

# Research Progress Panels Policy

## Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) To establish Research Progress Panels (RPP) to support higher degrees by research candidates and their supervisors.

(2) Research Progress Panels (RPP) support the candidates' work, progress and supervision. A Research Progress Panel, consisting of the supervisor, co-supervisors and at least one other person, will be appointed for each Higher Degree by Research Candidate.

## Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to:

- a. All campuses
- b. All staff, including honoraries
- c. All higher degrees by research
- d. All students enrolled in a higher degree by research

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) A Research Progress Panel (RPP) will consist of the principal supervisor, co-supervisor and at least one other person (but not more than three others). At least one member of the RPP will be a full-time member of staff of La Trobe University. The chair of an RPP will not normally be one of the candidate's supervisors.

(5) The Research Progress Panel will support the candidate's work and supervision, monitor his/her progress and make recommendations to the Head of School or Graduate Research Coordinator when required.

(6) Depending on circumstances, candidates will meet with the RPP not less than once each year.

(7) For professional doctorate students meetings may not be required in the first year of study when coursework is completed.

(8) In addition, a student is free to consult at other times with any members of the RPP on research, career or pastoral matters.

## Section 4 - Procedure

### Selection of Panel Members

(9) The membership of the RPP will normally be determined by the Graduate Research Coordinator in consultation

with the student, supervisor and program co-ordinator (or Head of School/Department/Unit).

(10) A candidate may invite support people to attending an RPP meeting. Such support people are not members of the RPP and are not required to agree with the RPP's recommendations or decisions.

### **Approval of Panel**

(11) After the membership of the RPP has been determined the Head of School/Discipline/Unit will give his/her formal approval.

### **Changes of Panel Membership**

(12) Where an RPP member resigns that member will be replaced if it is necessary to comply with this Policy.

(13) An RPP may recruit another member (within the terms of this Policy) at any time.

(14) Whenever an RPP changes its membership it will consider the views of the candidate and the supervisors. The Head of School/Discipline/Unit will approve the RPP change of membership.

### **Advice of Membership**

(15) After approval the candidate, supervisors, and Graduate Research Coordinator will be notified of the RPP membership.

### **Absence of Panel Members from Meetings**

(16) Another staff member or person may substitute for an RPP member who cannot attend a meeting of the RPP with the agreement of the Chair and candidate.

### **Review**

(17) A review of RPP membership may be flagged by:

- a. A written report by the HDR candidate to the relevant Graduate Research Coordinator or Program Coordinator, Head of School/Discipline/Unit, Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Research, or Chair of the Board of Graduate Research, regarding the RPP membership problem considered by the candidate to require review;
- b. or an independent assessment by the relevant Graduate Research Coordinator or Program Co-ordinator, Head of School/Discipline/Unit, or Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Research indicating that an RPP membership in regard to specific HDR candidates requires review.

### **Actions Following a Review Request**

(18) The relevant Head of School/Discipline/Unit, Graduate Research Coordinator or Program Co-ordinator should address the RPP membership review with the supervisor and RPP chair and initiate further action if required. It may only be necessary to draw the report requesting review to the RPP's attention.

(19) However, the Head of School/Discipline/Unit, Graduate Research Coordinator, or Program Coordinator may consider that further action is necessary with respect to a membership review. In such cases, the College Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Research will convene a Supervision Assessment Committee (SAC).

(20) Following its investigation of the RPP membership problems, the SAC may take the following actions:

- a. dismiss a report requesting a review as unfounded and initiate support processes to resolve the matters that prompted the review in the first place;

- b. conclude that the RPP's membership can be managed readily, and provide the RPP with advice aimed to improve its practices; or
- c. require that a member, or some members, resign from the RPP and be replaced.

## **Section 5 - Definitions**

(21) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. Higher Degree by Research: Doctors of Philosophy (PhD), professional doctorates by research; and masters by research
- b. Supervision Assessment Committee: Investigates alleged poor performance of a Supervisor of HDR candidates and consists of the College Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Research, the relevant Head of School, and one registered HDR supervisor from the other College as nominated by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Research (as defined in the Supervision of Research Students Procedures).

## **Section 6 - Stakeholders**

Responsibility for implementation – Supervisors; Postgraduate Coordinators; Heads of School.

Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – Graduate Research Coordinators; Heads of School; College higher degrees or research committees; Board of Graduate Research.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
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