Candidature Matters

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# Stages of a Higher Degree

**Doctoral**
- 1\textsuperscript{st} Year Probation/ Confirmation
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} Year
- 3\textsuperscript{rd} Year
- Submission

**Masters**
- 1\textsuperscript{st} 6 months Probation/Confirmation
- Submission
Doctoral and MPhil Handbook

Comprehensive guide to Candidature:

- Candidature
- Variation to candidature (PT/FT, Ext/Int, Intermission etc)
- Supervision (code of practice-supervisors & candidates)
- Intellectual Property
- Thesis and examination matters
- Grievance, appeal procedures etc.
- Etc

www.mrgs.monash.edu.au/research/doctoral/
Monash Research Graduate School

Their principal role and responsibility is to administer the university's:

- doctoral programs
- the MPhil degree
- postgraduate research scholarships (and other awards)
- research training activities

Also operates the Research Graduate Centre in building 3E (Clayton)
exPERT Seminars

Over a 150 seminars/events/workshops
exPERT General
exPERT IT
exPERT Stats
exPERT Teaching
exPERT Writing Skills
exPERT Replay- DVD’s of previous ExPERT seminars

www.mrgs.monash.edu.au/seminars/
Podcasts and other e-resources

MRGS Podcasts and Powerpoints- Confirmation, Building a thesis, Completing your thesis on time, statistics, non-academic careers etc etc etc.

www.mrgs.monash.edu.au/seminars/

MPA Compass On-line Podcasts

mpa.monash.edu.au/compass_online/podcast-index.html
Statistical Consulting Service

• Funded by MRGS and provided by the Dept Econometrics and Business Statistics, the School of Mathematical Sciences and the Dept of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine.

• Postgraduate research students are eligible for up to 10 hours of free statistical assistance over the course of their candidature. If more than ten hours is necessary an hourly fee will be charged.

Works in conjunction with the exPERT Stats Program
mrgs.monash.edu.au/scholarships/grants/statistical.html
Progress reviews
Progress reviews: new structure

Previously:

**Annual Progress Report**
- Hard-copy form that sought information on academic and administrative matters
- Completed by student, supervisor and Head
- In theory, enabled identification of problems and facilitated discussion, resolution and follow-up
- In practice, parties were not altogether honest and the utility of the report was diminished
Progress reviews: new structure

Going forward:

Separation of the administrative and academic reviews of candidature

- **Annual Questionnaire**  (administrative review)
- **Candidature Milestones**  (academic review)
Annual Questionnaire

• Provides regular opportunity to:
  – review and report on conditions of candidature, ethics, IP, resources etc
  – identify and address issues that may be affecting candidature

• Online – student an supervisor complete the same or similar questions separately

• System automatically compares responses of student and supervisor:
  ➢ where responses are discrepant and/or concerning, the two sets of responses are flagged for review and (where necessary) action by a delegate of the academic unit and/or faculty
Candidature Milestones

Academic progress is systematically reviewed throughout candidature via three milestones.

- **Confirmation of candidature**
  - Pre-existing milestone – hurdle requirement
  - 9-12 months FTE from commencement

- **Mid-Candidature Review**
  - New milestone – applies to those who commenced from 1/1/2010
  - 21-27 months FTE from commencement

- **Pre-Submission Seminar**
  - New milestone – applies to those who commenced from 1/1/2010
  - Within 6 months prior to expected thesis submission
Candidature milestones cont’d

• For each milestone, the candidate is required to make a written submission and an oral presentation to an academic review panel consisting of a minimum of three members (incl. supervisor)

• Ideally the same academic review panel will participate in the three milestones for each candidate

• The review panel must provide feedback on the work submitted and presented by the candidate towards the particular milestone and discuss its strengths and weaknesses with the candidate. The panel should also make any appropriate recommendations to assist the progress of the candidate.
Confirmation of candidature

Objectives:
- provide objective confirmation that the research direction is sound, the methodologies are appropriate and that the standard of writing is satisfactory
- allow candidates a platform on which to receive useful insights and feedback on their progress and research direction from a panel of experienced academics
- obtain independent advice in the refining and development of the research question and methods
- provide a supportive environment to enhance presentation skills
- identify and remedy any difficulties that may impede successful completion of the research project

Oral presentation – 20 mins
- should explore the research undertaken to date and the anticipated future directions of the research program.

Written submission – min 1,000 words
- A progress report incl. the title of research report/thesis, statement of the research problem, the procedure, timetable, bibliography
Why do I need to have probation?

• Probationary candidature, is used to review doctoral and Masters (by research) students at an early stage of their candidature.

• The purpose of confirmation/upgrade process is to alleviate rather than aggravate the negative feelings and difficulties some candidates may have in early candidature.

• Candidates are more likely to feel confident in their progress if, at an early stage, they receive objective confirmation that their research direction is sound, their research methodologies are appropriate, and their standard of writing satisfactory.
The confirmation/upgrade process also ensures that:

- Any difficulties that might impede successful completion, whether in research, writing, supervision, or outside pressures, are identified and remedied early.
- Candidates begin the writing process at an early stage so that their research and writing skills can be refined and developed.
- Candidates obtain early feedback on their progress and research direction.
- Candidates benefit at an early stage from review of their progress by a team of qualified academics, rather than just their supervisors.
Should I worry about Confirmation?

