

Higher Degrees by Research Admission and Enrolment - Guidelines



/explore/policies-and-procedures/higher-degrees-by-research-admission-and-enrolment-guidelines

Introduction

These Guidelines provide information in addition to that provided in the Higher Degrees by Research Candidature – Procedures, in relation to:

- Entry requirements - Discipline-specific examples of pathways to HDR
- Entry requirements - Discipline-specific English language requirements
- Admission process
- Fees

Entry Requirements: Discipline-specific pathways to HDR

Section 3 of the Higher Degrees by Research Candidature – Procedures describes Entry requirements for admission to USC's HDR programs including admission pathways and English language requirements.

1. Eligibility for admission to a HDR can be demonstrated by academic background and/or relevant professional research experience. Relevant professional research experience is assessed according to the length of time spent in relevant professional work to the proposed higher degree by research program, and whether the research was undertaken with guidance from a supervisor (or similar), or was undertaken independently. 'Relevance' is at the discretion of the University. All relevant experience will be considered, including part-time work which will be based on the full time equivalent.

Examples of research qualifications and/or professional research experience deemed to be equivalent to the academic admission pathways include (but are not limited to):

Faculty of Arts, Business and Law

Creative writing

All creative writing applicants must provide a Folio of their original creative work with their application for admission to HDR. The folio should be between 5,000-7,000 words, and should include two creative pieces (excluding poetry) and an exegetical piece relating to one of the creative pieces.

To be eligible for admission to the Doctor of Creative Arts, an applicant must have successfully completed a Bachelor Honours degree (AQF Level 8) in creative writing with a significant research component with a minimum of Class IIA from a recognised higher education institution.

Applicants from other backgrounds will be considered for admission to the Master of Creative Arts only.

To be eligible for admission to the Master of Creative Arts:

- An applicant must have successfully completed a Bachelor Honours degree (AQF Level 8) in creative writing with a significant research component with a minimum of Class IIB from a recognised higher education institution; or
- An applicant may be considered solely on the quality of the Folio. If accepted into the program, these applicants will have the following conditions placed on their first semester of probationary candidature:
 - Attendance and participation at ART411 Research Methods in Arts and Social Science; and
 - Attendance at weeks 1-3 of 'Creative Writing – Theory and Method' Honours course workshops
 - Commencement in the program is restricted to facilitate participation in conditional courses and workshops during the first weeks of candidature.

Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering

School of Education

Admission pathways to the Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Education include:

- 4 year Bachelor qualification in education (AQF Level 7), and a research project/s undertaken in a professional environment, or refereed journal publication/s
- 4 year Bachelor qualification in education (AQF Level 7) and a coursework Master of education (AQF Level 9) including research training and independent research project
- 3 year Bachelor degree in education (AQF Level 7) and a graduate diploma or certificate in education (AQF Level 8) and sustained work experience in the area of proposed research and evidence of publication through conferences or journals and/or other forums of independent research undertaken in the professional contexts

Admission pathways to the Master of Education (Research) include:

usc.edu.au/policy

- 3 year Bachelor degree in education (AQF Level 7) and graduate diploma of education (AQF Level 8) with a GRADE POINT AVERAGE of 5.0 or higher
- 4 year Bachelor degree in education (AQF Level 7) with a Grade Point Average of 5.0 or higher
- 3 year Bachelor degree in education (AQF Level 7) in vocational education with a GRADE POINT AVERAGE of 5.0 or higher and 2 years professional experience
- 3 year Bachelor degree in education (AQF Level 7) and coursework Master of Education degree (AQF Level 9)

School of Health and Sport Sciences

Admission pathways to the Master of Science in the School of Health and Sport Sciences include:

- 3 or 4 year Bachelor degree in the relevant discipline (AQF Level 7) with a Grade Point Average of 5.0 or higher and sustained work experience in the area of proposed research, or evidence of publication through conferences and other forums of independent research undertaken in the professional context; or
- A Bachelor Honours degree (AQF Level 8) Class IIB an area of study relevant to the discipline area of the Master degree

If the prior study did not include appropriate preparation in research methodology, the candidate will be required to undertake an appropriate research methodology course, as specified by the Associate Dean (Research), as part of their HDR candidature.

Admission pathways to the Master of Sports Nutrition by Research in the School of Health and Sport Sciences include:

- A Bachelor Honours degree (AQF Level 8) with a significant research component with a minimum of Class IIA in Nutrition and/or Dietetics, or Exercise and Sports Sciences; or
- A professional degree in Nutrition, Dietetics, or Exercise and Sports Sciences AND a recognised Diploma (AQF Level 5) in Sports Nutrition (e.g. IOC Diploma in Sports Nutrition); or
- A four year Bachelor Degree (AQF Level 7) or two year Masters degree (AQF Level 9) in a related area AND recognised further study in sports nutrition AND evidence of sports nutrition experience or evidence of research in the area of sports nutrition; and
- Successful completion or currently enrolled in a course on research design and methodology (e.g. **RES401 Advanced Research Methods** or equivalent).

