Research Committee Terms of Reference

Section 1 - Establishment

(1) The Research Committee (RC) is established under the Academic Board Terms of Reference.

Section 2 - Functions and responsibilities

(2) The Research Committee will:

a. foster a robust culture of scholarship, a supportive research environment, and excellence and impact in research at or above world standard at the University, including by:
    i. establishing and monitoring institutional benchmarks for quality and outcomes for research, including funding, publications, citations and measures of esteem, impact and engagement, and initiate action to address any systemic issues;
    ii. monitoring regular reports of quality, outcomes, and risks for research and report on these to Academic Board;
    iii. ensuring processes are in place for the accurate and complete recording and reporting of research outputs and the safe storage of research data;
    iv. receiving, considering and reporting on research matters relating to commercialisation and intellectual property;
    v. overseeing large strategic research partnerships and collaborations;
    vi. overseeing reporting on strategies for research communications; and
    vii. reviewing and recommending the formation of new research units, centres and institutes.
b. promote, oversee, and foster research training in higher degrees by research and for research academics at the University, including by:
    i. establishing institutional benchmarks for quality and outcomes for HDR candidates, research training and research supervision;
    ii. considering and reporting on feedback from HDR candidates and supervisors;
    iii. considering and reporting on research training and development for academic staff, with particular reference to Early Career Researchers; and
    iv. overseeing the quality assurance of research training and advising Academic Board about the quality of research training outcomes. These reports must provide insights into the outcomes of specific cohorts of HDR candidates including First Nations candidates, discipline, home faculty, gender, international students, and students with a disability.
c. oversee accredited research units and courses by:
    i. conducting comprehensive course reviews of HDR courses at least every seven years, supported by internal monitoring of quality and outcomes;
    ii. meeting annually as a Course Review Committee with supplemented membership, and provide a report to the Academic Board that meets all of the regulatory requirements;
    iii. liaising with the Academic Programs Committee (APC) about research elements within coursework

awards;

d. monitor, review and make recommendations to the Academic Board in regard to all governance documents related to the requirements for an institutional policy framework for research and research training as specified in the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 Standard 4 Research and Research Training;
e. monitor, review and make recommendations to the Academic Board on matters relating to:
    i. the award of internal grant funding;
    ii. incentive schemes and allocation of research funds such as the institutional block grant;
    iii. the awarding of scholarships and stipends to HDR candidates;
    iv. the merit ranking of applicants for stipends and nominations for external awards; and
    v. scholarships for HDR candidates and graduates.
f. consider the reports from the Human Research Ethics Committee and Animal Ethics Committee as they relate to ethics and monitor compliance with relevant codes and procedures;
g. receive, consider and report on instances of HDR student and academic research misconduct, grievances, complaints and appeals and initiate action to address systemic issues relating to research and research training; and
h. determine and set research performance metrics and expectations for Research Active and Research Focused members of staff.

Operations

(3) The Research Committee will:

a. develop an annual reporting schedule aligned to Academic Board requirements;
b. establish working parties, receive their reports, and determine and/or recommend actions within the functions of the Research Committee in response to such reports;
c. establish a working party to consider and approve HDR candidates' scholarship and candidature extension applications, and fee waiver requests;
d. establish Research Committees at faculties;
e. provide minutes and reports from Research Committee meetings to Academic Board and the broader University;
f. review its own performance against its Terms of Reference at least annually; and
g. consider and report on any matter referred to the Research Committee by Academic Board or the Vice-Chancellor.

Section 3 - Membership

(4) Membership of the Research Committee will comprise:

a. Chair: Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection;
b. Deputy Chair: Director Research;
c. Deputy Chair: Dean of Graduate Studies;
d. Deputy Vice-Chancellor First Nations Leadership;
e. Associate Deans Research or faculty HDR Coordinators;
f. Director Menzies School of Health Research;
g. Associate Director for Research Menzies School of Health Research;
h. Directors of Research Institutes;

i. Director Library Services;
j. Chair Human Research Ethics Committee;
k. Chair Animal Ethics Committee;
l. Two Research academics (appointed);
m. One Early Career Researcher (appointed); and
n. Two HDR candidates (appointed).

(5) The Chair may appoint individuals with particular knowledge and/or skills that the Chair believes would benefit the Research Committee or for equity purposes.

(6) Ex officio members may nominate a standing nominee.

(7) Appointed members will be appointed by the Chair after calling for expressions of interest from the relevant cohorts.

Members' attendance

(8) Attendance by members will be monitored by the Secretary. If a member has three consecutive unexplained absences from Research Committee meetings the Chair will discuss with the Vice-President Governance and University Secretary their future participation as a member of the committee.

Section 4 - Chair

(9) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection will be Chair of the Research Committee.

(10) The Director Research and the Dean of Graduate Studies will be the Deputy Chairs of the Research Committee.

(11) A Deputy Chair shall chair the meeting if the Chair is unable to attend. If the Chair and both Deputy Chairs are unable to attend a meeting, the Chair shall nominate an alternative Chair.

Section 5 - Secretary

(12) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Community Connection will nominate a secretary for the Research Committee.

Section 6 - Terms of office

(13) HDR candidate members may serve while actively enrolled for a higher degree by research. The term of any candidate can be no more than four calendar years in total.

(14) Researcher academics and early career researchers may serve a two-year term from the date of appointment and are eligible for reappointment by the Chair without an expressions of interest process.

(15) Ex officio members are members of the committee for the duration of appointment to their position.

Section 7 - Quorum

(16) At a meeting of the Research Committee a quorum is constituted as 50% plus one members of the Committee.

Section 8 - Meetings

(17) The Research Committee will meet at least four (4) times per year, and the Chair may call additional meetings if necessary.

Member conduct

(18) Professional conduct of members is expected at all times. The Chair may call members to order as required.

(19) Items of discussion must be treated with confidentiality as appropriate by members.

Section 9 - Agenda

(20) The agenda is to be distributed with supporting documentation normally at least three (3) days prior to the meeting date.

Section 10 - Out of session approval

(21) Urgent matters requiring a resolution prior to the next scheduled meeting, or before an additional meeting can be called, may be addressed by a circular resolution sent to members via email out of session.

(22) Any circular resolutions will be reported in the next meeting's minutes and reported to Academic Board.

(23) Circular resolutions should be used infrequently and only for matters that are urgent and do not require lengthy discussion by board members. If a lengthy discussion is required to support the decision, a Research Committee meeting should be convened.

Section 11 - Minutes

(24) Meeting minutes and action items will be made available within two weeks of the meeting.

(25) The minutes will detail the item under discussion, the main points of the discussion, the resolution reached and the primary reasons for reaching that determination.

Section 12 - Reporting

(26) The minutes and action items from the Research Committee will be provided to the next meeting of the Academic Board.

(27) Information relating to matters under consideration and issues resolved will be disseminated to the University.

Section 13 - Conflicts of Interest

(28) Where a member has an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest regarding an agenda item, they must declare this to the Chair at the commencement of discussion of the item, and be prepared to excuse themselves from the discussion, or the room, if required, as per the terms of the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of staff printing this document to always refer to the Policy Library for the latest version.

Section 14 - Non-compliance

(29) Non-compliance with Governance Documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct - Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct - Students.

(30) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(31) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

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Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Faculty" - An organisational and academic unit in the University that delivers courses and conducts research.

"University" - Charles Darwin University, a body corporate established under section 4 of the Charles Darwin University Act 2003. The University is comprised of the various faculties, CDU TAFE, organisational units, and formal committees, including the governing University Council and Academic Board.