chair of Graduate Research that:

- the degree be awarded; or
- the degree is not awarded.

Where the HDR Subcommittee, as delegate of the University Research Committee, supports the recommendation made by the Executive Dean, the Chair of Graduate Research will refer the Examiners' Reports, together with the Executive Dean or delegate's written recommendation to the University Research Committee for noting.

The recommendation to award or not to award rests with the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Chair of Graduate Research.

6. HIGHER DOCTORATES

Bond University offers Faculty-based Higher Doctorate degrees to recognise distinguished and authoritative contributions to a field of knowledge.

6.1. Requirements for Admission

For the Doctor of Business (DBus), Doctor of Laws (LLD), Doctor of Literature (DLitt), Doctor of Science (DSc), a candidate must be a graduate of eight years' standing of:

- Bond University; or
- another recognised university, and who has carried out advanced study and research at Bond University for a period of at least two years.

6.2. Admission

The processes for application and approval of admission to a Higher Doctorate program are outlined in the HDR Programs Procedure.

6.3. Duration of Candidature

The minimum period from award of a Doctoral Degree or equivalent in a relevant discipline to lodging an application for admission to a Higher Doctorate is eight years.

The period of candidature is a minimum of three months, dating from the beginning of the month following the admission to candidature.

6.4. Assessment

The HDR Subcommittee will, after consultation with the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty, appoint two examiners, all of whom will be external to the University. Examiners selected must be at least of professorial standing or equivalent with international standing in the field of knowledge.

The examiners will report to the HDR Subcommittee whether or not, in their opinion, the material submitted by the candidate is of sufficient merit for the award of the degree.

6.5. Award of Degree

The degree will be awarded for a distinguished contribution to knowledge that, in the written opinion of the

examiners, gives the candidate an authoritative standing in the field of knowledge in which the work falls and an entitlement to general recognition as such by scholars in that field.

The recommendation to award or not to award rests with the Executive Dean of the relevant Faculty. The recommendation will be forwarded to the HDR Subcommittee.

6.6. Honorary Higher Doctorate Degrees

The University Council may award the Higher Doctorate degrees of DUniv, DBus, LLD, DLitt and DSc, *honoris causa*, upon the recommendation of the Honorary Awards Committee in accordance with the University Honorary Awards Policy.

The award of DUniv, *honoris causa*, will normally be made to a person who:

- has made an outstanding contribution to the University or to society generally; and
- possesses personal attributes that reflect the highest ideals and standards to which the University is dedicated.

The award of DBus, LLD, DLitt or DSc, *honoris causa*, will normally be made to a person who:

- has achieved professional standing of the highest order in the field of the relevant award;
- has made an outstanding contribution to the University or to society generally; and
- possesses personal attributes that reflect the highest ideals and standards to which the University is dedicated.

7. DEFINITIONS, TERMS, ACRONYMS

Academic credit	Credit for subjects in a program of study granted on the basis of successful prior learning.
Award	A degree, graduate diploma, graduate certificate, associate degree or diploma conferred by the University upon completion of a coursework program or a program of research.
Examiner	In the case of research students, the person examining a thesis or dissertation.
Faculty	Bond Business School, Faculty of Health Sciences & Medicine, Faculty of Law, and Faculty of Society & Design (each of which is headed by an Executive Dean).
HDR	Higher Degree by Research.
Higher degree	An award at Masters or Doctoral level.
Professorial standing	The status of full or associate professor in relation to an academic staff member.
Supervisor	The person responsible for the supervision of a student's research.

8. AFFILIATED PROCEDURES AND SCHEDULES

[HDR Programs Procedure](#)

9. RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Credit Policy \(TL 5.4.3\)](#)

[Admissions Policy \(SS 5.4.1\)](#)

[Assessment Policy \(TL 3.5.1\)](#)

[Higher Degree Research Student Supervision Policy \(RES 4.4.3\)](#)

[University Honorary Awards Policy \(HR 2.2.1\)](#)

[Doctor of Legal Science Structure and Credit Protocol \(LAW 6.07\)](#)

10. MODIFICATION HISTORY

Date	Sections	Source	Details
Nov 2024	5.8	HDR Subcommittee	V3 – added information about oral examinations
10 Nov 2023	5.3 6.4	Academic Senate	V2 – changed 3 examiners to 2 Added “with international standing”
14 Dec 2022			Date first approved - Regulations to Policy

APPROVAL AUTHORITY: Vice Chancellor