

Graduate Research Course Management Policy

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Academic - Academic Board
Accountable Executive - Policy	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate and Global Research)
Responsible Manager - Policy	Senior Manager, Graduate and Global Research
Review Date	26 August 2027

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) This Policy describes the framework for the proposal of new graduate research courses and the revision, review and closure of existing graduate research courses.

Section 3 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

- a. All graduate research courses, including any courses developed in partnership with other institutions.

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Endorses discipline-specific graduate research course concept proposal and business case; endorses minor and major revisions, and the closure, of discipline-specific graduate research courses; endorses the recommendations regarding discipline-specific graduate research courses in the 5-year review cycle.	Dean
Approves graduate research course concept proposal and business case.	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate and Global Research) (PVC(G&GR))
Approves minor revisions to graduate research courses	Board of Graduate Research (BGR)
Approves major revisions to graduate research courses	Academic Board
Approves closure of graduate research courses	Academic Board
Approves recommendations of graduate research 5-yearly course review	Academic Board

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(3) The University will provide consistent principles and procedures to guide the University community in the design, approval, delivery, review, revision and closure of graduate research courses.

(4) The Board of Graduate Research is responsible for making recommendations to the Academic Board on all matters in relation to the profile of graduate research courses across the University and the structure of individual courses. Final approval is granted by the Academic Board.

(5) The Graduate Research School will own all graduate research courses at the University and is responsible for:

- a. initiating new University-wide course proposals and revisions for graduate research courses aligned with the University's strategic directions; and
- b. coordinating the regular review of graduate research courses.

(6) Schools are responsible for:

- a. initiating and endorsing new discipline-specific course proposals and revisions that are aligned with the University's strategic directions;
- b. ensuring the academic values and integrity of the research undertaken by candidates; and
- c. managing the governance and delivery of coursework subjects that form part of the graduate research courses.

(7) The University seeks to offer graduate research courses of the highest quality and relevance. Graduate research courses will be:

- a. designed consistent with best practice in the national and international higher education sectors for higher degrees by research;
- b. developed to meet the needs of existing and future candidates and professions in accordance with the University's strategic directions designed to comply with the [National Code 2018](#) and the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#);
- c. approved based on consistency with the qualification categories defined in the [Australian Qualifications Framework](#) as well as other criteria outlined in this Policy and Procedure; and
- d. subjected to regular strategic and academic review.

(8) The University will ensure that no candidate is disadvantaged by the revision or closure of a graduate research course.

Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Overview of Approval Procedure

Development of Proposals to Establish Graduate Research Courses

(9) There are two components to the approval of all new courses:

- a. management approval
- b. academic approval

Management Approval

(10) Proposals to establish a discipline-specific graduate research course will be completed by the Director of Graduate Research within a school.

(11) Proposals to establish a university-wide graduate research course will be completed by the Graduate Research School.

(12) Where a new discipline-specific course is proposed:

- a. The relevant Dean is responsible for endorsing the Course Concept on behalf of the school in which the course will be delivered.
- b. the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate and Global Research) is responsible for reviewing the Course Concept proposal and will consult the Provost and the Marketing Strategy Unit prior to endorsing the proposal for the development of a business case.
- c. the Director of Graduate Research is responsible for completing a full course proposal, including a business case, on behalf of the school in which the course will be delivered.
- d. The Dean is responsible for the review and endorsement of the final business cases on the recommendation of the Director of Graduate Research.
- e. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate and Global Research) is responsible for the approval of the business case.

(13) Where a new university-wide course is proposed, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate and Global Research) will consult with the Provost and Marketing Strategy Unit prior to approving the business case.

Academic Approval of Courses

(14) The proposers of new courses will consult with key stakeholders identified in the required form, and any others as appropriate, before finalising the course proposal for academic endorsement and approval.

(15) The Board of Graduate Research will co-opt the Chair of the University Coursework Committee and the Director, Higher Education Standards Registration to its membership when considering any proposal to establish, revise or close a graduate research course.

(16) All proposals to establish graduate research courses must be submitted for review as follows:

- a. Dean or nominee for endorsement (discipline-specific courses only)
- b. The Board of Graduate Research for endorsement
- c. the Academic Board for approval

Minor and Major Revisions to Graduate Research Courses

(17) Proposals to revise a university-wide graduate research course may be completed by the Graduate Research School.

