



## RESEARCH DEGREE ADMINISTRATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

### Purpose

This document sets out the details relating to the administration of research higher degree study at the Australian Institute of Business (AIB) and incorporates the rights and responsibilities of research candidates and supervisors. The principles guiding the development of these details are that: (a) AIB will only admit person(s) to a research degree if they believe that person has the potential to complete the degree successfully and suitable supervisory capacity for the research topic will be available; and (b) AIB will take all necessary measures to facilitate the progress towards the successful completion of the award.

### Scope

This policy applies to all research degrees offered by AIB.

### Definitions

Unless otherwise defined in this document, all capitalised terms are defined in the [glossary](#)

**Supervisors** means the Principal and Associate Supervisors collectively.

### Details

#### 1. Criteria for Admission

- 1.1 The criteria for admission depend on the course. Specific admission criteria for each course are approved by Academic Board. Admission criteria for each course are publicly available in official AIB marketing and course information (also published on the webpage).
- 1.2 Admission criteria relate to prior academic qualifications, to work experience and to English language proficiency.

#### 2. Admission Process

- 2.1 On receipt by AIB of an indication of interest in any research higher degree course, the applicant will be asked to provide:
  - (a) A completed Application Form
  - (b) Official certified transcripts of academic records, including full details of all courses undertaken and grades obtained. English translations must be supplied for documents in languages other than English
  - (c) Proof of English proficiency, where applicable
  - (d) Evidence of work experience, where applicable
  - (e) An up to date Curriculum Vitae
  - (f) An outline of the proposed research topic.

- 2.2 The following will be taken into consideration when assessing applications for admission to candidature:
- (a) whether the applicant meets the entry criteria;
  - (b) whether the proposed research topic is acceptable to AIB and can be matched to AIB's research resource capabilities;
  - (c) whether the research site is supportive of the research; and
  - (d) whether appropriate Research Supervisors are available.

### **3. Appointment of Research Supervisors**

- 3.1 On starting the degree, each candidate will be assigned a Principal Supervisor and at least one Co-Supervisor or Associate Supervisor. The candidate must be consulted and must agree to their appointment before the Supervisors are appointed.
- 3.2 The Supervisors for doctoral candidates and the Principal Supervisors for Masters candidates must have doctoral degree qualifications. For Masters candidates, Associate Supervisors with Masters degrees may be included on the Research Supervisory Team. All Supervisors must have relevant research experience in the candidate's field of research.
- 3.3 The Principal Supervisors of all candidates must have supervised to completion (as an associate supervisor) at least one candidate at the level being supervised and must be active in research and publishing or otherwise making original contributions to a relevant field or discipline.
- 3.4 Although the Supervisors have joint responsibility to supervise the candidate for the duration of candidature, the Principal Supervisor has the main responsibility of coordinating communication between the Supervisors and the candidate, and for resolving any issues.
- 3.5 Regular contact should be maintained between candidates and their Supervisors by appropriate means including face-to-face meetings, telephone, mail, email and online learning technologies, for academic supervision, guidance, support and feedback. Candidates should contact their Supervisors regularly to discuss progress, identify any issues early and seek appropriate guidance.
- 3.6 In the case of problems between candidate and Principal Supervisor:
- (a) Before an issue becomes a formal grievance:
    - (i) The Research Higher Degrees Manager will facilitate discussion between candidate and Principal Supervisor to help resolve any issues.
    - (ii) If there is no resolution to the problem, then assistance from the Research Director can be sought to resolve the issues.
  - (b) If there is still no resolution to the problem after the following the process outlined above, complainants may submit a formal grievance. Candidate is to refer to the 'Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy and Procedure'. An alternative supervisor should be appointed to candidate in the interim.
- 3.7 Supervisors should refer to the AIB Supervisor Guidelines for details of their roles and responsibilities.

#### **4. Admission and Enrolment**

- 4.1 Where an applicant has been accepted as a candidate for a research higher degree, a letter of offer will be sent to the applicant with relevant information including the degree for which the applicant is a candidate, fees payable, and how the offer can be accepted.
- 4.2 On the applicant's acceptance of the offer, the candidate will be sent a letter of acceptance with an information pack which includes details of the Research Higher Degrees policies and procedures.
- 4.3 A candidate must enrol by the date specified in the letter of acceptance of candidature. If the candidate has not enrolled by the date specified, the offer will lapse and the candidate will have to go through the application process again if s/he wishes to enrol subsequently.
- 4.4 Where an applicant applies for entry into a PhD or DBA, they will be registered provisionally as a PhD/DBA candidate as appropriate, pending satisfactory progress in terms of the conditions of their candidacy.

