

Note: A bound copy of this Induction Booklet can be provided on request to the School of Education or email soe-research@newcastle.edu.au

School of Education Research Higher Degree Student Induction Package

Dear RHD candidate,

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the School of Education as you begin your masters or doctoral study.

This package has been prepared in order to assist you in understanding the opportunities, important policies and responsibilities that relate to your Research Higher Degree candidature in the School of Education.

Being aware of the materials in this Induction Package will help you in the successful completion of your Research Higher Degree. Please read this introduction carefully and the relevant related documents. Note that all numbered and italicised documents referred to in this introduction appear in your package in the order they are mentioned.

A full copy of the induction package is also available on the School of Education website.

The package primarily addresses opportunities and procedures that are specific to the School of Education. The materials are organised as follows: overarching policies and requirements/milestones; ethics requirements and procedures; funding opportunities to support your project and/or conference attendance. You should also refer to the Office of Graduate Studies website <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/unit/office-of-graduate-studies/> and documents which govern your Research Higher Degree work.

I trust your Research Higher Degree experience will be stimulating and productive and wish you every success with your studies.

Kind regards,



Professor Max Smith

Deputy Head of School
Research Development
February 2012

Email: soe-research@newcastle.edu.au

SECTION 1 Key Policies and Processes Governing Candidature

Please read this section very carefully. Your candidature can be at risk if you fail to address these requirements.

1.1 The University of Newcastle's *Code of Practice for Research Higher Degree Candidature*

The principal purpose of the code of practice is to ensure that supervisors, their respective academic units and Faculties, and the candidates, are aware and clear about their minimum responsibilities, the responsibilities of each other and of the University.

1.2 Contact with Supervisors

Frequent and regular contact with your supervisor/s is a critical part of your research higher degree experience. Specific arrangements will vary according to the nature of your work, your preferred working style, the point in your candidature, and supervisor availability. Two general points of note are that:

1. you should take the initiative in setting up meetings in accordance with the work you are doing; and
2. time with your supervisor/s is usually most productive if you have provided something in writing, in sufficient time for your supervisor/s to read it before the meeting.

1.3 Confirmation Year Review

All candidates are required to complete the Confirmation process within twelve months of commencement of candidature on a full-time basis (or part-time equivalent). The requirements are:

- a research proposal containing at least:
 - a detailed research plan
 - a timetable for completion of the thesis
 - a comprehensive statement of the resources required to complete the project within the funded period.
- a presentation to a School-based Confirmation Committee; and
- a verbal defence of the research proposal before the Confirmation Committee.

Candidates who do not satisfy the above requirements will be required to show cause as to why they should be permitted to continue their studies.

Refer to *Candidate Guide to Presenting a Project Proposal to the School of Education Confirmation Committee* at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/research/rhd.html>. This guide will assist in your preparation for presenting your research proposal to the School Committee. It addresses the written document you will need to produce, requirements of the formal presentation, Committee members, evaluation criteria and feedback processes. See also the Office of Graduate Studies *Confirmation Year Review* form that will be used in this process.

1.4 Progress Reports

The purpose of the Mid Year and Annual Progress Reports is to assist candidates in reviewing progress, their supervision and the resources available to them. Annual Progress Reports must be completed by all candidates and their supervisors, independently and jointly, and approved by the Head of School (or nominee). Mid Year Progress Reports may also be required.

Refer to *Research Higher Degree Candidate Annual Progress Report* at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/research/rhd.html> as an indication of the information used to judge progress. These forms will be completed electronically.

