

# Higher Degree by Research Accreditation - Procedures



/explore/policies-and-procedures/higher-degree-by-research-accreditation-procedures

## Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures.

The Curriculum Support Unit refers to the relevant staff within the Centre for Support and Advancement of Learning and Teaching (C-SALT) who are responsible for supporting and facilitating the program accreditation and course approval process.

## Purpose of procedures

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Higher Degree by Research Accreditation – Academic Policy. It sets out steps to operationalise the Higher Degree by Research Accreditation – Academic Policy, and outlines processes for the management of the policies and processes throughout the lifecycle of higher degrees by research.

## Part A: Higher Degree by Research - Accreditation

### A1. Timeframes for higher degree by research accreditation

1.1 Schools plan and progress all proposed new higher degree by research developments so that:

- sufficient time is allowed for informed consideration of, and decision-making based on, the merit and academic integrity of proposed new higher degree by research developments and the associated resource and other implications
- the accreditation of a new University higher degree by research is finalised by no later than six months prior to the teaching period in which it is to be first offered

### A2. Variation to timelines

2.1 In exceptional circumstances, approval may be granted to expedite the accreditation processes through a minor variation of the procedures in Section A9 below, whereby the Chairperson, Research Degrees Committee, as appropriate, acts on behalf on the Committee under delegated authority, in considering a proposal for accreditation.

2.2 In the event that a School believes that there is a compelling reason to expedite accreditation of a higher degree by research, the relevant Head of School makes written application to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), through the Curriculum Support Unit, for approval to expedite.

2.3 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) makes a decision on the request and provides the relevant Head of School and the Curriculum Support Unit with written advice of that decision.

2.4 The Chairperson, Research Degrees Committee reports to the ensuing meeting of the committee on the action taken on the committee's behalf.

### A3. Approval to develop and to offer a new higher degree by research

3.1 For a new higher degree by research, the business case for a new degree is the resource and planning component of the accreditation process.

3.2 A business case is completed to provide the case for the proposed new degree's contribution to the University's strategic direction, financial viability, and all its resourcing requirements.

3.3 The Head of School endorses the business case prior to consideration and comment by the Chief Financial Officer. Following the provision of comments by the Chief Financial Officer, the Head of School arranges for the business case to be scheduled on the University Executive agenda and provides the relevant documentation to the Secretary, University Executive.

#### APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

#### RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

#### DESIGNATED OFFICER

Dean, Graduate Research

#### FIRST APPROVED

16 December 2016

#### LAST AMENDED

5 April 2019

#### EFFECTIVE START DATE

5 April 2019

#### REVIEW DATE

16 December 2021

#### STATUS

Active

#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

Course Approval, Change and Discontinuation - Procedures

Coursework Curriculum Design - Academic Policy

Higher Degree by Research Accreditation - Academic Policy

Higher Degrees by Research - Academic Policy

Program Accreditation and Course Approval - Governing Policy

Program Review - Procedures

#### RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

3.4 The University Executive considers the business case and makes a recommendation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President) who decides whether to approve or not approve the new program for development and for offering.

3.5 The Curriculum Support Unit liaises with the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and arranges for a copy of the approval documentation to be recorded in the relevant program file in the University's Records Management System.

3.6 The Head of School is responsible for advising, and liaising with, all relevant parties regarding the decision.

#### A4. Program Bulletin

An outcome of the approval to develop and to offer a new program, as set out in section A3, is the Head of School releasing a Program Bulletin (New Higher Degree by Research) which is registered with the Curriculum Support Unit for communication to the University community.

#### A5. Higher degree by research development

5.1 After the closing date for submissions in response to the Program Bulletin, the higher degree by research proposer advises the relevant Head of School of the substance of submissions received and, as advised by the Head of School, undertake consultations concerning any issues raised.

5.2 The School establishes a higher degree by research development team, or equivalent. In the case of proposed cross-School higher degree by research the development team comprises staff from each relevant School.