#### **5. Required Structured Activities**

- 5.1 A candidate commencing a research higher degree must satisfactorily complete an Orientation to Research module during the first month of candidature. The module addresses issues such as code of conduct, ethics, occupational health and safety, intellectual property and any additional issues necessary for the type of research undertaken (including rights and responsibilities as research candidates and the role of supervisors).
- 5.2 Where coursework subjects have to be completed as part of the course, these have to be successfully completed before the candidate can commence on the research component of the course. All the assessments will be marked by AIB academic staff (including adjunct staff) and the terms of the Assessment Policy and Procedures will apply.
- 5.3 Under certain circumstances, the requirement for successful completion of the required course of structured activities, or parts of the course, may be waived according to the AIB Credit Transfer Policy and/or Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

#### **6. Research Proposal**

- 6.1 Candidates must prepare a research proposal as part of their Research Proposal Subject with the guidance of their Principal Supervisors.
- 6.2 The proposal should be developed according to the specifications in the Research Proposal subject). It should define the area to which the research project will relate, and should contain a clear description of the work that the candidate intends to undertake, the research strategies intended to be used. A summary of the relevant literature, research questions, the research schedule and the research participants and/or organisation that will be the focus of the research project.

- 6.3 In the proposal, the candidate should note whether there are intellectual property implications of the proposed research as regards the organisation in which the research will take place, and whether these implications have been appropriately dealt with. The candidate should produce a letter of consent from the organisation in which the research will take place.
- 6.4 The proposal should also specify the ethical issues arising from the research and how the candidate intends to address them.
- 6.5 The proposal has to be approved by the Principal Supervisor prior to submission to AIB for approval by the Research Assessment Panel. A candidate may submit a research proposal for assessment against the advice of the Supervisor only after adequate advice to resolve the matter is provided in a three way discussion between the candidate, supervisor and RHD manager (or the Academic Director)

## **7. Research Assessment Panel**

- 7.1 The research proposal must be submitted to a specially-convened Research Assessment Panel for approval. Candidates are also required to submit an oral presentation on their proposal to the Research Assessment Panel (in person or by video). This Panel is comprised of at least three persons, one of whom is the Principal Supervisor, and the others being specialists in areas which would be of benefit to the candidate.
- 7.2 If the Panel is of the view that the intellectual property implications have not been appropriately dealt with, the candidate will be advised to obtain independent legal advice to resolve the matter.
- 7.3 The Panel may require the candidate to re-present their research proposal if it finds that the scope of the project is inappropriate to the course in question, or if it determines that the research proposal, as drafted, contains serious methodological or ethical issues that need resolving.
- 7.4 When the research proposal has been approved by the Panel, an application will be made by the candidate for consideration by AIB's Ethics Committee.

## **8. Ethics Approval**

- 8.1 It is the Principal Supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the candidate's proposal has appropriate ethics approval for their research. If a candidate's research proposal does not receive ethics approval, the candidate has the option of resubmitting the research proposal for ethics approval after the deficiencies have been rectified or of choosing another research approach or topic, failing which, their candidature will be terminated.
- 8.2 Candidates must apply for Ethics Approval using the required Ethics Approval Application Form and guidelines.
- 8.3 Candidates must ensure that their proposed research project complies with the following guidelines, which are a summary of the more detailed applicable research ethics standards as expressed in the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct of Human Research 2007 (Updated March 2014), in order to gain the approval of the Ethics Committee (the research

may gain approval at either 'low risk' or beyond 'low risk' levels, and each level of risk will be assessed and approved by a distinct AIB Research Ethics Committee constituted to deal with Level 1 (low risk) or Level 2 (greater than low risk) research ethics applications):