(18) Proposals to revise a discipline-specific graduate research course may be completed by the Graduate Research School or by the School in which the course is delivered.

(19) Where revisions to existing courses are proposed the approval pathway will depend on whether the changes are classified as a minor or major revision.

Minor Revisions

(20) A minor revision to a graduate research course may include but is not limited to the following:

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- a. any changes to the campus or mode of delivery
- b. any changes to no more than two existing core or core choice subjects within a graduate research course
- c. any changes to elective subjects
- d. any changes to the available areas of study or research

(21) All Proposals for minor revisions to a discipline-specific graduate research course must be submitted for review as follows:

- a. Dean or nominee for endorsement (discipline-specific courses only)
- b. The Board of Graduate Research for approval

Major Revisions

(22) A major revision of a graduate research course may include but is not limited to the following:

- a. the introduction of core coursework subjects
- b. changes to more than two existing core or core choice subjects
- c. a change to the name of the graduate research course
- d. any changes in admission criteria
- e. any changes in examination requirements
- f. any change which involves joint enrolment with another institution

(23) All proposals for a major revision must be submitted for review as follows:

- a. Dean or nominee for endorsement (discipline-specific courses only)
- b. the Board of Graduate Research for endorsement
- c. the Academic Board for approval

(24) All proposals to close graduate research courses must be submitted for review as follows:

- a. the Dean or nominee will endorse the recommendation (discipline-specific courses only)
- b. the Board of Graduate Research for endorsement of the closure
- c. the Academic Board will approve the closure

(25) Proposers of course closures will consult with key stakeholders identified in the required form, and any others as appropriate, before submitting the proposal for academic endorsement and approval.

Implementation and Promulgation

(26) Following the required approval, the Student Administration will take all necessary steps to establish, revise or close on the University course and student databases. The Schools will take all necessary steps to establish, close or revise any coursework subjects.

(27) The Graduate Research School will be responsible for making any required applications or changes to CRICOS registration.

(28) The Graduate Research School will arrange for the publication of new courses, or changes to existing courses, in appropriate publications and websites

Rights of Candidates When Graduate Research Courses are Changed

(29) The Graduate Research School will advise all candidates affected by any change to a graduate research course. The notice should normally be provided at least one semester prior to the semester in which the change is to take effect.

(30) Where there is a major change to a graduate research course that affects currently enrolled candidates, the Graduate Research School will give candidates the option of completing their course under either the original conditions or the changed conditions. Candidates' decisions must be:

- a. in writing;
- b. by voluntary informed consent; and
- c. registered with the Graduate Research School, which will ensure that they form the basis for assessing candidates' progress and completion.

Part B - Course Review

(31) Graduate research courses will be subject to an annual and five-yearly review.

(32) Performance data, including load, completion times, research outputs and student survey outcomes for each graduate research course will be submitted annually to the Board of Graduate Research.

(33) Every five years the Board of Graduate Research will establish a panel to conduct a review of all research courses. The review will consider all annual performance data for all courses for the previous five years, benchmarked against the sector, and the profile of all graduate research courses at the University. The comprehensive review will take into account student feedback on educational experiences and will consider the design and content of each course of study, the expected learning outcomes, the methods for assessment of those outcomes, the extent of students' achievement of learning outcomes, and will also take account of emerging developments in relevant fields of education, modes of delivery, the changing needs of students and identified risks to the quality of the course of study.

(34) The recommendation of the review panel for individual courses may be:

- a. re-accreditation
- b. re-accreditation with amendments
- c. no re-accreditation

(35) Review recommendations for discipline-specific graduate research courses must be endorsed by the Dean or nominee prior to endorsement by the Board of Graduate Research and approval by Academic Board.

(36) Following the endorsement of review recommendations, the Board of Graduate Research will work with the Schools to initiate any required proposals under Part A of this Procedure.

Section 7 - Definitions

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

- a. Business Case: completion of course concept proposal, the course calculator and finance evaluation.
- b. Discipline-specific courses: courses that are not offered university-wide.
- c. Graduate Research Course (or higher degree by research): 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 doctoral degree (research), doctoral degree (professional); and masters by research degrees.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

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

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	22nd November 2019
Review Date	26th August 2027
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	13th November 2019
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
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