- Confirmation is a time for you to demonstrate what you have learned.
- Most students sail through the confirmation process.
Mid-Candidature Review

Objectives:
• review progress towards the workplan developed on confirmation of candidature to ensure the candidate is “on track” for a timely completion;
• Check the candidate is developing the appropriate thesis structure, writing and presentation skills required and that research is being conducted in an ethical manner;
• identify additional support structures/programs which may assist with the development of a high quality research project and thesis;
• identify and remedy any difficulties that may impede successful completion.

Oral presentation:
• must explore at least one aspect of research undertaken to date and note anticipated future directions of the research program

Written submission:
• an accompanying written paper which demonstrates progress by the candidate since confirmation of candidature (could be a published journal or conference paper, a draft thesis chapter or a prepared paper of an appropriate length to the discipline)
• a progress report (minimum of 1000 words)
Pre-Submission Seminar

Objectives:
• ensure that the candidate has conducted high quality, independent research;
• verify that the candidate understands and can effectively present their research;
• provide constructive feedback from experienced and informed researchers on the near-finished research project;
• provide advice to assist the candidate prepare their thesis for submission; and
• further develop the candidates skills in presenting arguments clearly and effectively.

Oral presentation:
• to a critical audience - provide a summary of the thesis structure/findings and describes, in greater detail, at least one element of their research.

Written Submission – max 3,000 words
• a thesis summary and chapter outline which provides a brief overview of the research project and the main findings; and
• a more detailed explanation of the research element presented at the seminar.
Variations to Candidature

- Conversion to part-time or full-time enrolment
- Extension of candidature application
- Application for study away from the university
- Application for leave from candidature/scholarship (intermission of candidature, sick leave and maternity leave)
- Resumption form
- Permanent supervisor arrangement form
- Transfer to external candidature for PhD/MPhil (rtf)
- Application for writing-up away
- Application for withdrawal from candidature
Thesis Preparation
Information on the Web

Thesis by publication

Preparation, submission, examination
See Chapter 7 pf the Doctoral Handbook at:
Mode of Submission

- Standard thesis
- Thesis by publication
- Thesis containing both published and unpublished work

Well the theory was current twelve years ago when I started this stupid thing!
Editing Assistance

You can utilise editorial assistance from a professional editor but:

• you must obtain written permission from your supervisor.
• You must supply the editor with a copy of this permission.
• The name of the editor and a brief description of the service rendered should be printed in the thesis acknowledgements.
• If the professional editor's current or former area of academic specialisation is similar to that of the candidate, this too should be stated.
Binding

You have the option of
- hard binding, (must use for final submission) or
- soft thermal binding (initial submission only).

The following information must be printed on the spine.
- Family name of candidate (first name is optional)
- Title of thesis (abbreviated if necessary)
- The approved abbreviation for your degree (e.g. PhD)
- The year of submission
- Volume number - if more than one thesis volume.

Optional: You can also print this on the front cover
Forms for Submission

- Nomination of examiners
- Supervisor statement
- Library release authorisation
- Lapsed candidature (if necessary)
- Examination in confidence (if necessary)

Status after Submission

- Once you submit your enrolment is no longer active.
- Library and IT access (including staff email account) will normally cease on the date of submission.
- Your student account will continue for 90 days (jsmi5@student.monash.edu)
- If you are an international student, please ensure you are aware of any visa conditions that may change with the submission of your thesis.
- Scholarships cease upon submission.
Postgraduate Publication Award

- The PPA provides a living allowance for up to 12 weeks for research students whose theses are under examination and wish to use that time to write articles or books based upon their theses.
- If you are considering applying familiarise yourself with the cut-off dates (4 rounds per year).
  E.g. If submitting between 1 March and 31 May, apply for Round 1, closing on 31 March

Scholarships and Grants

- Stipend Scholarships
- Travel Grants
- Statistical Support Grants
- Doctoral Completion Scholarships
- Postgraduate Publication Awards

www.mrgs.monash.edu.au/scholarships/
Welcome to the Monash Research Graduate School News on seminars, scholarships and other useful information.

MRGS News 11 August 2009

A publication of the Monash Research Graduate School

News

Scholarships and awards

Seminars and workshops
Monash Postgraduate Association (MPA)

The Monash Postgraduate Association (MPA) offers a wide range of seminars, lunches and networking opportunities for research postgraduates.

- The MPA serves the interests and welfare of all postgraduate students by directing its activities towards their specific needs, offering representation, information, and advocacy.
- For further information: www.monash.edu.au/students/mpa/ Download The MPA Guide to Postgraduate Programs each semester
Language & Learning Services

- Free of charge for students wishing to improve the quality of their academic English and approaches to study.
- Available for native and non-native speakers of English.
- Assistance is offered in such areas as written and oral expression, reading, giving oral presentations, listening and taking notes.
- Face to face teaching and support is available on the six campuses of Monash.
Online tutorials:
• writing (including thesis writing)
• listening
• grammar
• reading for study
• study skills
• oral presentations

Monash Library Online Tutorials

How to:

• Develop a search strategy
• Do research on the internet
• Citation and Referencing
• Find a thesis
• Use End Note 6
• Use the Uni Library catalogue etc etc…

www.lib.monash.edu.au/vl/howind.htm
Further information - MRGS

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Questions?