- (a) The research must conform to scientific and community standards.
- (b) In the conduct of the research, the candidate must at all times respect the rights, wishes, beliefs, personality, freedom and consent of the individual research participants.
- (c) Before research is undertaken, the candidate must show that he or she understands that the consent of the research participants should be obtained. To this end, the candidate is responsible for providing the research participants with sufficient information, at an appropriate level of comprehension, about the purposes, methods, demands, risks, time involved and inconveniences of the study. Unless there are good reasons to the contrary, consent to participate in the study should be obtained in writing. If consent is not obtained in writing, the candidate should record the conditions under which consent is given.
- (d) The research participants must be free to withdraw consent to further participation at any time. They are free to decline to provide information on any issue.
- (e) Special care must be taken in relation to consent and to safeguarding individual rights where the research involves those in dependant relationships or comparable situations.
- (f) Procedures for data collection, analysis and storage shall ensure that the information contributed by individual research participants remains confidential and that no participants can be individually identified unless written authorisation by them have been obtained.
- (g) Where the research procedures involve or include the administration of questionnaires or the conducting of interviews, consent requirements may be considered satisfied by the inclusion of a covering letter or statement identifying the candidate administering the questionnaire or interview and their Principal Supervisor, indicating the nature and general purposes of the project, the participant's right to withdraw consent to further participation at any time and to decline to answer any specific questions, and the procedures to maintain confidentiality of data.
- (h) In the case of recorded interviews and group interactions, the candidate must provide the research participants with an indication of the purposes for which the recording may be used and conditions proposed for safeguarding confidentiality and governing its subsequent retention.
- (i) Recording of interviews and/or group interactions may take place only with the written consent of the research participants.

8.4 Upon approval by the Ethics Committee of the proposed research project, the candidate may commence the fieldwork under the guidance of the Principal Supervisor.

## 9. Status, Duration and Extension of Candidature

- 9.1 For the PhD and DBA degrees the maximum duration of candidature will normally be three years for a full-time candidate and six years for a part-time candidate.
- 9.2 The maximum duration of the candidature for the MMgt, MMgt (WAL) and MMgt (Research) degrees will normally be one and a half years for a full-time candidate and three years for a part-time candidate.
- 9.3 Upon the recommendation of the Principal Supervisor, the Research Higher Degrees Manager may approve extensions to candidature provided the candidature does not exceed seven years in the case of PhD and DBA candidates or four years in the case of MMgt candidates.
- 9.4 Applications for extensions beyond the limits set in previous section must be submitted to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the Research and Higher Degrees Committee may, in its sole discretion, grant an extension of time for such period as it deems appropriate. The then current annual fees will be charged for the extended candidature.

## 10. Variations to Conditions of Candidature

Where the candidate wishes to vary the following conditions of candidature, a written application must be made to the Research Higher Degrees Manager, and must be accompanied by a recommendation from the Principal Supervisor. After consultation with the candidate's Principal Supervisor, the Research Higher Degrees Manager will notify the candidate of the outcome of an application.

- (a) Leave of absence of candidature—Candidates may apply for periods of intermission from their candidature for up to a total of twelve months. They may apply for additional periods of Leave of Absence if there are exceptional circumstances
- (b) Change of status between full-time and part-time
- (c) Change of status from internal to external
- (d) Significant amendment to research topic

## 11. Upgrade or Transfer between Degrees

- 11.1 The following procedures apply where candidates who wish to upgrade their MMgt candidature to a DBA or a PhD, or transfer between a DBA and a PhD. The Research Higher Degrees Manager will notify the applicant of the outcome of an application.
- (a) Candidates must apply for an upgrade or transfer when well advanced in the candidature for their current degree, and *before* they have submitted that degree's thesis/dissertation for examination
  - (b) Candidates must submit
    - (i) their currently completed work (i.e. chapters or partially completed chapters),
    - (ii) a 15-20 page research proposal for the further degree (or, if the current dissertation/thesis is almost complete, a 5-10 page report),

- (iii) a one-page letter of support from the Principal Supervisor.
- (c) When preparing the research proposal (or the report) for the further degree, candidates should be mindful of the differences between Masters and doctoral level theses and the differences between DBA and PhD. In the research proposal (or report) candidates should clearly demonstrate that the research will meet the requirements of the further degree.

