

Monash University Policy

Policy Title	Graduate Research Course Review Policy
Date Effective	19-October-2016
Review Date	19-October-2019
Policy Owner	Vice-Provost (Graduate Education)
Category	Academic Quality and Standards
Version Number	1.2
Content Enquiries	Policy Mrgs
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All graduate research courses, including joint and dual award degrees. • All graduate research coursework units that comprise a compulsory component of a graduate research course. • All campuses and locations.
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure regular review of graduate research courses through a systematic framework for assessing the objectives, structure, program delivery and support, management and outcomes of graduate research courses leading to Monash awards. • To provide a framework for evaluating graduate research courses against the University's quality cycle to ensure monitoring and continuous improvement of these programs and formal reporting of these processes.
POLICY STATEMENT	

Principles

Accreditation is a quality assurance process under which courses and units are evaluated to determine that certain standards are met. As such, accreditation is not the same as a decision to offer a course or unit of study but a necessary condition for such a decision.

Academic Board has overarching responsibility for the accreditation of graduate research courses, including joint or dual award degrees, and units of study. Graduate Research Committee (GRC) has authority to approve certain types of amendments to accredited courses, such as minor amendments to units of study offered within a graduate research degree, in keeping with the principles and criteria set out in this policy.

Graduate research courses are delivered across the University's organisational structure, including by academic units or equivalent entities and also by Monash Graduate Education via its program of professional development activities.

Graduate research courses are governed by university-wide regulations, as well as policies and procedures specific to graduate research students.

Graduate research courses are to be reviewed every 5 years.

Accreditation of graduate research courses

Course accreditation is a cyclical process that contains the following four elements:

1. **Accredit:** Initial accreditation and approval of a course as able to be offered.
2. **Monitor:** Evaluation to ensure that expected quality and viability outcomes are achieved, undertaken at least once a year.
3. **Review:** evaluation of a course with respect to strategic, academic and business aspects. Course review must be undertaken within two years prior to re-accreditation.
4. **Re-accredit:** assessment of a course's continued alignment with accreditation criteria and performance as evidenced by course review outcomes.

Criteria for initial accreditation of new courses

Before the initial accreditation of a course, Academic Board must be assured that:

- The course aligns with the academic profile and priorities of the University and the portfolio of courses offered.
- The course meets the academic standards of the University as set out in policies, regulations and the statute.
- The University has the academic and research training resources (e.g., information technology, library, supervisors, student support) to successfully offer and sustain the course.
- Appropriate governance and management arrangements are in place for successful implementation, delivery and oversight of the course.

Criteria for re-accreditation of courses

Before re-accrediting a course, Academic Board must be assured that:

- The course aligns with the academic profile and research priorities of the University.
- The course meets the academic standards of the University as set out in policies, regulations and the statute.
- There is evidence of successful research training outcomes, timely completions, student success and graduate outcomes.
- The academic resources (e.g., information technology, library, supervision, student support) are adequate to continue to successfully offer and sustain the course.
- The implementation of governance and management arrangements is appropriate for ensuring successful delivery and oversight of the course.
- There is evidence of an appropriately conducted course review that addresses the above points, and that action has been taken as a result of outcomes and recommendations of the review.

Period of accreditation

The maximum period of accreditation for courses is seven years.

Before the end of a course's accreditation period, the faculty must either apply for re-accreditation or disestablish the course.

Conditions for ongoing accreditation of courses

Academic Board accreditation of courses is granted with the condition that faculties:

- Seek the appropriate approval for amendments to accredited courses.
- Monitor and review courses in accordance with university policy.

- Report to Graduate Research Committee on outcomes of course reviews and any withdrawal or loss of professional accreditation, failure to gain re-accreditation, unsuccessful applications for professional accreditation and professional accreditation with new bodies.

Academic Board may withdraw its accreditation prior to the end of the accreditation period if the above conditions are not met, or if it is concerned that academic quality standards are being breached or not maintained systematically.

Accreditation of courses offered outside Australia

In addition to the University's requirements, courses offered at the Monash Malaysia campus and any other locations outside Australia must meet the legislative requirements of the relevant country.

Graduate Research Course Review

All award courses must be reviewed every 5 years. A shorter review cycle may be employed for strategic or operational reasons. Any applications to Academic Board for re-accreditation must be made within two years of the course review.

Course reviews must include one or more person/s external to the University.

The Graduate Research Committee may direct the Dean of a faculty to undertake a review of a course if either is concerned that academic quality standards are being breached or not maintained systematically, or for any other reason.

Approval of course amendments

Academic Board approval is required for amendments that propose courses, locations or partnerships that are new. Furthermore, Academic Board approval is required for any amendments that carry an element of risk to the University.

Academic Board delegates to GRC the responsibility for approval of amendments that are minor, amendments to course outcomes, course structures, or amendments that will affect other parts of the university. This includes amendments to training activities that are offered as part of a graduate research course.

GRC will refer to Academic Board any course amendment that it considers may have strategic implications, carries an element of risk to the University or where an exemption from policy is required.

The Chair of GRC will determine the necessary approval where an interpretation of this policy is required for a particular amendment.

Accreditation of units

Academic Board has responsibility for the accreditation of units of study that comprise a compulsory component of a graduate research course. Graduate Research Committee has responsibility for re-accrediting such units.