School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine

Admission pathways to the Doctor of Philosophy program in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine include:

- Evidence of professional activity that demonstrates experience and ability in
- Project Management
- Professional experience and evidence of research skills in activities such as such as quality projects, program evaluation or development of clinical practice guidelines
- Publication of outcomes in peer reviewed journals or industry reports

Admission pathways into the Master of Science program in the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedicine include:

- Evidence of extensive professional activity with the development of beginning skills in project management and professional writing together with a requirement to complete USC's "Research Fundamentals" modules.

Entry Requirements: Discipline-specific English language requirements

2. Section 3.3 of the Higher Degrees by Research Candidature – Procedures describe USC's English language proficiency requirements for admission to HDR programs for applicants from a non-English speaking background. Some disciplines require a higher level of English proficiency than USC's minimum requirements, e.g. where professional accreditation requires it. These are provided below:

Faculty of Arts, Business and Law (except School of Law):

IELTS 6.5, with minimum sub-score 7.0 in the written component and no other sub-score less than 6.0 (or equivalent level of proficiency demonstrated in other accepted measures which are listed on the USC website).

School of Law

IELTS 7.0, with minimum 7.0 in the writing component and no other sub-score less than 6.5 (or equivalent level of proficiency demonstrated in other accepted measures which are listed on the USC website).

[Back to top](#)

Admission process

The following process applies across the University.

1. Upon receipt of an Application for Admission (AA) to HDR, the Office of Research will:

- Ensure the documentation is complete
- Seek USC-International's assessment of overseas qualifications as required

- Assess the application against the admission requirements for the program
- Follow processes for applications from citizens of Sanctioned countries
- Consider whether a HDR Study Space is available (if applicable)
- Provide a preliminary assessment to the relevant School for consideration

The Principal Supervisor will assess the AA and make a recommendation to the Head of School of proposed enrolment as to whether the application should be accepted, resubmitted or rejected. In so doing, the:

- Principal Supervisor:
 - Develops an appropriate supervision panel and liaises with co-supervisors and associate supervisors to ensure all required expertise is available to support the proposed candidature
 - Prepares a recommendation for the admission with the proposed supervision panel for the Head of School to consider.
- The Head of School of proposed enrolment:
 - Considers the quality and scope of the research proposal, which includes applying relevant text matching software to test for plagiarism
 - If the applicant is from a Sanctioned country, conducts the risk assessment on the proposed research in consultation with the proposed supervisors and relevant Head of School
 - Consults with proposed or possible supervisors and other faculty members as required ensuring that at least two USC registered HDR supervisors are available and have the appropriate qualifications and research expertise and the approval of their PPR supervisors to participate on the panel before recommending an application be accepted
 - Recommends specific conditions of candidature as appropriate
 - Ensures that the physical resources to support the proposed research can be provided by the School or Research Centre, including (but not limited to) laboratory access and funding for consumables, travel and other research equipment (by discussing required resources with relevant staff members)
 - Records their decision regarding the application for admission using the appropriate form and returns the complete documentation to the Office of Research.

The School aims to complete their assessment within three weeks.

2. The Office of Research conducts a quality assurance check of the admission decision and

2.1 If the Head of School's decision requires an exemption from USC Policy or Procedures, prepares the documentation for Research Degrees Committee consideration.\

2.2 The Research Degrees Committee considers School exemption requests, and determines the final outcome. The Research Degrees Committee aims to complete its recommendation within one week.

2.3 The Office of Research prepares and sends appropriate notification to the applicant in accordance with the final decision, CC to proposed supervisors.

The Office of Research aims to respond to all applications within eight weeks. Incomplete applications or applications from citizens of Sanctioned countries will take longer. The Office of Research will endeavour to keep applicants and their proposed supervisors informed of any delays to the processing of their application.

[Back to top](#)

Fees

3.1 The Offer documentation explicitly describes the tuition fee type for each applicant (i.e. domestic or international tuition fees). Offers for tuition fee scholarship are made separately to an offer for admission.

3.2 Where a candidate exhausts their fee type offered, the Office of Research in consultation with Student Services and Engagement will:

- Provide advice to the candidate and their Principal Supervisor in advance of RTP Fees Offset Scholarship exhaustion, including information about USC's tuition fees and how to access FEE HELP
- Liaise with the relevant School to determine whether a period of tuition fee scholarship might be provided to the candidate (where an extension request is submitted)

The School may:

- Consider the candidate's progress (including history of progress) to determine whether the reason that extension required is beyond the candidate's control
- Consult with the candidate's supervisors as required
- Determine whether or not to provide any period of university supported tuition fee enrolment. Candidates who are not making satisfactory progress are unlikely to receive additional support from their School of enrolment. This decision is at School discretion, and will be made on a case-by-case basis, and is subject to available funding
- Advise the Office of Research of their decision so that this can be communicated to the candidate and Student Finance.

[Back to top](#)

usc.edu.au/policy

University of the Sunshine Coast | CRICOS Provider Number: 01595D | Correct as at 22 February 2020
Hard copies of this document are uncontrolled and may not be current.