If the current dissertation/thesis is almost complete, the required five to ten-page report about that thesis/dissertation should cover:

- (i) the research that has already been done and the contributions to the literature that it provides;
  - (ii) what further research and writing will be done for the further degree's thesis/dissertation;
  - (iii) a schedule for that further research and writing; and
  - (iv) the contributions to the literature and/or practice that the further thesis/dissertation will provide.
- (d) The request for upgrade from MMgt to doctoral degree will be assessed by one internal and one external assessor and a request for a transfer from DBA to PhD will be assessed by one internal assessor. The assessors must meet the same standards as examiners for the degree.
- (e) When considering an application for upgrade, the assessors will require assurance that:
- (i) the nature of the research is substantial enough to warrant an upgrade;
  - (ii) the thesis will make a contribution to knowledge and/or practice appropriate to the further degree; and
  - (iii) the candidate has demonstrated a capacity to undertake work at the level of the further degree.
- (f) The assessors will advise on whether they agree or do not agree to the upgrade, and also make suggestions for improvements to the dissertation or thesis. If there is disagreement between the two assessors, the Chair of the Research and Higher Degrees Committee or his or her nominee, will make the final decision.

11.2 Temporary or Permanent Change of Supervisor—where a candidate's Principal Supervisor is absent from AIB for more than three months, the Research Higher Degrees Manager will appoint a temporary replacement Supervisor.

11.3 The Research Higher Degrees Manager will, after consultation with the candidate, appoint a permanent replacement Principal Supervisor where:

- (a) the Supervisor is no longer with AIB; or
- (b) there is a change in the candidate's research project such that a different Principal Supervisor would be more appropriate; or
- (c) irreconcilable differences between the candidate and the Supervisor require a change in supervision arrangements.

## 12. Withdrawal from Candidature

- 12.1 If a candidate wishes to withdraw from their studies, they are encouraged to discuss this with their Supervisors and the Research Higher Degrees Manager, in order to try to resolve any problems the candidate may have in the study environment.
- 12.2 If the candidate decides to withdraw, they must notify the Research Higher Degrees Manager of the withdrawal in writing, giving the reasons for and the effective date of the withdrawal.
- 12.3 The Research Higher Degrees Manager will acknowledge the notification, confirm the date on which the withdrawal is effective and take any action necessary to suspend any scholarship.
- 12.4 A candidate who has withdrawn and who subsequently wishes to re-enrol has to apply to AIB for re-admission. AIB will determine whether the candidate will be re-admitted and whether the period of candidature will be adjusted to take account of the previous candidature.

## 13. Provisional candidature of DBA and PhD candidates

- 13.1 In respect of the DBA and PhD only, at the end of the first year of full-time study or second year of part-time study, the Research and Higher Degrees Committee shall consider the reports or statements furnished by the candidate and the reports of the Research Supervisors regarding the candidate and shall determine on one of the following outcomes:
  - (i) to confirm the candidature; or
  - (ii) to extend provisional candidature to a specified date; or
  - (iii) to terminate the candidature.

### **(a) Research Proposal Completion and Obtaining Human Research Ethics Committee Approval**

For candidature to be confirmed, the candidate should demonstrate a capacity to undertake research at a doctoral level, by submitting a Research Proposal developed according to the specifications in the Research Proposal subject (705RDIS), outlining the conceptual framework and research design of the candidate's thesis. Then the candidate needs to obtain the approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee to undertake this research.

### **(b) Extension of Provisional Candidature**

Provisional candidature may be extended for a specified period to give the candidate a further opportunity to meet the conditions for confirmation of candidature.

### **(c) Termination of Candidature**

Candidature will be terminated if the candidate has failed to comply with the conditions of candidature after having been advised in writing that failure to comply within the required time will result in termination of candidature.

- 13.2 The Supervisors are expected to monitor the performance of the candidate relative to the standard for the degree, and to ensure that the candidate is made aware if the

candidate's progress is unsatisfactory or if the work is below the standard generally expected.

- 13.3 Where the Principal Supervisor perceives that it may become necessary to recommend that a candidature be terminated because of unsatisfactory progress, the Supervisor must give the candidate a preliminary warning in writing to that effect, stating the reasons why the candidate's progress is considered to be unsatisfactory. The Supervisor should inform the candidate's other Supervisor(s) of the preliminary warning and try to work with the candidate to improve the candidates' progress.