5.3 The development team develops the proposed higher degree by research in line with any School requirements and processes, ensuring that:

(a) consultations are held with all relevant parties

- with a legitimate interest in the proposed higher degree by research, including for example other Schools or Research Centres, the School Board, the Office of Research and other service areas of the University, and potential employers, or
- for whom there may be resource, legal or administrative implications with the proposed higher degree by research, including for example USC International, Information Technology Services, Information Services, Student Services and Engagement, Asset Management Services, and Marketing and External Engagement

(b) input is sought from other appropriate sources with expertise relevant to development of the higher degree by research, within or beyond the University, for example, academic developers within the Centre for Support and Advancement of Learning and Teaching (C-SALT), and the Curriculum Support Unit for alignment with University policies and procedures and external requirements listed in A5.3 (c) below.

(c) the higher degree by research is designed and developed consistent with:

- the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and associated guidelines and principles
- any applicable legislation and statutory requirements (e.g. Education Services for Overseas Students [ESOS] Act and Code; the Higher Education Standards Framework)
- any applicable plans, policies and procedures within the University
- any applicable resolutions of the Council or Academic Board or their standing committees
- any applicable directives issued by senior staff of the University
- any standards for external recognition, registration or accreditation of the proposed higher degree by research or potential graduates
- relevant guidelines and good practice in higher degree by research design and development for higher degree by research of that type; and

(d) the higher degree by research is designed and developed in order to meet all criteria for accreditation of a higher degree by research as provided in the parent policy.

#### A6. Accreditation Documentation

6.1 The higher degree by research development team documents the proposed new higher degree by research including resource needs using:

(a) Higher Degree by Research Proposal template

(b) Higher Degree by Research Outline template

(c) New Course Proposal and Course Outline template(s) (where the program contains a coursework component)

(d) resource impact statement pro forma required by Asset Management Services, Information Services, and Information Technology Services (only required if the proposal includes new courses or if resources for existing courses will be significantly impacted)

#### 6.2 Higher Degree by Research Proposal

The Higher Degree by Research Proposal is the case made for introduction of the proposed new higher degree by research and must be submitted on the Higher Degree by Research Proposal template.

#### 6.3 Higher Degree by Research Outline

The Higher Degree by Research Outline is the detailed description of the proposed new higher degree by research that is used to assess the academic integrity of that higher degree by research. The Outline forms the basis for provision of information to students, prospective

students, the University community and the public concerning the higher degree by research. The identified Higher Degree by Research Outline template must be used.

#### 6.4 Course Details

Any new courses proposed as part of the proposed higher degree by research, must be documented in accordance with the Course Approval, Change and Discontinuation – Procedures.

### A7. Consideration by Head of School

7.1 The relevant Head of School considers the documentation in consultation with all relevant Heads of School, taking into account the criteria for accreditation provided in the parent policy, and any others matters of relevance.

7.2 If the relevant Head of School is satisfied that resource issues have been adequately addressed and that accreditation should be sought, the Head of School signs the relevant section of the Higher Degree by Research Proposal and 7.3 Following consideration of the proposal by the Head of School, the School Administration Officer completes a template to request from Student Services and Engagement the:

- (a) allocation of a Program Code; and
- (b) allocation of Course Codes for any new courses.

7.4 The School Administration Officer requests Information Management Services Unit to create a new University file for the proposed program and for each new course allocated a code.

7.5 The School Administration Officer updates the accreditation documentation and Resource Impact Statements to include program and course codes and file numbers, and then provides a copy to Asset Management Services, the Library and Information Technology Services.

7.6 The Head of School signs the relevant section of the Proposal.

7.7 The Head of School arranges for a PDF set of the complete accreditation documentation to be submitted to the Curriculum Support Unit and for a signed set of accreditation documentation to be recorded in the relevant higher degree by research files on the University's Records Management System.

