

RESEARCH TRAINING POLICY

Policy owner	Education Committee
Policy category	Academic
Policy status	Approved
Approval body	Academic Board
Last amended	14 th May 2024

PURPOSE

Research training is defined as a formal course of postgraduate study that leads to the acquisition of advanced skills, techniques and knowledge in the conduct of research, and requires the production of a substantial original research output, such as a thesis. This policy refers to MIECAT research training in the AQF 10 Professional Doctorate course but not the Masters coursework degree.

MIECAT values Professional Doctorate candidates and their contribution to MIECAT's research community. MIECAT is committed to providing high quality student-centred research training in an inclusive, supportive and research active environment. This policy provides the framework that supports these outcomes.

SCOPE

This policy and its associated procedures are applicable to the Professional Doctorate course at MIECAT, including students and their supervisors. The term research students and candidates are used interchangeably.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Rights and responsibilities of supervisors and research students

1.1 General principles

- 1.1.1 Research students are ultimately responsible for their own work.
- 1.1.2 Each research student will be supported by continuing supervisory arrangements including the appointment to them of a Primary Supervisor and at least one second supervisor.
- 1.1.3 The primary role of supervisors is to provide academic support and guidance throughout a candidature with the objective of enabling the student to achieve a high standard of researcher development, research activity and output.
- 1.1.4 Supervisors are responsible for offering tailored guidance and constructive feedback.
- 1.1.5 Supervisors and students must discuss their respective roles, and the expectations and requirements of the degree. They must reach a common understanding of key project aims, key milestones, proposed timetable and methods of working together. This common understanding must be documented.
- 1.1.6 Students and their supervisors must regularly revisit roles, expectations and requirements of the degree to ensure that the student's project stays on track.
- 1.1.7 Supervisors and students should establish and maintain clear communication, which means actively identifying and resolving any misunderstandings or divergent expectations as they arise.
- 1.1.8 Giving and receiving critical feedback, and learning how to use it effectively, are integral aspects of the research process. Supervisors and students should undertake these activities respectfully and with a common focus on producing quality learning as well as quality work.
- 1.1.9 Supervisors should be responsive to students' changing needs at different stages of the degree.
- 1.1.10 Supervisors and students should treat each other fairly and reasonably and should respect the social, cultural and intellectual diversity of the MIECAT community.
- 1.1.11 Supervisors and students must not engage in, or tolerate, harassment and discrimination.

- 1.1.12 Supervisors and students should recognise that every supervisory relationship is unique and will reflect the needs, preferences and work styles of those involved.
- 1.1.13 Supervisors and students should recognise that intellectual and practical input from other researchers is necessary and desirable and is to be encouraged.
- 1.1.14 Supervisors and students should exercise professional discretion in their relationship, maintaining confidentiality where appropriate.

1.2 Supervisors

- 1.2.1 All supervisors must be registered on the MIECAT Register of Approved Primary Supervisors and Co-Supervisors wherein relevant academic, or equivalent professional qualifications are detailed.
- 1.2.2 The Primary Supervisor for candidates enrolled in the Professional Doctorate must hold either a Professional Doctorate, PhD, or possess equivalent research experience.
- 1.2.3 All Primary Supervisors must be current members of the MIECAT staff or possess a relevant adjunct appointment to MIECAT, be research active and publishing in, or otherwise making original contributions to the relevant field of research. (Refer to Research Policy for a definition of research and active researchers)
- 1.2.4 All supervisors must undertake no less than one research-focused supervision training annually. To ensure relevance, the training needs to align with our subject learning outcomes and/or examination criteria whilst focusing on supervisory roles and responsibilities. . At least two training events per year will be facilitated by MIECAT for this purpose. Supervisor training must be recorded annually on MIECAT's Scholarly Activity sheet, which will then be transferred to our Scholarly Activity Register. Primary Supervisors will be offered doctorate-specific Supervision for Supervisors to reflect on and reflexively enhance their relationship with the students, their research, and the doctoral inquiry process.
- 1.2.5 All supervisors are expected to supervise in accordance with the responsibilities noted below, to foster research integrity and maximise the opportunities for timely and successful completions by:

- 1.2.5.1 being familiar with, abiding by and guiding research student/s in relation to MIECAT's policies, procedures, regulations, guidelines, and codes relevant to higher degrees by research, including intellectual property, ethics and compliance, integrity, and authorship arrangements, - as set out in the Research Policy
- 1.2.5.2 communicating/meeting regularly with their research students in order to provide timely advice and guidance in all matters related to research conduct and overseeing all stages of the research process, including identifying the research objectives and approach, obtaining ethics and other approvals, conducting the research, and reporting the research outcomes in appropriate form and media
- 1.2.5.3 maintaining a level of communication with their research students, other supervisors and relevant academic staff to ensure adequate supervision
- 1.2.5.4 satisfying themselves that the research methods and outcomes of research students under their supervision are appropriate and valid
- 1.2.5.5 ensuring that, prior to data collection, ethics and compliance approvals for the research program as necessary have been obtained, and that research students adopt ethical and safe working practices in places of study and work, and comply with work health and safety and injury management guidelines
- 1.2.5.6 completing the progress review and reporting requirements of MIECAT and advising research students on preparation for these reviews and reports
- 1.2.5.7 monitoring the performance of research students and ensuring they are made aware promptly of inadequate progress or insufficient work by providing detailed feedback that identifies problems, establishing agreed timelines and milestones by which to measure performance, and conducting additional reviews of progress as required
- 1.2.5.8 encouraging and supporting research students to publish and present their work where appropriate

1.2.5.9 contributing to examination procedures by:

- certifying that the thesis/exegesis plus presentational form is of a standard appropriate to the field
- is properly presented and adequately expressed in English, conforms to academic regulations and policies and is, therefore, prima facie, worthy of examination.
- consulting the research student on the choice of examiners cognisant that the final decision lies with both the supervisor and MIECAT's Education Committee
- advising the research student on how to deal constructively and appropriately with critical review, including examiners' comments and recommendations, as well as agree on an appropriate response
- recommending to the Professional Doctorate Co-ordinator an appropriate response to the examiners' recommendations, including a proposed resolution of conflicting examiners' reports to the Academic Board where necessary
- reviewing amendments to the thesis and when required certify that the requisite amendments have been made within a required timeframe
- once all amendments have been approved by the Primary Supervisor and the research document has been submitted to MIECAT, the supervisor will advise MIECAT's Academic Board with a request for approval to confer the Professional Doctorate award.

1.3 Research students

Research students are expected to:

- 1.3.1 establish with supervisors the mutual expectations and obligations of the relationship and their candidature at the beginning of their degree journey;
- 1.3.2 take an active part in maintaining an appropriate schedule of meetings with their supervisors;

- 1.3.3 obtain ethics and safety approvals for the research project as necessary (prior to working with participants and data collection);
- 1.3.4 undertake ethical and safe working practices in all places of study and work and comply with work health and safety and injury management guidelines;
- 1.3.5 participate in the intellectual community provided by MIECAT;
- 1.3.6 maintain the progress of work according to milestones agreed with their supervisors;
- 1.3.7 participate in planning and reviewing progress with their supervisors;
- 1.3.8 Report on their progress on an ongoing basis during their candidacy;
- 1.3.9 cite the work of other authors fully and accurately when disseminating research findings;
- 1.3.10 comply with all confidentiality requirements of MIECAT;
- 1.3.11 take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties and share responsibility for seeking appropriate solutions;
- 1.3.12 prepare the thesis/exegesis and presentation for examination and submit with the necessary documentation according to appropriate guidelines and regulations;
- 1.3.13 participate in discussions to raise any concerns or objections about potential examiners;
- 1.3.14 after examination, promptly make required corrections to the thesis within the allocated time

1.4 Induction and orientation of research students and supervisors to their roles. Refer to Student Orientation Policy.

1.5 Monitoring of the progress of research students

- Candidature will be considered provisional until a first-year report on a student's progress has been reviewed as satisfactory and confirmed by the MIECAT Education Committee.
- At the end of each year candidates need to have successfully attended to the requirements for each subject in order to progress. This will be formally reported to the Education Committee for review at the conclusion of each academic year.

1.6 Assessment and examination of students' work

1.6.1 The Professional Doctorate Coordinator will provide the Education Committee with background information and CVs of proposed examiners for approval.

1.6.2 MIECAT Education Committee will appoint 3 external examiners for the thesis or exegesis and presentation.

1.6.3 In the first instance the candidate's Primary Supervisor will advise the Education Committee of the examiners' assessment of the thesis and recommendations.