1.5 School of Education Postgraduate Research Conference - SSTAR

University guidelines state that all RHD candidates are required to present a research paper at a Faculty or School-based seminar annually. Opportunities to do this in the School of Education are through the regular *SSTAR (Students and Staff Talking About Research)* seminar sessions held on Tuesdays, and bi-annual *SSTAR Conferences* held each Semester. *All candidates in the School of Education are required to make use of these conferences to fulfil the annual requirement.*

Further information regarding SSTAR Sessions and bi-annual Postgraduate Conferences are available on the School Events Page <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/events/>

1.6 Coursework Requirements

Research higher degree students may be required to undertake some coursework within the School of Education. The requirements are often for:

EDUC 6048 Introduction to Educational Research

and

EDUC 6049 Educational Research Methodology: Qualitative

and/or

EDUC 6050 Educational Research Methodology: Quantitative.

Where a candidate has a demonstrable record of recent successful study in research methods, or substantial research experience, or where the supervisor(s) argues that study in research methods is counterproductive to the student's research project, such requirements may not be applied.

These coursework components are designed to develop candidates' broad understanding of research design and research methods in order to:

- improve the methodological quality of their own theses;
- improve their capacity for future research and employment; and
- meet the University's commitment to research training

RHD candidates will benefit from studying research design and research methods because their own studies will require (at least aspects of) the knowledge they develop in these courses.

Completing these courses can directly aid students in the development of their own research proposals, literature reviews, and guide their methodological decisions while ensuring methodological rigour.

1.7 Milestones

According to the regulations set out by Office of Graduate Studies the maximum period of enrolment for a PhD candidate is 4 years full-time or 8 years part-time and for a Masters candidate 2 years full-time or 4 years part-time. The following benchmarks are designed to provide students with a sense of structure and progression in their research program:

(Please note that these milestones are based on full-time enrolment. Equivalent time periods for milestones if enrolled part-time are implied.)

Milestones	
Timing	Tasks
During first semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a preliminary literature review
By end of first semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a draft research proposal with a description of the project and its significance, a critical review of recent research in the area of the project, an updated literature review, and preliminary ideas on methodology • Complete any coursework required
By the end of the second semester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a full research proposal in accordance with the Confirmation process and complete Confirmation Year Review • Students whose projects require ethics clearance should submit an application for that process to the HREC at, or soon after, their Confirmation of Candidature. • Complete any coursework required • Present your proposal as part of the School of Education Postgraduate Research Conference • Complete Annual Progress Report
During every subsequent semester of enrolment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit complete drafts of chapters with references
During every subsequent year of enrolment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present an aspect of your project as part of the School of Education Postgraduate Research Conference (SSTAR) • Complete Annual Progress Report
At least by the end of the second last semester of candidature (that is, 7 semesters F/T PhD; 3 semesters F/T MPhil)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a complete draft of the thesis, including references. Candidates are advised that they need to set aside at least one full semester to revise the draft chapters before submitting the thesis for examination.
Several weeks before submission of the thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the <i>Notification of Intent to Submit</i> form and send to the Office of Graduate Studies • Forms to assist in the preparation and submission of theses can be found at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/rhd/forms.html

1.8 Changes to candidature

Note that all changes to your candidature require approval and notification to the Office of Graduate Studies. Such changes include:

- Change of name
- Change of address
- Change of research topic
- Change of supervisor
- Extension of candidature
- Leave of absence
- Transfer of program (PhD to MPhil or MPhil to PhD)

You can find and download the “Candidature Variation Form” from the Office of Graduate Studies website at the following address:

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

1.9 Concerns about candidature

If you are having difficulties with your candidature, your first point of contact should be your Supervisor/s. You can also make contact with the Deputy Head of School Research Development, Professor Max Smith, or the Head of School, Professor Jenny Gore.

If you have a complaint based on a dispute, mismanagement or misconduct, you should refer to the University’s Complaint Resolution Policy

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000745.html>.

This policy emphasises informal resolution where possible through a direct approach to the person or group whose actions have given rise to the complaint. If a person making a complaint is not comfortable making a direct approach, a complaint may be made through a Complaints Officer or through approaching the Dean of Students or NUPSA (Newcastle University Postgraduate Students’ Association) at Callaghan, or the Deputy Dean of Students or Campus Central at Ourimbah.