7.8 The Curriculum Support Unit checks the accreditation documentation for completeness, clarity, accuracy, internal consistency, compliance and consistency with relevant University and external reference points. The Curriculum Support Unit liaises with relevant School staff in order for appropriate actions to be taken to address any issues and for amended documentation to be submitted where needed.

### A8. Consideration by Research Degree Committee

8.1 The Curriculum Support Unit forwards the accreditation documentation to the Research Degrees Committee.

8.2 The Chairperson, Research Degrees Committee can determine that the accreditation documentation is incomplete or under-developed and delay the consideration of the proposal by this committee until such time as the School has responded to the Chairperson's concerns regarding the quality of the accreditation documentation.

8.3 Research Degrees Committee considers the academic merit of the higher degree by research on the basis of the accreditation and related documentation and:

- (a) resolves to recommend to Academic Board that the proposed new higher degree by research as currently documented be accredited; or
- (b) resolves to recommend to Academic Board that the proposed new higher degree by research as currently documented be accredited subject to identified amendments being made to the proposed new higher degree by research and associated documentation; or
- (c) resolves that the proposed new higher degree by research and associated documentation should be revised by the relevant School in light of matters identified by the Committee and subsequently be submitted to the Committee for further consideration; or
- (d) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate.

8.4 If unqualified accreditation is recommended, the Committee Secretary refers the Higher Degree by Research Proposal and Higher Degree by Research Outline to the Academic Board for consideration.

8.5 If accreditation is recommended subject to amendments being made:

- (a) the relevant School is advised to make the amendments and submit to the Chairperson, through the Curriculum Support Unit, the amended documentation together with a written response to the matters identified, including a statement detailing the changes made to the documentation; and
- (b) the Chairperson, Research Degrees Committee reviews the amended documentation then forwards it to the Academic Board through the Curriculum Support Unit. (The Chairperson may raise with the Academic Board any matters related to the amended documentation.)

8.6 Where revision is recommended [under item A8.3 (c)]:

- (a) the relevant School is advised to revise the proposed higher degree by research and associated documentation and submit new documentation to the Committee together with a written response to the matters identified including an outline of changes made;

- (b) the Committee reviews the revised documentation and makes an appropriate resolution; and
- (c) the Committee refers the accreditation documentation to the Academic Board through the Curriculum Support Unit for consideration.

#### **A9. Consideration by Learning and Teaching Committee**

In parallel, and prior to recommendation to Academic Board, the Higher Degree by Research Proposal and Outline will be provided to the Learning and Teaching Committee to provide context for and to inform the approval of any new courses associated with the higher degree by research.

#### **A10. Consideration by Academic Board**

10.1 The Curriculum Support Unit forwards the latest version of the Higher Degree by Research Proposal and Higher Degree by Research Outline and minutes of the Research Degrees Committee to the Academic Board.

10.2 Academic Board considers the Higher Degree by Research Proposal and related Higher Degree by Research Outline, and:

(a) resolves to accredit the higher degree by research subject to the standard conditions of accreditation as specified in the parent policy and any other conditions that the Academic Board may impose, identifying when the higher degree by research will be offered for the first time; or

(b) resolves to accredit the higher degree by research, subject to:

(i) specific amendments being made to the proposed new higher degree by research and associated documentation to the satisfaction of the Chairperson, Academic Board; and

(ii) the standard conditions of accreditation as specified in the parent policy; or

(c) resolves not to accredit the higher degree by research in the form in which it is currently documented; or

(d) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate.

10.3 Where accreditation is subject to any required amendments being made:

(a) the relevant School is advised to make the amendment and submit to the Chairperson, Academic Board, through the Curriculum Support Unit, the amended documentation together with a covering statement detailing the changes made to the documentation

(b) the Chairperson, Academic Board reviews the amended documentation and, if satisfied that the required amendments have been made, attests to this in writing and forwards the attestation to the Curriculum Support Unit; and

(c) the higher degree by research:

(i) is accredited from the date of the Chairperson's attestation; and

(ii) may be offered from the time specified in the amended documentation

#### **A11. Post-accreditation matters**

11.1 The Curriculum Support Unit advise all relevant parties of the outcome of final considerations concerning proposals for accreditation.