## **14. Review of Progress**

- 14.1 A regular review of higher degree candidates is undertaken to formally monitor progress where both the candidate and Principal Supervisor complete a Quarterly Progress Report and submit it to the Research Higher Degrees Manager.
- 14.2 The quarterly review requires the candidate and the Principal Supervisor to separately report on the progress made by the candidate over the last period and it is used by AIB to assess whether the candidature is progressing satisfactorily, and whether the candidature should continue.
- 14.3 Candidates are required to give an oral presentation (in person or by video) of their Research-in-Progress at least once a year for the duration of their candidature.
- 14.4 The final review each year includes a requirement for the candidate to independently discuss their progress with the Research Higher Degrees Manager and identify any issues impacting on their progress.
- 14.5 Upon receipt of the Quarterly Progress Report, or at any other time, the Research Higher Degrees Manager will review the progress of a candidate and consider the recommendations from the Supervisors. The Research Higher Degrees Manager will make a recommendation to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee who will decide on a course of action as follows:
  - (a) If the progress is satisfactory, the candidate be allowed to continue as a candidate for the degree; or
  - (b) If the progress is unsatisfactory, the candidate be allowed to continue as a candidate subject to such conditions as the Research Higher Degrees Manager may impose; or
  - (c) If the progress is unsatisfactory and the candidate is a PhD or DBA candidate, the candidate be given a preliminary warning in writing by the supervisor and if the progress continues to unsatisfactory, the candidate be asked to show cause why their candidature should not be transferred to a Master's degree candidature or be terminated; or
  - (d) If the progress is unsatisfactory and the candidate is a Master's candidate, the candidate be asked to show cause why their candidature should not be terminated.
- 14.6 Where a 'show cause' decision has been made, the following procedures will apply:
  - (a) The Research Higher Degrees Manager will write to the candidate:
    - (i) explaining why the candidate's progress has been found to be unsatisfactory;

- (ii) asking the candidate to show cause why the candidature should not be terminated or transferred;
  - (iii) describing the procedures for the termination of candidature; and
  - (iv) notifying the candidate that if a response is not received within the specified period the candidature will be terminated or transferred.
- (b) If the candidate requests an interview with the Research Higher Degrees Manager in order to discuss his or her response to the letter, the interview should be granted.
- (c) The candidate will be invited to attend a meeting with the Research Higher Degrees Manager at which time their case is to be considered or, in the case of a candidate who is not a resident of South Australia, to send a representative or to participate by means of video conference. If attending in person, the candidate may be accompanied by a student or staff member or a support person to present the facts of the present situation, but the candidate will not be permitted to have legal representation at the meeting.
- (d) The candidate and/or representative must be present throughout discussion of the case and must be allowed to participate in the discussion. The candidate and/or representative must be absent when the case is decided.
- (e) If a candidate required to show cause fails to respond to the request, the Research Higher Degrees Manager will recommend to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee that the candidature be terminated.
- 14.7 After the formal meeting between the Research Higher Degrees Manager and the candidate, the Research Higher Degrees Manager will recommend one of the following actions to the Research and Higher Degrees Committee:
- (a) take no further action; or
  - (b) permit the candidate to continue under specified conditions; or
  - (c) transfer candidate from DBA or PhD to MMgt candidature; or
  - (d) terminate the candidate's enrolment.
- 14.8 The Research Higher Degrees Manager must immediately inform the candidate of the decision, the reasons for the decision and the procedures for appeal.
- 14.9 The appeal procedures are set out in the Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy.

## **15. Appointment of Examiners**

- 15.1 When the Principal Supervisor is satisfied that the thesis will be ready for examination within the next three months, the candidate and their Principal Supervisor shall:
- (a) complete and sign an 'Intention to Lodge' form including a summary of the thesis; and
  - (b) shortlist the names of potential external examiners in consultation with the candidate.
- 15.2 The criteria for the appointment of examiners depends on the degree:

- (a) PhD—two external examiners who have research PhD’s or equivalent doctoral degrees, have international standing in the candidate’s field of research, and who have empathy with the theoretical framework used by the candidate. The Supervisors will not act as examiners.
  - (b) DBA or MMgt (Research)—two external examiners who have research PhD’s or professional doctorates or equivalent doctoral degrees, have international standing in the candidate’s field of research, and who have empathy with the theoretical framework used by the candidate. The Supervisors will not act as examiners.
  - (c) MMgt or MMgt (WAL)—two examiners who have research PhD or professional doctorate or equivalent doctoral degrees, one of whom is external to AIB. The Supervisor(s) will not act as an examiner.
  - (d) All examiners must have previously supervised RHD students and, preferably, have previous examination experience.
- 15.3 The 'Intention to Lodge' form will include the names of at least three possible examiners, including reserve examiners (in the event that a preferred nominee is unable to act as examiner), and provide a justification and CV for each possible examiner. The information provided on each potential examiner should include his or her academic qualifications (and/or professional qualifications if appropriate), institutional affiliation and rank, and details of any relevant published work in the field of the thesis. The Principal Supervisor should ensure that, *inter alia*, the potential examiners are free from bias as regards the candidate, the Principal Supervisor or the research method adopted, and that they are still active in the field of research pertaining to the thesis.
- 15.4 The Research Higher Degrees Manager presents the 'Intention to Lodge' form with the names of the proposed examiners, CVs and justification to the Research & Higher Degrees Committee of the proposed examiners for approval.
- 15.5 Provided approval of the proposed examiners is received from all members of the Research & Higher Degrees Committee, the Research Higher Degrees Manager will officially write to the examiners to advise the name of the candidate, the title of the thesis/dissertation and inviting them to act as examiners. Should there be any disagreement about one or more of the proposed examiners, this process of the Principal Supervisor nominating proposed examiners will be repeated until such approval is obtained.
- 15.6 If an examiner is unable to accept an invitation or fails to respond to an invitation in six weeks including being sent reminder notifications, an invitation will be sent to a person approved as a reserve examiner.
- 15.7 Submission without Principal Supervisor support:
- (a) Where, the Principal Supervisor may not support submission of the thesis. In this case:
    - (i) The Principal Supervisor must inform the candidate in writing of their concerns.
    - (ii) The Research Higher Degrees Manager must then facilitate a three-way discussion involving the candidate, the supervisor and the Research Higher Degrees Manager to reach mutual agreement.

- (b) If the student still wishes to submit without the support of the supervisor, then:
  - (i) The Principal Supervisor must provide a written statement outlining why the thesis is not supported.
  - (ii) The candidate must provide a written statement outlining the reasons for submitting without supervisor support.
- (c) The Research Higher Degrees Manager will then organize the thesis to be reviewed by an independent member of AIB's academic staff (including adjunct staff).
- (d) On receipt of this review, the Research Higher Degrees Manager is to discuss this with the candidate and provide to the candidate (in writing) the statement provided by the Principal Supervisor and the review provided by the independent staff member.
- (e) If the candidate still wishes to proceed without Principal Supervisor support, the candidate can submit the thesis for examination.
- (f) The submission and examination process will follow standard procedures.
- (g) Examiners must not be informed that the thesis has been submitted without the support of the Principal Supervisor.

## **16. Submission of thesis**

- 16.1 The candidate must lodge an electronic copy of the final thesis with the Research Higher Degrees Manager. The candidate must sign a declaration that the thesis does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text or footnotes.
- 16.2 On receipt of the thesis, the Research Higher Degrees Manager will forward one copy of the thesis to each examiner together with the following:
  - (a) Examiner's Report and Guidelines for Examination;
  - (b) information on the examination processes including matters in relation to the disclosure of the examiner's report to the candidate;
  - (c) timelines for the completion of the assessment process (turnaround period on receipt of the thesis is normally eight weeks); and
  - (d) information in relation to payment for examination.
- 16.3 The identity of examiners will not be revealed to candidates until the examination process has been completed and then not if an examiner has expressed a desire to remain anonymous.

## **17. Examination process**

- 17.1 From the time of the submission of the thesis, a candidate must not initiate contact with their examiners on any matter concerning the thesis.
- 17.2 From the time of the appointment of examiners, there must not be any direct contact between an examiner and a Supervisor in relation to the thesis. If an examiner has a

query, it must be directed to the Research Higher Degrees Manager who will refer it to the candidate or the Supervisors.

