Graduate Research Support Policy

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Academic – Academic Board
Accountable Executive – Policy	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Responsible Manager – Policy	Senior Manager, Graduate and Global Research
Review Date	4 December 2027

Section 2 - 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 academic and non-academic support for graduate researchers, including the:

a. Desktop Equipment Policy
b. Disability Policy
c. Graduate Research Supervision Policy
d. Graduate Research Progress Policy
e. Library and Digital Learning Resources Policy
f. Research Integrity Policy
g. Research Data Management Policy
h. Space Allocation and Use Policy
i. Student Support Policy
j. Graduate Research Academic Governance Model

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to:

a. All campuses
b. All staff of La Trobe University
c. All graduate research degrees

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d. All candidates enrolled in a graduate research degree

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Support schools to manage the provision of workstations and infrastructure to graduate research candidates	Infrastructure and Operations (I&O)
Support schools to manage the provision of information and communication technology to graduate research candidates	Information Services (IS)

Section 5 - 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 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 a workstation proportionate to their actual on-campus working hours 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 a workstation and infrastructure to graduate research candidates in accordance with the Space Allocation and Use Policy. All workstations 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 in accordance with the Desktop Equipment Policy.

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

Section 6 - Procedures

(11) In keeping with the La Trobe University Disability Policy, the Universal Design and Inclusion Action Plan, 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 with 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 AccessAbility Advisor if requested.

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Part A - Workspaces

(12) Graduate research candidates will have access to shared workstations and office facilities, proportionate to their actual on-campus working hours, and suited to the fulfilment of their tasks normally within the vicinity of researchers in their discipline and subject to available resources. The allocation of workstations and office facilities within an area is at the discretion of the of the candidate's School or PVC (Regional) Campus Offices.

(13) Graduate research candidates enrolled on an external basis will negotiate appropriate access to a workstation 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 enrolled in a joint PhD program where La Trobe is the host institution will be entitled to the same provisions as other on-campus graduate research candidates for the period they attend a La Trobe Campus.

(15) Graduate Research candidates whose status is under examination will continue to be entitled to shared workstations and office facilities, proportionate to their actual on-campus working hours and suited to the fulfilment of their tasks normally within the vicinity of researchers in their discipline and subject to available resources.

(16) Graduate Research candidates should be aware of and cooperatively manage any flexible working arrangements that are in place with their supervisor and School in support of La Trobe's Ways of Working Statements, the Flexible Working Policy and the Graduate Research - Schedule A: Expectations for Graduate Research Supervisors and Candidates.

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

(18) Graduate research candidates who are on leave of absence greater than 6 months or whose candidature has lapsed will normally not be provided with access to a workstation, specialised spaces like laboratories, or other office facilities; the provision of space will be at the discretion of their school.

(19) Graduate research candidates who are provided with access to La Trobe University spaces must remove all personal items from these spaces when they complete, withdraw or are terminated from their degree, or, in the case of joint degree programs, return to their home institution. Physical research materials that are owned by the university, or are otherwise the responsibility of the university, must be surrendered to the custody of an appropriate university staff member. The university will not be responsible for the storage or return of any items left behind by a candidate.

(20) To accommodate accessible needs, Infrastructure and Operations will provide the procedure for requesting variations to standard provisions outlined in the La Trobe University Design Standards.

Part B - Information and Communication Technology

(21) All graduate research candidates will be entitled to access an IS-funded computer with a standard operating environment as determined by IS in accordance with the Desktop Equipment Policy.

(22) The standard operating environment for candidates based at a regional campus will include provision for remote audio-visual access.

(23) 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.

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(24) The candidate's school may fund at its discretion any additional hardware or software requirements identified after enrolment in the degree.

(25) 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.

(26) Graduate research candidates enrolled in a joint PhD program where La Trobe is the host institution will be entitled to an IS-funded computer with a standard operating environment as determined by IS in accordance with the Desktop Equipment Policy when they visit a La Trobe campus.

(27) 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.

(28) Graduate research candidates who are provided with La Trobe University computing facilities must return them to the University when they lapse, complete, withdraw or are terminated from their degree, or in the case of joint degree programs, return to their home institution.

(29) 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.

(30) 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

(31) 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 School 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.

(32) Consistent with the Graduate Research Candidature Policy candidates may apply to enrol 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.

(33) 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 and will promote and actively encourage participation from candidates who are not based at the campus where the activity is being held.

(34) 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

(35) 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 discretional and competitive funding to support conference attendance, travel, fieldwork, publishing (including open access publishing) and other professional development activities.

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Part E - Intellectual Climate

(36) The Graduate Research School's Research Education and Development (RED) Team is responsible for providing a centralised professional development program for graduate researchers that includes skill development in key areas and initiatives that serve to support an engaging and inclusive intellectual climate.

Section 7 - Definitions

(37) For the purpose of this Policy:

a. Graduate research degree: A degree at Level 9 or 10 of the Australian Qualifications Framework, which is comprised of at least two-thirds research and no more than one-third coursework, namely Masters by research degrees, professional doctorates, and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). May also be referred to as a higher degree by research.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(38) This Policy is made under the La Trobe University Act 2009.

(39) Associated information includes:

a. La Trobe Graduate Research School (GRS)
b. Graduate Research School (GRS) intranet

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	4th December 2024
Review Date	4th December 2027
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	4th December 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Rebecca Lubansky Senior Manager, Graduate and Global Research
Enquiries Contact	Graduate Research School

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"staff" - Staff means any person employed by the University as per the definition in the La Trobe University Act 2009 (Vic).

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