11.2 The relevant School staff will liaise with Marketing and External Engagement and the Office of Research to ensure that all program marketing materials (including the website, portal and Postgraduate Research Guide) is updated.

11.3 USC International arranges CRICOS registration and advises the School office and the Office of Research of this code.

#### **A12. Records management**

12.1 The school proposing accreditation of a new higher degree by research is responsible for initiating action with the Information Management Services Unit to create new files for the proposed higher degree by research.

12.2 Staff providing secretariat services to the Research Degrees Committee and Academic Board are responsible for ensuring that the versions of the accreditation documentation considered by the relevant body together with related documentation including extracts from minutes are recorded in the relevant files and registered in the Records Management System.

#### **A13. Reporting**

13.1 An annual summary report of all programs accredited by Academic Board is to be provided to Council. The report should be submitted to the first meeting each year and includes all programs accredited in the previous year.

13.2 A summary report of all programs approved for development is compiled by the Curriculum Support Unit to be provided to University Executive, for noting at least twice annually.

### **Part B: Higher Degree by Research - Changes**

#### **B1. Timeframes for changes to a higher degree by research**

1.1 Schools plan and progress all proposed higher degree by research changes so that:

(a) sufficient time is allowed for informed consideration of, and decision-making based on, the merit and academic integrity of proposed changes to a higher degree by research and any associated resource and other implications

(b) approval of any substantial changes to a higher degree by research is finalised well in advance of the teaching period in which the changes are to take effect.

#### 1.2 Variation to timelines

- Refer to Section A2.

### B2. Changes to a higher degree by research

2.1 All proposed changes to a higher degree by research need to be designed to ensure that the changes will not bring into question whether the higher degree by research continues to meet all criteria for accreditation of a higher degree by research as provided in the parent policy.

2.3 Advice must be sought from USC International concerning the implications of changes to any higher degree by research that has been advertised as being available to international students or in which they have been offered or have accepted a place or are currently enrolled.

### B3. Program changes and approval authorities

3.1 The authority to approve changes to programs varies, depending on the nature of the proposed changes. If the approval authority is unclear in these procedures, the Chairperson, Research Degrees Committee (RDC) will make a determination of the appropriate level of approval authority required.

#### 3.2 Changes approved by Academic Board

3.3.1 Following consideration by Research Degrees Committee, Academic Board will consider and approve:

(a) altering the requirements for completion of a higher degree by research, including the addition or removal of exit/entry points; addition and removal of required courses

(b) a change to the award title (requires a new program code)

(c) a change to the total unit value of a currently accredited higher degree by research (requires a new program code)

(d) a change to the duration (standard completion time) of an accredited higher degree by research

(e) a significant alteration to the entry requirements.

Refer to B5.-B9. for process.

#### 3.3 Changes approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate

The following types of proposed changes will be documented by the Head of School, for the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President):

(a) the offering of an existing higher degree by research at a new location

(b) changing the funding arrangement for an existing higher degree by research

(c) the discontinuation of an existing program at a location

(d) a change to a higher degree by research that has significant resource impact outside the proposing School or for the University

Refer to B10. for process.

### B4. Documentation

#### 4.1 Proposal to make a change to a higher degree by research

The Proposal is the case made for making changes to the higher degree by research and should be made on the Proposal to Make a Change to a Higher Degree by Research template.

#### 4.2 Higher Degree by Research Outline

The proposed new Higher Degree by Research Outline is the version intended to replace the current Higher Degree by Research Outline and is used to assess the merit and academic integrity of the changed higher degree by research and form the basis for provision of information to students, intending students, the University community and the public concerning the higher degree by research.

#### 4.3 Course details

Any new courses proposed as part of the changes to the higher degree by research, must be documented in accordance with the Course Approval, Change and Discontinuation – Procedures.

