

Research Higher Degree Registration and Roles of Supervisors Policy

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1. Preamble

Top Education Institute (TOP) recognises that quality supervision is fundamental to providing a high quality research training experience, leading to successful learning outcomes and timely completions for higher degree research (HDR) students. TOP is obligated to ensure the delivery of quality supervision to each student and the timely completion of research degrees of the highest standard.

This policy outlines a process for establishing and maintaining a register of (a) experienced and skilled supervisors and (b) new co-supervisors who do not yet meet all criteria for full registration as an experienced and skilled supervisor. It also outlines the roles of supervisors. The purpose of the policy is to recognize, encourage, support, and develop best practice supervisory practice.

All supervisors of HDR students will be recorded on the Register of Supervisors. No HDR student can be supervised by anyone who is not on the Register of Supervisors.

To be eligible for entry into the Register, supervisors must meet certain criteria. The Register will provide for two categories of supervisor – Principal Supervisors and Co-Supervisors.

2. Criteria for Registration as Principal Supervisors

To be registered as a Principal Supervisor of HDR students, all of the following criteria must be satisfied:

- a. Be a member of academic staff (including honorary staff) of TOP;
- b. Be a productive researcher as demonstrated by scholarly outputs. This requires demonstration of current and active involvement in research appropriate to the field of study by both of the following:
 - i. Publications in the field of study in the last three years (including the preparation of substantive research report(s)/creative work(s)/patent(s) which meet the Commonwealth Department publication categories.
 - ii. Successful supervisory experience. This requires having co-supervised at least one HDR student to successful completion;

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- iii. Have obtained a Research Doctorate degree (or equivalent) in order to supervise a masters or doctoral candidate, where equivalence requires a minimum of a masters qualification (either coursework or research) plus at least ten years post-qualification professional experience in roles which support equivalence in terms of learning outcomes for level 10 qualifications under the AQF , in particular systematic and critical understanding of a complex field of learning and specialised research skills for the advancement of learning and/or for professional practice Professional equivalence to Level 10 AQF research doctorate will be determined by the Higher Degree Research and Scholarship Committee;
- c. Have agreed to supervise Higher Degree Research students in accordance with TOP's Higher Degree by Research policies and guidelines.

3. Criteria for Registration as Co-Supervisors

To be registered as a Co-Supervisor of HDR students the following criteria must be satisfied:

- a. Be a member of academic staff (including honorary staff) of TOP OR be considered to be a person with appropriate academic and/or practical expertise and experience by the Deputy Principal (Academic);
- b. Be a productive researcher as demonstrated by scholarly outputs or practical business and/or law expertise. This requires demonstration of current and active involvement in research appropriate to the field of study by publications in the field of study in the last three years (including the preparation of substantive research report(s)/creative work(s)/patent(s) which meet the Commonwealth Department publication categories. Alternatively, the co-supervisor must have current practical business/law experience and expertise reflected in direct business/law activities at a senior level. Previous supervisory experience is not mandatory, however co-supervisors without such experience may be required by the Deputy Principal (Academic) to complete the Southern Cross University course Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice majoring in Higher Degree Research Supervision or the equivalent;
- c. Have obtained a Research Master's degree or Research Doctorate degree (or equivalent) in order to co-supervise a masters candidate, where equivalence requires a minimum of a masters coursework qualification plus at least ten years professional experience post qualification in roles which support equivalence in terms of learning outcomes for level 10 research degree qualifications under the AQF, in particular systematic and critical understanding of a complex field of learning and specialised research skills for the advancement of learning and/or for professional practice. Professional equivalence to Level 10 AQF research doctorate will be determined by the Higher Degree Research and Scholarship Committee ; and
- d. Have agreed to supervise Higher Degree Research students in accordance with TOP's Higher Degree by Research policies and guidelines.

4. Supervisory Roles

A supervisory team will comprise a Principal Supervisor, who contributes at least 60% of the supervision, together with one or more Co-Supervisors.

Principal Supervisors:

- a. must be registered at the Principal Supervisor Level;
- b. are the main point of contact for the HDR student academically and administratively;
- c. mentor, as appropriate, the Co---Supervisor(s) in their supervisory role;
- d. are responsible for ensuring the standard of research is appropriate to the level of the Degree being sought. He/she must maintain close consultation with the co---supervisor(s) as well as the candidate;
- e. shall ensure that the research topic chosen by the candidate is appropriate to the level of the degree and will if successfully completed be worthy of publication; Will, in consultation with co---supervisor(s), advise the candidate on the quality of early drafts of the thesis that the thesis presented must be substantially independent work by the candidate; and,
- f. will report to the Higher Degree Research and Scholarship Committee on the candidate's six monthly progress reports. Should the Principal Supervisor consider that the candidate is not making adequate progress to be complete on time, the Principal Supervisor must recommend to the RHDC on one of the following courses of action, namely:
 - i. invite the student to 'show cause',
 - ii. recommend termination
 - iii. recommend downgrading to candidature in a lesser qualification, or
 - iv. advise the need for an extension of candidature.

Co---Supervisors:

- a. May be registered at either the Principal or Co---Supervisor Levels;
- b. Are usually the secondary point of contact for the HDR student academically and administratively;
- c. Provide support to the Principal Supervisor and the student;
- d. May provide specifically required expertise; and
- e. Provide 40% or less of the supervisory workload.

5. The Registration Process

- a. Staff who wish to be registered should complete an Application for Registration form (available from the Research Services website) and submit it to the Deputy Principal (Academic) to sign and forward to the Higher Degree Research and Scholarship Committee. Qualifications, supervision experience and current research activity will be considered before endorsing applications.
- b. Otherwise suitably qualified staff who do not have previous experience of supervision should be encouraged to gain experience by acting as co---supervisors with an experienced colleague. Staff should also simultaneously develop and maintain good supervisory skills and knowledge of HDR policies and guidelines by such means as attendance at relevant supervisory workshops/seminars, or attendance at appropriate external supervisory conferences/workshops, or participation in established online supervisory programs. They should also be conversant with the responsibilities of RHD students and

supervisors.

- c. Where otherwise suitably qualified staff have not yet supervised a candidate to completion, such staff may be registered as co-supervisors provided that they meet criterion all other criteria. It is expected that they supervise as part of an experienced team. The Senior Director, Research and the Principal Supervisor will mentor these staff to ensure that they become established supervisors. Following successful graduation of a co-supervised HDR student, a Co-supervisor is eligible to apply for registration as a Principal Supervisor, provided they meet all other stipulated criteria for appointment. Applications will be assessed and overseen by the Deputy Principal (Academic) and decisions made by the Higher Degree Research and Scholarship Committee. The Register will be maintained in Research Services.

6. Extenuating Circumstances/Special Cases

a. Periods of Leave

In the case of a Principal Supervisor going on leave (for periods exceeding 2 weeks), an alternative Principal Supervisor will be appointed where the Co-supervisor(s) does not meet the necessary Principal Supervisor criteria.

b. Resignation/Retirement

In special cases where the Principal Supervisor has left TOP, an alternative Principal Supervisor will be appointed where the Co-supervisor(s) does not meet the necessary Principal Supervisor criteria.

7. Review Process

The Deputy Principal (Academic) will be required to review continuation of staff on the register as part of the annual performance review.

8. De-registration

Deregistration of supervisors may occur on any of the following grounds:

- a. The supervisor leaves TOP or ceases honorary or equivalent appointment;
- b. The supervisor fails to meet the registration criteria; or
- c. The supervisor is guilty of academic misconduct at TOP or another university research institution.

9. Version Control

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
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