

Graduate Research Support Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) In accordance with Section 4.2 of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#), La Trobe University supports all graduate research candidates through the provision of equitable access to facilities and resources, appropriate study environment of research activity, creative endeavour, inquiry and scholarship, in which resources required for their project are available in a way that takes reasonable account of individual needs, abilities and expectations.

(2) This policy should be read in conjunction with those governing other avenues of support for graduate researchers, including the [Disability Policy](#), [Graduate Research Supervision Policy](#), [Graduate Research Progress Policy](#), the [Research Integrity Policy](#), the [Research Data Management Policy](#) and the Graduate Research Academic Operating Model.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to:

- a. All campuses
- b. All staff of La Trobe University
- c. All higher degrees by research
- d. All candidates enrolled in a higher degree by research

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) The University will provide a safe and robust intellectual environment to support the research activity, creative endeavour, inquiry and scholarship of all its researchers and graduate researchers and will actively foster a sense of connection and belonging within the research community.

(5) The University will admit candidates to graduate research degrees only where adequate resources are available to support the proposed research project, including training required to meet statutory and/or regulatory obligations necessary to undertake the research.

(6) All graduate research candidates will be provided with access to desk-space and information and communications technology appropriate to their research project and mode of enrolment.

(7) The University recognises the unique needs of graduate research candidates based at regional campuses and will endeavour to address these needs to the maximum extent possible.

(8) Infrastructure and Operations will support schools to manage the provision of desk space and infrastructure to graduate research candidates in accordance with the [Space Allocation and Use Policy](#). All desk space and infrastructure for graduate research candidates will meet the [La Trobe University Design Standards](#).

(9) Information Services will manage the provision of information and communications technology to graduate researchers in consultation with schools and will provide a level of support comparable to the support provided to La Trobe University staff where possible.

(10) Schools will manage the resources required to support the research project, including printing, as well as discretionary and competitive funding for graduate research candidates equitably and transparently.

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Desk Space and Infrastructure

(11) Graduate research candidates enrolled on a full-time basis will be entitled to a dedicated workstation within the vicinity of researchers in their discipline.

(12) Graduate research candidates enrolled on a part-time basis will be entitled to a shared workstation within the vicinity of academic researchers in their discipline. The number of workstations available to part-time candidates within a school will be at minimum equal to the number of full-time equivalent enrolments in graduate research degrees.

(13) Graduate research candidates enrolled on an external basis will negotiate appropriate access to desk-space in the application for external candidature, or it may be determined in a relevant partnership agreement, and will have at minimum access to hot desk space at a La Trobe University campus.

(14) Graduate research candidates who are on leave of absence or whose candidature has lapsed will normally not be provided with access to desk space; the provision of space will be at the discretion of their school.

(15) The [Space Allocation and Use Policy](#) will determine the length of time after which unused desk space may be reassigned.

(16) The [La Trobe University Design Standards](#) will determine the procedure for requesting variations to standard provisions to accommodate special needs.

(17) In keeping with the La Trobe University [Disability Policy](#), the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) and the [Disability Standards for Education 2005](#), the University is committed to providing equitable support for all graduate research candidates who have a disability. Where information about a candidate's registered disability support and/or Learning Access Plan is made available, requests for additional support or reasonable adjustments will be accommodated wherever possible, and negotiations occur in consultation with the student and a Disability Advisor if requested.

Part B - Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

(18) All graduate research candidates will be entitled to access an ICT-funded desktop computer with a standard operating environment as determined by IS.

(19) The standard operating environment for candidates based at a regional campus will include provision for remote audio-visual access (such as Zoom or Skype).

(20) The candidate's school will assess the need for any additional hardware or software requirements necessary for the research project at the point of application for admission to the degree. The candidate's school will fund the difference between the standard provisions and any alternative requirements necessary for the research project at the point of admission to the degree.

(21) The candidate's school may fund at its discretion any additional hardware or software requirements identified

after enrolment in the degree.

(22) Graduate research candidates enrolled on an external basis will determine and negotiate appropriate access to computing facilities in the application for external candidature, or it may be determined in a relevant partnership agreement.

(23) Graduate research candidates may carry out research using their own devices. IS will advise the level of support they are able to provide to candidates using their own device and the licensed software available to them.

(24) Graduate research candidates who are provided with La Trobe University computing facilities must return them to the University when they complete, withdraw or are terminated from their degree.

(25) Computing facilities allocated to graduate research candidates which are not used for a period of six months or more may be recovered by IS and reassigned following four weeks, written notice to the candidate. IS will not be responsible for the loss of any data stored on recovered computers.

(26) Graduate research candidates must comply with the [Research Data Management Policy](#) with respect to the storage of research data.

Part C - Support for Regional and External Candidates

(27) Applicants for graduate research degrees will indicate in their application for admission whether they intend to study at a regional campus. Prospective supervisors, Graduate Research Coordinators and Directors of Graduate Research will then assess whether adequate resources are available at that campus to support the proposed research project, consulting with Campus Management if they do not manage space on the regional campus directly. The University's strategic aim to build research communities at regional campuses should be taken into consideration when making decisions around resourcing and new applications.

(28) Consistent with the [Graduate Research Candidature Policy](#) candidates may apply to enroll as an external candidate. The application for external candidature will be accompanied by a signed agreement which details how the requirements for supervision, progress milestones, appropriate intellectual climate and other resources will be met. While the University will support all candidates to successfully complete their higher degree by research it may not be possible for external candidates to receive the same level of support that is provided to on-campus candidates.

(29) The facilitators of research and graduate research support programs, seminars, reading groups and similar, run both centrally and within schools and disciplines, will use video-conferencing facilities (such as Zoom and Skype) and will promote and actively encourage participation from candidates who are not based at the campus where the activity is being held.

(30) Travel support for regional candidates, and where possible, external candidates, to attend research and graduate research support programs, seminars, reading groups and similar will be made transparent to prospective participants prior to the event.

Part D - School Support

(31) Schools in which candidates are based will publish online the availability of funding for graduate researchers along with information on how to apply. This will include discretionary and competitive funding to support conference attendance, travel, fieldwork, publishing (including open access publishing) and other professional development activities.

Part E - Intellectual Climate

(32) The Graduate Research School's Research Education and Development (RED) team will support and assist candidates to develop quality research practices; develop strategies for success in research publication and funding; acquire insight into researchers' career paths and industry sectors; and to acquire excellent research communication skills.

Section 5 - Definitions

(33) For the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Higher Degree by Research: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), professional doctorates by research, and masters by research.

Status and Details

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Responsible Manager - Policy	Chris Pakes Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate and Global Research) +61 3 9479 1485
Author	Clare McCausland +61 3 9479 3892
Enquiries Contact	Graduate Research School