

# Joint PhD Proposal Procedure

## 1 Purpose

To clearly define the conditions for the establishment and management of joint PhD agreements between the University and overseas institutions governing joint Doctoral Degrees from both institutions.

A Joint PhD Proposal must be submitted to the two relevant institutions in respect of each candidate, detailing the arrangements pertaining to the particular candidature.

## 2 Scope

This procedure applies to Joint PhD Proposals involving overseas institutions.

**Exclusion:** This procedure does not apply to Joint PhD proposals with other Australian institutions.

## 3 Procedure Overview

This procedure establishes the process for the management of joint PhD agreements between the University and overseas institutions governing joint Doctoral Degrees from both institutions. Generally, joint PhD agreements will only be considered:

- with institutions with which a relationship has already been established;
- if the institution complements the University's research strategy; and
- if the institution has an international reputation at least equal to that of the University.

Monitoring of the agreement must be performed during the life of the agreement. The joint PhD agreement must specify the review date, procedures and allowable circumstances for termination of the agreement.

Once the joint PhD agreement is approved for implementation by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research), or nominee, on behalf of the University, and the appropriate representative of the partner institution, the University's Legal Office will draw up a joint PhD agreement between the University and the partner institution. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research), or nominee, is responsible for negotiating and finalising the agreement.

This procedure aligns with:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021: Standard 5.4 Delivery with Other Parties*

## 4 Procedures

### 4.1 Standards

The application process for joint PhD candidature will be initiated by the completion of the Joint PhD Proposal Form by research supervisors of each institution in consultation with the relevant Head of School. The Joint PhD Proposal Form must include as much detail as possible and must be signed by the PhD candidate, the proposed principal supervisors and any co-supervisors. On endorsement by the Dean (Graduate Research School) the Joint PhD Proposal Form and supporting documents will be submitted for the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research) and then sent to the Legal Office for drafting of the joint PhD agreement. The joint PhD agreement must also be signed by the appropriate officers at the overseas institution.

Students must satisfy the requirements of both the University and the partner institution with regard to Enrolment, progression and the review of progress, Thesis submission and Examination, intellectual property agreements and ethical clearances. Upon Enrolment, Students will have reviewed these procedures and expectations and signed to confirm they are aware of and agree to uphold these requirements. Refer to the Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure for further details.

Any exceptions or restrictions applicable to the Student must be specified in the Joint PhD Proposal Form.

Joint PhD agreements must be accepted and signed prior to the beginning of the candidature and will take effect from that time. However, under extenuating circumstances, retrospective approval may be sought for existing Students from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research). Existing Students must follow the same process for the establishment of a Joint PhD Proposal.

### 4.2 Candidature

Conditions relevant to the Student at the partner institution must be compatible with the University's policies and procedures for a standard PhD. In the absence of policy or procedure at the partner institution, the University's policies and procedures shall apply. In the case of a significant variation, this should be resolved in the initial Agreement documents.

Candidature related matters include, but are not limited to:

- Admissions requirements - note that entry requirements must be met by all Students whether from the University or a partner institution;
- all other policies, procedures, codes of conduct, ethics clearances and program requirements as appropriate.

### **4.3 Fee arrangements**

Fees will be payable at the institution which the Student is currently attending (with a minimum of at least one year full time equivalent at each institution). Enrolment must meet the 16 minimum units required at UniSQ to be eligible for graduation.

The agreement must also detail any fee exemptions, tuition fee scholarships or other relevant fee related arrangements covering the period of Enrolment at each institution.

Students who are Domestic Students of the University should either be fee paying or on a Research Training Program (RTP) tuition fee offset scholarship. RTP is only available for those Courses the Student takes through the University. Domestic Students undertaking Courses from an international partner institution will be liable for International Student fees at that institution.

International Students will be liable for fees relating to their Enrolment at both the host and partner institutions.