17.3 Consultation between examiners will not be permitted prior to submission of the initial report.

17.4 The examination criteria for each course will reflect the learning outcomes of the course.

17.5 The examination process of the thesis/project depends on the degree:

(a) PhD, DBA and MMgt (Research)

(i) The examiners will be asked to recommend one of the following results:

- (A) that the thesis be *accepted* without revision; or
- (B) that the thesis be *accepted subject to minor amendments as specified*, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor (where minor amendments refer to corrections involving typographical or other spelling errors, errors in grammar and/or syntax, etc. and not require additional data collection or analysis); or
- (C) that the candidate be *required to undertake more substantial revisions to the thesis*, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor, and Chair of Research and Higher Degrees Committee or his or her nominee; or
- (D) that the candidate be required to undertake *substantial revisions* to the thesis and that the thesis be *re-submitted for examination*; or
- (E) that the thesis be *rejected*, but in the case of a candidate who has submitted a thesis for the degree of PhD or DBA, an appropriate Masters degree should be awarded; or
- (F) that the thesis be *rejected* and the candidate not be permitted to re-submit it for examination.

(ii) In the case of a disagreement between examiners:

- (A) In the event that examiners are not unanimous in making any one of the recommendations above, and their recommendations based on section 17.4 are at least two levels apart, the Supervisor and the candidate are provided with copies of the examiners' reports and are invited to comment. In this process the examiners' identities are not revealed to the candidate.
- (B) The Research and Higher Degrees Committee will then consider all the documentation presented and recommend an examination outcome or recommend that a third examiner be appointed.
- (C) Where a third examiner is appointed, the examiner will independently examine the thesis and provide a recommended result. The Research and Higher Degrees Committee will consider all three examiners' reports, together with the candidate and Supervisor response to the initial examiners and recommend an examination outcome.

(b) MMgt and MMgt (WAL)

(i) The examiner will be asked to recommend one of the following results:

- (A) that the project/thesis be accepted without revision; or
- (B) that the project/thesis *be accepted subject to minor amendments as specified*, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor (where minor amendments refer to corrections involving typographical or other spelling errors, errors in grammar and/or syntax, etc. and not require additional data collection or analysis); or
- (C) that the candidate *be required to undertake more substantial revisions to the project/thesis*, to be done to the satisfaction of the Principal Supervisor, and Chair of the Research and Higher Degrees Committee or his or her nominee; or
- (D) that the candidate be required to undertake *substantial revisions* to the project/thesis and that the project/thesis be *re-submitted for examination*; or
- (E) that the project/thesis be *rejected* and the candidate not be permitted to re-submit it for examination.

17.6 If revisions are required, the candidate will be asked to undertake the revisions in the following timeframes:

- (a) Minor revisions – 2 months
- (b) Major revisions – 4 months
- (c) Resubmit for examination – 6 months

17.7 In the event that an allegation of academic dishonesty has been made during the examination process, the Research and Higher Degrees Committee should refer the candidate to the Academic Integrity Policy and the Academic and Non-Academic Grievance Handling Policy of AIB.

## 18. Outcome of the Examination

When the examination result has been determined, the following procedures will apply:

- (a) the Research Higher Degrees Manager will advise the Research and Higher Degrees Committee to recommend approval of the issue of the award, and then forward the minutes to the Academic Board for formal approval of the issue of the award.
- (b) The Academic Board will then certify that the candidate has qualified for the award of the degree.

## 19. Conferral of the Award

When the award is certified by the Academic Board, the Research Higher Degrees Manager will provide a letter to the candidate advising them they may now start using their post nominal, notify the candidate of the degree conferral procedures, and provide the candidate with a copy of the examiners' reports.

## 20. Lodging of Theses

The Research Division will arrange copies of the final form thesis/dissertation to be lodged in the Library as a bound hard copy and an electronic copy and for copies to be sent to the Research Supervisors.

**Related Forms:**

Application Form for Award  
Intention to Lodge Thesis  
Nomination of Examiners  
Variation to Candidature

**Related Policies:**

Research and Research Degrees Policy  
Research and Publications Policy  
Admissions Policy  
Academic Integrity Policy  
Terms of Reference of Academic Board and Associated Committees of Australian Institute of Business

**Responsibility:**

Academic Director

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