

Faculty of Business & Law **Faculty RHD Confirmation Guidelines**

Consistent with the University guidelines the Faculty requires all RHD candidates to undertake confirmation within 12 months of commencement. During this process, candidates are required to report on their progress, and outline plans for completing their theses.

The **purpose of the confirmation process** is to support candidates in the early stages of their candidature. It is designed to be a strategic tool that will benefit candidates.

Requirements of Candidates

The requirements of the confirmation process are to:

1. Submit a formal Confirmation Cover Sheet and Research Proposal to the Confirmation Committee at least four days prior to the scheduled presentation. This document should be less than 5000 words in total and *must* cover each of the following areas:
 - Turnitin ID for the proposal
 - Background to the project
 - Aims and objectives
 - Critical review of recent work in the field (maximum of 3000 words)
 - An overview of the research design
 - An updated plan of research
 - An updated timetable for completion of the thesis
 - A comprehensive statement of the resources required to complete the project within the funded period.
2. Deliver an Oral Presentation to the Confirmation Committee, and other staff and RHD students
3. Provide a Verbal Defense of the research proposal before the Confirmation Committee.
4. Clarify any Procedural Concerns with ethics and safety approvals, intellectual property, and data retention and management.

Note: The precise requirements of each section of the Research Proposal will depend on the discipline. Candidates are to seek guidance from their supervisors.

Composition of the Committee

The Confirmation Committee shall consist of:

- Chair (Deputy Head of School or HoS nominee, not the supervisor)
- One senior academic (Level D or E) from within the Discipline (not the supervisor)
- One senior academic (Level D or E) from outside the Discipline.

Where the only available non-supervisors within a Discipline are less senior than D or E, the Head of Discipline shall provide the Chair with a list of names of suitably qualified research active staff. It will be the responsibility of the Chair to make the final decision as to who should be invited to be part of the committee.

Conduct of the Confirmation Process

The aim of the process is to assist the Faculty to determine the progress of the RHD candidate in as supportive and equitable a manner as possible.

1. The rulings and decisions of the Committee in conducting the proceedings shall be final.
2. Confirmation presentations are open to all members of the Faculty (including current RHD students).
3. Supervisors of the candidate should only speak at the invitation of the Chair, and then only to clarify points of concern for the confirmation committee.
4. The confirmation committee
 - Will evaluate the written proposal and the oral presentation and ask questions of the candidate in relation to their research.
 - May seek to address the candidate or supervisors, together or separately, following the presentation.
 - Will review its findings and determine an outcome.
 - Will record its evaluations, outcome and feedback on the Confirmation Committee Evaluation Form and forward all of the documentation to the Head of School/Nominee for ratification.
5. The Chair of the Confirmation Committee will convey the outcome and feedback to the candidate as soon as possible after the outcome has been determined. It is expected that the outcome will be conveyed to the candidate within two working days of the confirmation seminar.
6. The FBL Director Postgraduate Students is responsible for ensuring that the procedures as outlined above are followed.

Outcomes of the Confirmation Process

There are three major categories of outcomes:

1. Confirmed
2. 2nd Attempt required - The candidate is not confirmed and is required to undertake confirmation again within 3 months. The School will coordinate the second attempt in the same manner as the first.
3. Not Confirmed - A recommendation is made to the Dean of Graduate Studies to advise the candidate to show cause to the Research Training Sub-Committee as to why their candidature should be permitted to continue.

Further Information

The full University guidelines, which include the required forms and detailed information on roles & expectations, transfers, and outcome procedures, are available from the Office of Graduate Studies website

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/students/research-higher-degree/current-students/confirmation-year.html>