

## Research Higher Degree Admissions and Recognised Prior Learning Policy

Policy Category	Policy/guideline/procedure/rules		
Review	1 year from date of Approval		
Policy Code	ARP005		
Contacts	policy@top.edu.au		
Version	Approval Authority	Approval Date	Commencement Date
2013.12	Academic Board	19 December 2013	19 December 2013

### 1. Admissions

#### a) Research Higher Degree (Research Masters)

##### **Normal admission**

Admission to Research Higher Degree (Research Masters) candidature may be approved by the Research Higher Degree Committee only when it has been confirmed that the applicant for admission to candidature shall be a graduate of an Australian university or an equivalent standard international university or higher education institute (national or international). Further, the candidate for admission shall, subject to the equivalent qualifications section of this policy, have graduated with:

- a. A Bachelor degree majoring in a relevant discipline related to the intended research and in which the applicant has achieved a Distinction grade average; or
- b. A Bachelor Honours degree (first or second class) in a relevant discipline related to the intended research; or
- c. A Graduate Diploma degree or a Master degree of at least 2 semester's full time duration in a relevant discipline related to the intended research.

##### **Alternative admission**

TOP recognises that some potential applicants may have qualifications and/or experience that do not guarantee them entry to the Masters program under the normal admission requirements. In such instances, and with approval of the Research Higher Degree Committee, after examining the provision of a strong, clear and substantiated case from the applicant outlining research experience including outputs such as refereed publications, that applicant may be admitted. However, such an applicant will be required to satisfy an additional probationary process as described in the TOP [Confirmation of Research Higher Degree \(Masters\) Candidature Policy](#).

##### **Other admission requirements**

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Applicants must submit an outline research proposal in which they present a summary of their proposed area of research, identify research questions, and outline why they are interested in this area and how they might undertake the research. This outline proposal will be used by the Research Higher Degree Committee to determine if TOP Education Institute has appropriate staff to supervise in the proposed area of research and to allocate appropriate supervisors to accepted candidates.

Applicants are also required to demonstrate competency in English by providing evidence of one or more of the following:

- a. completion of one or more degrees with English as the language of instruction and assessment, and undertaken in a predominantly English-speaking context, or
- b. have an overall band score of not less than 6.5 in an International English Language Testing Service (IELTS) test with no individual band score below 6.0

### **Admission Conditions**

Admission to candidature will only be approved when appropriate supervisors and other resources are available.

All candidates will be admitted for a probationary period of no less than 9 months and no more than 12 months duration.

### **b) Research Higher Degree (Doctor of Philosophy)**

Admission to a Doctor of Philosophy Candidature will require compliance with all the provisions outlined above for admission to a Research Masters Degree except that the candidate must have the equivalent of a Research Masters Degree in an appropriate discipline (as determined on a case by case basis by the Research Higher Degree Committee).

## **2. Confirmation of Candidature**

Every applicant for admission to candidature should produce in their second six months of study a detailed outline of their program of study and will have demonstrated to a satisfactory standard their capacity to undertake independent research.

Toward the end of the probationary period a Confirmation of Candidature Panel will review each student to ascertain the level of progress (see *Confirmation of Research Higher Degree Candidature Policy*). Where a candidate is accepted they will be deemed to have commenced the research higher degree from the date of the probationary admission.

## **3. Recognised Prior Learning**

Advanced Standing of up to 24 credit points may be awarded for the coursework components of a Research Higher Degree to students who have, at other approved institutions of higher education, completed relevant subjects at an appropriate standard as assessed by the Research

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Higher Degree Committee.

#### 4. Supervision and Facilities Requirements

Admission to candidature will only be approved when the necessary facilities are available to support the applicant's research, and when a principal supervisor and co-supervisors have been allocated to the candidate.

#### 5. Duration of Candidature

The normal period for candidature for a Masters Degree is 2 years full-time or equivalent part time.

#### 6. Progression

Each six months the candidate will provide a written report to the Principal Supervisor who will forward it to the Research Higher Degree Committee with a recommendation to continue/terminate/upgrade/downgrade the candidate.

#### 7. Extension

In very special circumstances the Principal Supervisor can recommend an extension of candidature explaining the reasons for such extension. Only one extension during the period of candidature, not exceeding six months, (normally three months) will be granted by the Research Higher Degree Committee.

Applications for extensions will have to present a strong case which is endorsed by both the Principal Supervisor and the Co-Supervisor/s and include a statement from the supervisors of the progress to date and the anticipated outcome at the end of the extension period.

#### 8. Acknowledgements

TOP utilises best practice examples from other Higher Education Institutions to guide its policies in many area. In particular, this Research Higher Degree Admission and Recognised Prior Learning Policy makes use of the wording used by the University of New England in its policies in related documents.

#### 9. Version Control

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2013.12	Academic Board	19 December 2013