1.10 Re-Enrolment

All Research Higher Degree students are required to re-enrol online (in ‘myHub’) in Semester 1 and Semester 2 of every year, unless you take approved leave of absence or withdraw from candidature. You are also required to re-enrol on return from leave of absence.

You need to check ‘myHub’ each semester to ensure that enrolment and personal details are correct and to pay any student fees or charges. Please refer to the RHD Student Self Service web site for more information at:

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/rhd/studentselfservice.html>

SECTION 2. Ethics Requirements for Projects involving Humans

If you intend to undertake any research involving or impacting on humans you must receive ethics clearance for your project. This means that if you wish to conduct any surveys, interviews, observations or have any other involvement with people for your project, you must obtain the necessary approvals to conduct this research.

Please do not make contact with any potential subjects or institutions until you receive ethics clearance. This includes trialling of instruments or conversations about the research with potential subjects, unless covered by a previous ethics clearance.

2.1 University Human Research Ethics Approval

As a Research Higher Degree student, your principal supervisor must be the Chief-Investigator for ethics purposes. You would normally prepare your ethics application around the time you present your proposal to the School Confirmation Committee (i.e. around one full time year into your candidature). Note that the paperwork and processes are very detailed and you would normally need to allow approximately two months between submitting your application and beginning any data collection with ethics approval.

To prepare your application for ethics approval please go to the Human Research Ethics Committee website <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/human-ethics/application-procedures/peer-review.html>

Note that your Ethics application must undergo a methodological peer-review by someone other than one of your supervisors, prior to its submission to the Ethics Committee for their consideration. To facilitate this process, please notify the Deputy Head of School for Research Development (soe-research@newcastle.edu.au) who will coordinate this process, after which it will be approved by the Head of School and submitted to the Human Research Ethics Committee.

An annual report is required by the Ethics Committee and a review/renewal of the application occurs every three years.

Once you receive ethics clearance you will be issued with an approval number. The number needs to be cited on annual progress reports and elsewhere so be sure to securely record these details.

If a project is discontinued please inform HREC.

2.2 Additional Ethics Approval

Please be aware that if you wish to conduct research in schools, you are likely to need other approvals. For instance, anyone wishing to conduct research in NSW public schools must complete the NSWDET State Educational Research Approval Process (SERAP)

https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/detresources/State_education_guidelines_SJXFTWVaCS.pdf

It is your responsibility to become aware of any bodies from which such approvals are needed in relation to your research. Please consult your supervisor/s about this important aspect of your research.

If you will be conducting research overseas, you are still required to attain ethics clearance from HREC, and adhere to the associated principles and protocols when conducting your research. Approval from local bodies, as required, will need to be attained.

SECTION 3 Support and Funding Opportunities during Candidature

In addition to support available to all RHD candidates in the University (general support, provision of a laptop and Research Training Scheme funding), there are three opportunities for additional funding support within the School of Education: Conference Travel Scholarships, the Research Exchange Program, and Recognition Awards.

3.1 General support

The following minimum level of resources is provided to each full-time, on-campus research higher degree candidate:

- a desk and chair and dedicated workspace with a lockable filing cabinet;
- access to a photocopier on a reasonable basis;
- access to office facilities for the transmission and receipt of official telephone and facsimile messages and mail;
- reasonable access to computer facilities and software programs (see 3.2 Laptop Policy below), and training to use such programs, as may be necessary for research and thesis preparation; and
- adequate library access and free access to inter-library loans.

Candidates may also gain academic support from association with one or more of the School's Research Centres: Educational Research Institute Newcastle (ERIN), Centre for Education, Research and Children (CERC), Centre for Special Education and Disability Studies (CSEDS), Centre for the Study of Research Training and Impact (SORTI), and the Priority Research Centre in Physical Activity & Nutrition (PRC). Normally candidates will be connected with the Research Centre of their Supervisor/s.