### B5. Consideration by Head of School

5.1 The proposer submits the updated documentation to the relevant Head of School who considers the documentation in consultation with all relevant Heads of School, taking into account any matters of relevance.

5.2 If the relevant Head of School decide that approval should be sought for the changes, the Head of School signs the relevant section of the Proposal and arranges for a PDF set of the complete signed documentation to be submitted to the Curriculum Support Unit and for a signed set of documentation to be recorded in the relevant higher degree by research file in the University's Records Management System.

## B6. Consideration by Research Degree Committee

6.1 The Curriculum Support Unit checks the documentation for completeness, clarity, accuracy, internal consistency, compliance and consistency with relevant University and external reference points. The Curriculum Support Unit liaises with relevant School staff in order for appropriate actions to be taken to address any issues and for amended documentation to be submitted where needed.

6.2 Research Degrees Committee considers the academic merit of the proposed changes to the higher degree by research on the basis of the documentation and:

- (a) resolves to recommend that the proposed changes to the higher degree by research as currently documented be approved; or
- (b) resolves to recommend that the proposed changes to the higher degree by research as currently documented be approved subject to identified amendments being made to the associated documentation; or
- (c) resolves that the proposed changes to the higher degree by research and associated documentation should be revised by the relevant School in light of matters identified by the Committee and subsequently be submitted to the Committee for further consideration; or
- (d) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate.

6.3 If unqualified approval is recommended, the Committee Secretary refers the documentation to the Academic Board for consideration.

6.4 If approval is recommended subject to amendments being made:

- (a) the relevant School is advised to make the amendments and submit to the Chairperson of the Committee, through the Curriculum Support Unit, the amended documentation together with a written response to the matters identified, including a statement detailing the changes made to the documentation; and
- (b) the Chairperson of the Committee reviews the amended documentation then forwards it to the Academic Board through the Curriculum Support Unit. (The Chairperson may raise with the Academic Board any matters related to the amended documentation.)

6.5 If revision is recommended:

- (a) the relevant School is advised to revise the Proposed Changes to Higher Degree by Research and associated documentation and submit new documentation to the Committee together with a written response to the matters identified including an outline of changes made;
- (b) the Committee reviews the revised documentation and makes an appropriate resolution; and
- (c) the Committee refers the documentation to the Academic Board through the Curriculum Support Unit for consideration.

## B7. Consideration by Learning and Teaching Committee

In parallel, and prior to recommendation to Academic Board, the Higher Degree by Research Proposal and Outline will be provided to the Learning and Teaching Committee to provide context for and to inform the approval of any new courses associated with the higher degree by research.

## B8. Consideration by Academic Board

8.1 The Curriculum Support Unit forwards the latest version of the documentation and minutes of the Research Degrees Committee to the Academic Board.

8.2 The Academic Board considers the academic merit of the proposed changes to the higher degree by research on the basis of the documentation provided, and:

- (a) resolves to approve all of the changes subject to any conditions that the Academic Board may impose, identifying when the changes to the higher degree by research and any associated discontinuation of courses, majors and minors will take effect; or
- (b) resolves to approve changes to the higher degree by research subject to:
  - (i) specific amendments being made to the documentation to the satisfaction of the Chairperson, Academic Board; and
  - (ii) any conditions that the Academic Board may impose; or
- (c) resolves not to approve any of the changes to the higher degree by research in the form in which they are currently documented; or
- (d) makes such other resolutions as may be appropriate.

8.3 If approval of changes is subject to any required amendments being made:

- (a) the relevant School is advised to make the amendment and submit to the Chairperson, Academic Board, through the Curriculum Support Unit, the amended documentation together with a covering statement detailing the changes made to the documentation (with page references);

(b) the Chairperson, Academic Board, reviews the amended documentation and, if satisfied that the required amendments have been made attests to this in writing and forwards the attestation to the Curriculum Support Unit; and

(c) the changes to the higher degree by research -

(i) are approved (with any conditions of approval) from the date of the Chairperson's attestation; and

(ii) become effective from the time specified in the amended documentation.