### **4.4 Budgets**

Full details of budgeting requirements must be specified in the Joint PhD Proposal Form, including:

- details of any scholarships or allowances (if applicable);
- financial travel support for the Student;
- visa and health insurance costs (if these are not going to be the responsibility of the Student);
- funding arrangements for supervisors and examiners;
- any additional funding for Thesis examination;
- costs of specialist equipment, consumables, laboratory and fieldwork expenses; and
- any other expenses as determined by the two institutions.

### **4.5 Ethics clearances**

The joint PhD agreement must outline arrangement for dealing with ethics approvals and should provide:

- confirmation and details that the relevant University ethics committee has been consulted;
- confirmation and details that the equivalent office at the partner institution has been consulted; and
- evidence that an agreement has been reached between the two institutions in relation to ethics in accordance with the Research Code of Conduct Policy.

## 4.6 Time spent at each institution

The joint PhD candidature will be divided between the two institutions with a minimum of one year full-time equivalent at each institution. The remaining time of study will be as agreed by both institutions and as stipulated in the joint PhD agreement. An indicative timetable for candidature at both institutions should be specified in the agreement, including information pertaining to the arrangements should the Student require more than the normal period to complete the PhD.

## 4.7 Duration

The duration of a Doctoral Degree under a joint PhD agreement is the same as stated in the University's current handbook entry for a Doctoral Degree.

## 4.8 Visas

Students enrolled as doctoral Students at both institutions are eligible to apply for a Student visa for the period of research overseas. Students studying in Australia and overseas are subject to strict visa conditions and should contact the relevant government department in the country to which they are travelling in order to acquaint themselves with their possible visa requirements. Students are personally responsible for undertaking the Student visa application process.

## 4.9 Supervision

Joint PhD agreements will list at least one principal supervisor from each institution as well as any co-supervisors from each institution. In the case where the University is the home institution, the Student will have a principal and an associate supervisor from the University, as well as at least one principal supervisor from the host institution. A co-supervisor from the host institution will also be provided if that is a requirement of the host institution.

The agreement will detail the agreed roles of each supervisor throughout the candidature, when the Student is at each institution. Additional associated supervisors from either institution may

be negotiated, as appropriate. The partner institution must agree to adhere to any applicable University conditions for supervision when supervising joint PhD Students.

#### **4.10 Language of instruction**

Instruction shall be in English. Should the partner institution have a requirement of submission of an abstract in a language other than English, this is the responsibility of the Student and partner institution. The expectation is that all communication between the Student, partner institution and the University will be in English.

#### **4.11 Intellectual property**

The joint PhD agreement will specify any intellectual property arrangements or conditions. Copyright of the Thesis will be assigned to the Student. All agreements must comply with the University's Intellectual Property Policy and subordinate Procedures.

#### **4.12 Student progress reporting**

The Student will be expected to complete progress reporting requirements at both institutions, as set out in the Joint PhD Proposal Form.

The agreement must specify the process to be followed by the institutions and Students who are deemed to not be making satisfactory progress.

#### **4.13 Thesis**

The Student must produce the prescribed Thesis for examination as agreed by both institutions and is required to meet all submission requirements of each institution for the Thesis relevant to that institution. The University will require a written evaluation of the Thesis by two external examiners.

#### **4.14 Examination process**

The joint PhD agreement will specify the nature of the examination process and any resolution of outcomes. Any funding requirements presented as a result of examination processes and applicable standards at the partner institution will be negotiated in the joint PhD agreement.

The Student will satisfy the examination process of both institutions through a single examination as detailed in the agreement.

#### **4.15 Conferral of Award**

When the required time has been spent at each institution, and the required conditions for examination have been met, a Student will receive a doctoral Testamur from the University and

the partner institution in respect of that candidature (or other equivalent qualification from the overseas institution). The University's Testamur, and the relevant certification of the overseas institution, must specify that the Award is 'Conferred under a joint PhD program between the University of Southern Queensland and (name of the partner institution)'.

## 5 References

Nil.