3.2 Laptop Policy

All commencing M.Phil and PhD candidates are eligible to receive a laptop, if required, to support their research.

Please refer to the document *Provision of Laptops to Research Higher Degree Candidates* at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/students/research-higher-degree/candidates-guide/resources.html#laptop>

The provision of a laptop is in addition to the allocation of up to \$1500 per annum for research purposes that is available to full-time RHD candidates, or \$750 per-annum for part-time RHD candidates (see Section 3.3 below).

3.3 Research Training Scheme Funding Support

RTS Funding Support is available to all RHD candidates, upon application, providing eligibility criteria are met. The level of funding available is for \$1500 per year for all full-time, or \$750 for part-time, M.Phil or PhD candidates. The funding can be used in a wide variety of ways to support your RHD progress and research training, including things like: fieldwork and travel costs, specialist texts, hardware, conference registrations

Individuals will not be able to access their RTS funds until they have successfully completed their *Confirmation of Candidature*. Consolidated funds of up to \$3000 will then be available in the second (full time equivalent) year of candidature, to support substantive research costs like travel, fieldwork, archival work, etc.

Refer to *RTS Funding Support Information and Guidelines*, and *RTS Funding Support Application Form* <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/research/rhd.html> .

3.4 Conference Travel Scholarships

Refer to *Conference Travel Scholarship Information and Guidelines* at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/research/rhd.html> .

There are two submission rounds per year, closing on the last Friday in May and the last Friday in October at 5pm.

This award aims to encourage candidates to:

- disseminate their findings
- build their publications profile
- gain recognition for their research
- develop research networks
- gain access to cutting edge ideas and key researchers in their field.

The RHD Travel Scholarship is offered to a maximum of two students in a year, depending on the quality of applications.

Each student is eligible once during their candidature to receive a Travel Scholarship with the maximum amount available set at \$3000.

Refer to *Conference Travel Scholarship Application Form* and the *Travel Scholarship Report* at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/research/rhd.html>

3.5 International Fieldwork Grants

Refer to *International Fieldwork Grant Information and Guidelines* and *International Fieldwork Grant Application Form* at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/research/rhd.html>

There are two rounds annually of the International Fieldwork Grants, closing on the last Friday in May and the last Friday in October at 5pm.

This grant of up to \$3,500 is designed to directly facilitate higher degree research students' international travel to conduct research / fieldwork essential to their study.

Candidates are only eligible for these grants once throughout their candidature, and subject to certain conditions being met as outlined in the guidelines.

3.6 Recognition Award

Refer to *Recognition Award Grant in Aid of Travel and Grant Application in Aid of Travel Application Form* at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/research/rhd.html>

This grant recognises the achievement of a candidate who receives a major national or international prize granted independently of the University of Newcastle, and undertaken through a clearly and publicly documented competitive process. It is intended for those who have to travel to receive the prize within or outside Australia.

The amount awarded will be a maximum of \$1500 grant in aid of expenses.

3.7 External Research Course Support

Refer to *External Research Course Support Application Form* at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/education/research/rhd.html>.

This scheme offers financial support (Early Bird Registration costs) for students to attend an intensive, specialist research methods course at the bi-annual ACSPRI (Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated) courses; or the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) Annual Early Career Researcher workshops.

ACRONYMS

AARE	Australian Association for Research in Education
CERC	Centre for Education, Research and Children
CSEDS	Centre for Special Education and Disability Studies
ERIN	Educational Research Institute, Newcastle
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
NUPSA	Newcastle University Postgraduate Student Association
OGS	Office of Graduate Studies
PRC	Priority Research Centre in Physical Activity and Nutrition
RDC	Research Development Committee
RHD	Research Higher Degree
RTS	Research Training Scheme
SERAP	State Education Research Application Process
SORTI	Centre for the Study of Research Training and Impact
SSTAR	Staff and Students talking about Research