Possible recommendations

- That the candidate be awarded the Doctorate in Therapeutic Arts Practice without further examination or amendment.
- That the candidate be awarded the Doctorate in Therapeutic Arts Practice without further examination, subject to inserting in the thesis the corrections and/or additions of the kind specified, and which may be subsequently carried out to the satisfaction of the Education Committee, without further reference to the examiner.
- That the candidate be awarded the Doctorate in Therapeutic Arts Practice subject to revising parts of the thesis to the satisfaction of the examiners.
- That the candidate not yet be awarded the degree but be permitted to re-submit the thesis in a revised form for re-examination within a 6-month period.
- That the candidate is not awarded the degree.

1.6.4 The Education Committee will then ratify the Primary Supervisor's recommendations or ask the Institute's Director to appoint a Research Examination Group to consider the reports and make a recommendation.

1.6.4.1 Where an Examination Group is required:

- The candidate's supervisors will be invited to provide comment within 7 days on the examination reports for consideration by the Examination Group.

- The Research Examination Group will advise the Education Committee of their recommendation.
- The Education Committee will consider both the Primary Supervisor's recommendation and that of the Research Examination Group before ratifying a recommendation

1.6.5 In the event that 2 examiners cannot concur, the third examiner will be invited to assess the research thesis.

1.7 Independence of examiners

The use of independent thesis examiners is an important defining feature of Australian Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programs. The independence of examiners is one indicator of the quality of the examination process and of the course as a whole. MIECAT recognises that conflict of interest can occur with the candidate, the supervisor, the MIECAT Institute, the subject matter or other examiners. These conflicts may potentially exist to a major extent in which case the examiner will not be appointed, or to a minor extent in which it is deemed the appointment may proceed with appropriate mitigations in place.

1.8 Presentation and communication of research outputs by the graduand

The abstract and/or complete thesis/exegesis and presentation will be published on the MIECAT website.

1.9 Resolution of disputes

1.9.1 The MIECAT Grievance handling and resolution policy provides the framework and procedures for responding to and resolving student grievances.

1.9.2 Potential breaches of the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018) must be reported to the Professional Doctorate Co-ordinator. The process outlined in the *Guide to Managing and Investigating Potential Breaches of the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018) will be followed. Full records of this process must be kept. In association with the Chair of the Education Committee following investigation and evidence gathering, a determination will be made as to whether these allegations should be dismissed or could be classified as potentially minor or serious breaches of *The Code*. In

responding to minor breaches due regard will be given to the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, allowing for the opportunity for researchers to improve their procedures. Serious breaches will be referred to the Director of MIECAT who will be responsible for overseeing further investigations and the determination of outcomes and the subsequent implementation of necessary action.

1.10 Request for discharge of a supervisor

1.10.1 A Supervisor may be discharged by the Education Committee on the recommendation of the MIECAT Director provided that such recommendation is made in writing and a copy is given to the Supervisor; or at the request of the candidate, provided that such request is made in writing giving reasons for the request and the education Committee considers that a discharge is appropriate in the circumstances. The Education Committee shall consult the MIECAT Director, the Supervisor and the student before making any decision.

1.10.2 If the candidate objects to any decisions related to the discharge of supervisor or any other matter of concern related to research supervision, she/he will be referred to the MIECAT Grievance Handling and Resolution Policy.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Academic Board, Education Committee, HREC, Professional Doctorate Co-ordinator, Supervisors, Research students

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Academic Board, Education Committee, HREC, Professional Doctorate Co-ordinator, Supervisors, Research students

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

MIECAT Guidelines for Human Research Ethics

MIECAT Ethics application form

MIECAT Grievance Handling and Resolution policy

MIECAT Intellectual Property Policy

MIECAT Student Orientation Policy

MIECAT Register of Approved Primary Supervisors and Co-Supervisors

MIECAT Research Policy

Higher Education Standards Framework (2021)

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)

Management of Data and Information in Research: A guide supporting the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2019)*

National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2018)

AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research (2020)

Guide to Data sharing considerations for Human Research Ethics Committees, Australian National Data Service (2018).

VERSION HISTORY

Date of Issue	Version	Author	Summary of changes
20 th March 2023	1.0	J. Mitchell	Draft for approval
28 th March 2023	1.0	J. Mitchell	Approved by Academic Board
14 th May 2024	1.1	J. Mitchell	Revisions made in response to academic governance review
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