## **B9. Post-approval matters**

9.1 The Curriculum Support Unit advises all relevant parties of the outcome of final considerations concerning proposals for changes to higher degree by research.

9.2 The relevant Head of School will liaise with Marketing and External Engagement and the Office of Research to ensure that all program marketing materials (including the website, portal and Postgraduate Research Guide) is updated.

9.3 USC International arranges any necessary updates to CRICOS registration and advises the School office and the Office of Research.

## **B10. Changes requiring Vice-Chancellor and President (or delegate) approval**

10.1 The proposer consults with all interested parties concerning the proposed changes, including relevant areas of the University for which the changes may have administrative or resource implications.

10.2 The proposer submits a Program Bulletin Notification (Program Change) to the Head of School, who releases it to the University Community via the Curriculum Support Unit.

10.3 The proposer submits the Proposal to Make a Change to a Higher Degree by Research and the revised Higher Degree by Research Outline to the Head of School, who considers the documentation in consultation with the relevant stakeholder, taking into account any matters of relevance. The Change Proposal should evidence consultation with the Chief Financial Officer for comment on matters of resourcing and the program's continued viability.

10.4 If the Head of School decides that approval should be sought for the changes, they sign the relevant section of the proposal and submits a copy of the complete documentation to the Curriculum Support Unit. The Head of School arranges for the signed documentation to be recorded in the relevant program file in the University's Records Management System.

10.5 The Curriculum Support Unit checks the Change Proposal for completeness and clarity and liaises with relevant staff in order for appropriate actions to be taken to address any issues and for amended documentation to be submitted where required.

10.6 The Curriculum Support Unit forwards the proposal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as the Vice-Chancellor and President's delegate), who decides whether to approve or not approve the program change.

10.7 The Curriculum Support Unit informs the Head of School of the decision and any required actions arising from the decision.

10.8 The Curriculum Support Unit arranges for the approval documentation to be recorded in the relevant program file in the University's Records Management System.

## **B11. Reporting**

11.1 Summary reports of program changes approved is required to be submitted as follows:

Annually

· Research Degrees Committee to Academic Board

Biannually

· Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)), via the Curriculum Support Unit to the University Executive.

11.2 Annual reports should be submitted to the first meeting each year and include all program changes approved in the previous year.

11.3 A report of all decisions types approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)) is noted at the next meeting of the Academic Board or its standing committees.

## **Part C: Higher Degree by Research – Discontinuation and suspension of intake**

### **C1. Discontinuation**

Discontinuation of a higher degree by research is a decision made by Vice-Chancellor and President or delegate (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)) on a recommendation of the Head of School that:

(a) there can be no new intake of students into that higher degree by research from a specified date;

(b) the higher degree by research cannot be advertised or marketed as available to students; and

(c) the higher degree by research is to be eventually removed from the suite of higher degree by research available to students.

## C2. Suspension of intake

Suspension of intake is a management decision made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) that there will be no intake of students for a particular higher degree by research in a specified period. A suspension of intake is temporary, and may or may not lead to a discontinuation of a higher degree by research.

## C3. Discontinuation of a higher degree by research

3.1 If a School intends to propose that a higher degree by research should be discontinued, for whatever reason, the School consults all interested parties and arranges for development of a preliminary plan and draft timetable for the discontinuation from the proposed date from which there will be no new intake up to the proposed date of permanent removal of the higher degree by research.

3.2 If the higher degree by research concerned is currently available to international students, the advice of USC International is sought in developing the plan and timetable.