Criteria for initial accreditation of units

Before accrediting a unit Academic Board must be assured that:

- There is alignment between unit outcomes, learning activities, assessment and the overall relationship to the graduate research course outcomes.
- The rationale for offering the unit is sound, e.g. by considering the unit's role within courses of study, strategic importance and overlapping content with other units.
- Adequate resources are in place to successfully offer the unit, including academic staff, support staff, physical resources and services.

- Mechanisms are in place for continuous monitoring of the quality and viability of the unit.

Criteria for re-accreditation of units

Before re-accrediting a unit the Graduate Research Committee must be assured that:

- The unit aligns with the initial accreditation criteria.
- There is evidence of high-quality outcomes and educational effectiveness.
- The unit is viable.

Period of accreditation

The maximum period of accreditation for units is five years.

Conditions for ongoing accreditation of units

The Graduate Research Committee may set conditions on the accreditation of units and may withdraw the accreditation for any reason if deemed necessary.

GRC has the authority to direct the Dean of a faculty to undertake a review of a unit if the GRC is concerned that the standards of academic quality are being breached or not maintained systematically, or for any other reason. In this circumstance, GRC will determine the particular focus of the directed unit review.

Maintaining oversight and reporting requirements

The University will maintain a register of accredited courses, the period of accreditation and any conditions linked to the accreditation.

Monash Graduate Education must maintain records of course and unit amendments approved by GRC. Copies of these records must be made available at the request of Academic Board or any of its subcommittees.

Roles and responsibilities

Academic Board

Academic Board has overarching responsibility for the accreditation and re-accreditation of graduate research courses and units.

Graduate Research Committee (GRC)

GRC reviews new course proposals and applications for re-accreditation with a view to assessing alignment with the accreditation criteria, prior to consideration by Academic Board.

Academic Board delegates to GRC the responsibility for approval of course amendments as set out in this policy.

Monash Graduate Education

The portfolio established to provide support to the Graduate Research Committee. It also centrally administers graduate research student admissions, enrolment, scholarships and examination of theses. It offers professional development programs for graduate research students, specifically for Monash Doctoral Program students.

Supporting Procedures	Graduate Research Course Review Procedures
Responsibility for implementation	<p>Vice-Provost (Graduate Education)</p> <p>Pro-Vice Chancellor - Monash Malaysia</p> <p>Deans (or delegates)</p> <p>Director of MUARC</p> <p>Director of MIRI</p> <p>Associate Deans (Graduate Research)</p> <p>Faculty / School Managers</p> <p>Faculty / School Graduate Research Managers (or equivalent)</p> <p>Heads of School – Monash Malaysia</p> <p>Deputy Heads of School (Research) – Monash Malaysia</p> <p>Heads of academic units/departments</p> <p>Graduate Research Coordinators</p> <p>Program Directors</p> <p>Director, Quality Assurance and Compliance – Monash Malaysia</p> <p>Quality Assurance and Compliance Unit – Monash Malaysia</p> <p>Director, Campus Research Management – Monash Malaysia</p> <p>Senior Manager, Graduate Student Experience, Monash Graduate Education</p> <p>Manager, Monash Doctoral Program, Monash Graduate Education</p> <p>Manager, Policy and Governance, Monash Graduate Education</p>
Status	Revised
Approval Body	<p>Name: Academic Board</p> <p>Meeting: 6/2016</p> <p>Date: 19-October-2016</p> <p>Agenda item: 12.3</p>
Endorsement Body	<p>Name: Graduate Research Committee</p> <p>Meeting: 6/2016</p> <p>Date: 5-September-2016</p> <p>Agenda item: 10.5</p>
Definitions	<p>Graduate Research Course: a degree that comprises at least a 66% research component. May also be referred to as a Higher Degree by Research (HDR). In relation to a PhD, typically includes either faculty-delivered units of study or a combination of training activities delivered by the faculty and Monash Graduate Education.</p> <p>Graduate Research Committee: university-wide committee responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advising the Academic Board on all matters of policy relating to doctoral and research master's degrees, including admissions, variations to candidature, examinations, supervision, academic progress, and research scholarships and awards;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsing all new graduate research courses, units and programs, and endorsing or approving amendments to, or disestablishment of, existing graduate research degrees. <p>Graduate Research Entity: Monash Graduate Education and each of the academic units separately responsible for the delivery of graduate research courses, currently comprising 10 faculties, Monash University Accident Research Centre, Monash Sustainability Institute, Monash Malaysia and Monash South Africa.</p> <p>Monash Graduate Education (MGE): Administrative entity established to support the functions of the Graduate Research Committee. Formerly, Monash University Institute of Graduate Research (MIGR).</p>
Legislation Mandating Compliance	<p>Monash University (Council) Regulations</p> <p>Monash University (Academic Board) Regulations</p> <p>TEQSA Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011 Part 3 - Provider Course Accreditation Standards (until end of 2016)</p> <p>Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015 (taking effect from 1 January 2017)</p> <p>Malaysian Qualifications Framework</p> <p>MQA Code of Practice for Programme Accreditation (COPPA)</p> <p>MQA Code of Practice for Institutional Audit (COPIA).</p>
Related Policies	<p>Coursework Course and Unit Accreditation Policy</p> <p>HDR Course Accreditation Policy</p> <p>Code of Practice for Supervision of Doctoral and Research Masters Candidates</p>
Related Documents	<p>Handbook for Doctoral Degrees</p> <p>Handbook for Research Master's Degrees</p>