## 6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

## 7 Procedure Information

<b>Accountable Officer</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research)
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Dean (Graduate Research School)
<b>Policy Type</b>	University Procedure
<b>Policy Suite</b>	<a href="#">Higher Degree by Research Student Policy</a>
<b>Subordinate Schedules</b>	
<b>Approved Date</b>	5/5/2026
<b>Effective Date</b>	2/1/2026
<b>Review Date</b>	2/1/2031
<b>Relevant Legislation</b>	<a href="#">Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018</a> <a href="#">Autonomous Sanctions Regulations 2011</a> <a href="#">Crime and Corruption Act 2001</a> <a href="#">Defence Trade Controls Act 2012</a> <a href="#">Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000</a> <a href="#">Higher Education Support Act 2003</a> <a href="#">Migration Act 1958</a> <a href="#">National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to</a>

	<a href="#">Overseas Students 2018 (National Code 2018)</a>
<b>Policy Exceptions</b>	<a href="#">Policy Exceptions Register</a>
<b>Related Policies</b>	<a href="#">Academic Programs and Courses Quality Policy</a> <a href="#">Admissions, Enrolment and Graduations Policy</a> <a href="#">Assessment Policy</a> <a href="#">Educational Partnerships Policy</a> <a href="#">Intellectual Property Policy</a> <a href="#">National Security Policy</a> <a href="#">Records and Information Management Policy</a> <a href="#">Research Code of Conduct Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Academic Integrity Policy</a> <a href="#">Student General Conduct Policy</a> <a href="#">Student Grievance Resolution Policy</a> <a href="#">Travel Policy</a>
<b>Related Procedures</b>	<a href="#">Admissions Procedure</a> <a href="#">Assessment Procedure</a> <a href="#">Commercialisation of Intellectual Property Procedure</a> <a href="#">Cotutelle PhD Program Procedure</a> <a href="#">Enrolment Procedure</a> <a href="#">Higher Degree by Research Student Admissions and Enrolments Procedure</a> <a href="#">Higher Degree by Research Student Progress Procedure</a> <a href="#">Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedure</a> <a href="#">Higher Degree by Research Thesis Examination Procedure</a> <a href="#">Intellectual Property Procedure</a>

	<p><a href="#">National Security Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Research Code of Conduct: Management of Potential Breaches Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sanctions and Export Controls Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student Academic Misconduct Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student Appeals Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student Discrimination, Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Response Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student General Misconduct Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Student Grievance Resolution Procedure</a></p> <p><a href="#">Travel Procedure</a></p>
<p><b>Related forms, publications and websites</b></p>	<p><a href="#">UniSQ Handbook</a></p>
<p><b>Definitions</b></p>	<p><b>Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary</b></p> <p><a href="#">Admission</a></p> <p>The process of submission and assessment of applications for entry to study at the University.</p> <p><a href="#">Award</a></p> <p>The qualification conferred upon a Student following the successful completion of an Academic Program. The categories of Award are listed in the Program Nomenclature Schedule .</p> <p><a href="#">Domestic Student</a></p> <p>A Student who is an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, an Australian Permanent Resident or the holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa.</p> <p><a href="#">Enrolment</a></p> <p>The process of admitting Students to one or more Courses for the current Academic Year.</p> <p><a href="#">International Student</a></p>

A Student who is not an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, an Australian Permanent Resident or the holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa.

#### Semester

A period of time during which instruction is provided, learning is undertaken and Assessment is carried out. There are three Semester periods during an Academic Year, known consecutively as Semester 1, Semester 2 and Semester 3.

#### Student

A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

#### Testamur

A certificate issued by the Council of the University to signify that a Student has satisfied the requirements of a specific program and has graduated.

#### Thesis

Also known as a Standard Thesis, is the material outcomes of a program of research. It is also referred to as a 'dissertation'.

#### University

The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

#### **Definitions that relate to this procedure only**

**Keywords**

**Record No**

15/523PL