3.3 The plan and timetable form the basis for all subsequent actions and decisions related to the proposed discontinuation of a higher degree by research. The timetable and preliminary plan takes account of:

- (a) any associated courses that are also available in other programs or higher degrees by research
- (b) the date of the most recent intake into the higher degree by research
- (c) the maximum completion time for the program as stated in the applicable University policy and procedures
- (d) prior offers of a place in the degree that have been made to any international student (agreed commencement date for student plus maximum completion time)
- (e) the obligation of the University to continue to offer the degree to a student who is currently enrolled
- (f) any associated transition arrangements
- (g) the need to provide timely information to the University community, relevant authorities and the public concerning discontinuation of the degree and any applicable transition arrangements
- (h) University timeframes for progressing proposals for discontinuation as outlined in guidelines prepared by the Curriculum Support Unit.

## C4. Program Bulletin – Discontinuation

4.1 If it is proposed that an accredited higher degree by research is to be discontinued, the Head of School drafts a Program Bulletin (HDR Discontinuation) using the relevant template, and forwards it to the Curriculum Support Unit.

4.2 The Curriculum Support Unit forwards the Program Bulletin - Discontinuation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for consideration, who discusses any issues related to the proposed discontinuation with the relevant Head of School and then advises the Curriculum Support Unit whether to release the Program Bulletin.

## C5. Proposal to Discontinue a Program

5.1 Incorporating any submissions received or issues raised in response to the Program Bulletin (HDR Discontinuation), the proposer completes the Proposal to Discontinue a Program template. The document is forwarded to the Head of School for consideration.

5.2 If the Head of School decides that approval for discontinuation should be sought, they sign the relevant section of the proposal and submit the proposal to the Curriculum Support Unit.

5.3 The Curriculum Support Unit checks the proposal for completeness and clarity and liaises with relevant parties for appropriate actions to be taken to address any issues and for amended documentation to be submitted where needed.

5.4 The Curriculum Support Unit forwards the proposal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (as delegate of the Vice-Chancellor and President) who decides whether to approve or not approve the discontinuation and signs the relevant section of the proposal.

5.5 The Curriculum Support Unit informs the Head of School of any required actions arising from the decision.

5.6 The Head of School is responsible for advising, and liaising with, all relevant parties regarding the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)'s decision.

## C6. Suspension of intake

6.1 If it is proposed that there be a temporary suspension of intake into a program, the Head of School initiates the process for approval to suspend intake and consults all interested parties as soon as possible.

6.2 The Head of School prepares a Program Bulletin (HDR Suspension of Intake) using the relevant template and submits it to the Curriculum Support Unit.

6.3 The Curriculum Support Unit forwards the Program Bulletin to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for consideration, who discusses any issues related to the proposed suspension of intake with the relevant parties and then advises Curriculum Support Unit whether to release the Program Bulletin (HDR Suspension of Intake).

6.4 After the closing date for submissions in response to the Program Bulletin, the Head of School completes a Proposal to Suspend an Intake, using the relevant template, and forwards it to the Curriculum Support Unit. The Curriculum Support Unit refers the proposal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

6.5 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) decides whether to approve or not approve the suspension of intake and signs, and signs the relevant section of the proposal.

6.6 The Curriculum Support Unit informs the Head of School of any required actions arising from the decision.

6.7 The Head of School is responsible for advising, and liaising with, all relevant parties regarding the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)'s decision.

## C7. Post-approval matters

7.1 The Curriculum Support Unit:

(a) provides written advice to all relevant parties of the outcome and final considerations concerning proposals for suspension of intake

(b) registers and records the complete signed documentation in the relevant higher degree by research file and the University's Records Management System.

7.2 The relevant School will liaise with Marketing and External Engagement and the Office of Research to ensure that program marketing materials (including the website, portal and Postgraduate Research Guide) is updated.

7.3 A report of all decisions regarding discontinuation and suspension of intake approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is noted at the next meeting of the Academic Board or its standing committees.

END

## Appendix 1

### Flowcharts: Approval Processes for Higher Degree by Research Accreditation

Flowcharts and relevant templates are available from MyUSC (Staff login required)

<https://my.usc.edu.au/teaching/program-accreditation-and-course-approval/programs/hdr-accreditation>