Graduate Research at UTS

The Research Environment

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Introduction

At UTS, we are proud of the results and societal impact that we have achieved since we formed in 1988. We now rightly have a reputation, both nationally and internationally, as a leading research university. This reflects the commitment of the university and of our individual academic and professional staff members to producing and supporting excellent research.

We're consistently ranked as the top young University in Australia, and our sights are set even higher. One hundred per cent of UTS's broad research fields have been benchmarked at world standard or above by the Australian Government's 2018 Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) evaluation.

We have made significant investments over the past decade, in particular through our academic growth and campus development strategies. These have enabled us to increase the scale, quality and impact of our research. Our achievements have come through focus. They have been greatly accelerated by our culture of collegiality and creativity, use of agile and transdisciplinary approaches, and our industry and community connections. All these have been used to create real-world solutions to complex problems. This positive culture and approach has increasingly seen us sought out as a research partner across different industry and professional-practice sectors. These foundational elements have been embedded into our UTS 2030 strategy.

Our postgraduate research program is designed to produce the leaders of the future. We offer a supportive, multidisciplinary research environment where you can study alongside world-leading experts in your field.

As part of the UTS research strategy, we have chosen to build research capacity and performance in our research areas with the UTS vision, to be a world-leading university of technology.

- Health
- Future Industries
- Sustainability
- Infrastructure
- Communities
- Transdisciplinary

These guidelines describe the research environment and support services available to Graduate Research Students at UTS. It includes sections on research governance and researcher development programs, as well as links to relevant policies, other guidelines and rules.

The guidelines apply to both Master's (Research) degree and Doctoral degree candidates, currently enrolled students, supervisors and staff involved in research and research degree management at UTS.

1. The Graduate Research Journey

1.1 Information sources

At UTS we have several activities and resources aimed at supporting your research studies from induction and orientation to the UTS research community through to graduation.

UTS Graduate Research provides you with a wealth of information about the resources available to support for your studies in the graduate research space.

1.2 The UTS Graduate Research Education Framework (GREF)

Graduate research programs at UTS are structured in accordance with the Graduate Research Education Framework (GREF).

The UTS GREF is a university-wide initiative that involves faculties, research centres and the GRS. The framework has two main aims: to support the advancement of knowledge through original graduate research and to develop the graduate research student as a researcher prepared for careers in academia and/or industry.

This framework articulates the support you will receive and are expected to engage with while undertaking a graduate research degree at UTS.

The UTS Graduate Research Education Framework:

- involves a panel of supervisors;

- is guided by a Graduate Research Study Plan (GRSP);

- comprises three formal candidature stages including assessment;

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- includes mandatory and optional training components;

- involves undertaking a program of research that adheres to research management best practice;

- culminates with the submission of a final thesis for examination;

- provides a supportive Research Environment.

1.3 Getting started

When you start your studies at UTS, you will be invited to attend induction sessions run by the Graduate Research School and your faculty.   The GRS induction session will provide you with an overview of the UTS Graduate Research Education Framework and UTS services that will support you during your HDR candidature. If you are unable to attend, a recorded version is available at the Graduate Research website.

1.4 Candidature Management, Progress and Submission

You will find information regarding all stages of candidature management from the GRSP to Examination in the Graduate Research Candidature Management, Thesis Preparation and Submission Procedures. This is your main source of information about the university-wide procedures that support your candidature.

2. Support

UTS offers a range of support which begins with your induction and continues throughout your candidature. Support starts with your supervisory panel and also includes your faculty/institute contacts, central units such as the Graduate Research School (GRS), the Research Office (RO), the UTS Library, student services, scholarships and researcher development programs.

2.1 Supervisors

Your supervisory panel is your first point of reference for research advice and support. They are the experts in your field. Your supervisors oversee all stages of your research degree, guide you in the design and conduct of your project, work with you to set goals and monitor progress, and advise on your thesis and publications.

The Graduate Research and Supervision Policy sets our roles and responsibilities for supervisors and students.

Supervisors and supervisory panels are appointed by the Faculty Responsible Academic Officer. The total number and type of supervisors appointed to your panel will vary across faculties; however, panels require a minimum of two supervisors including one principal supervisor and one co-supervisor. A supervisory panel may include supervisors from more than one UTS faculty or institute (i.e., cross-faculty supervision), from other universities or research institutions, or relevant industry partners.

2.2 Faculties

When you commence at UTS, you will undertake your research project in one of our faculties, institutes or centres. The area you study in will depend on the research project and supervisor you choose. The faculty or academic unit in which you are enrolled has direct oversight of your research program. They provide you with academic and administrative guidance.

Faculties provide support to graduate research students including researcher development programs, student engagement activities, and the development and implementation of procedures to manage research

degree candidature, including determining specific candidature stage assessment procedures. They also have a Responsible Academic Officer (RAO) who supports graduate research students in their area.

2.3 The Graduate Research School (GRS)

The UTS Graduate Research School (GRS) is the central support unit for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students at UTS. From the initial application and admission stage and final submission, through to development of your early research career skills, the GRS team are dedicated to assisting you with managing your candidature, scholarships and study queries. GRS also provides you with access to a range of learning opportunities, workshops and resources to help develop your skills and knowledge as a researcher throughout your research degree. GRS also supports a range of events designed to help you build a strong peer cohort as you settle into the UTS research community.

2.4 The Research Office (RO)

The Research Office (RO) is responsible for university contract and collaborative research, and for research commercialisation. As a research student, RO can assist you in areas such as NHMRC applications, Orchid ID, IP management and ethics applications.

2.5 UTS Library

The UTS Library provides services to support students at all stages of their studies. Workshops and training sessions are run throughout the year on finding information, managing data, referencing, connecting and collaborating with colleagues, getting published and maximising research impact. Online tutorials and the Research section of the UTS Library website provide additional specialised support. Librarians also provide information and assistance via email, chat and social media channels.

The Library has an extensive collection of journals, books and other resources, both online and in print, and provides free access to a wide range of research databases and other tools such as referencing software. The collection is supplemented by access to partner University collections through the BONUS+ service, subsidised reciprocal borrowing arrangements with most Australian university libraries and the inter-library loan service which sources material locally and internationally at no cost to graduate research students.

2.6 Further Support

If you are unsure whether the course or subjects you are doing are the right fit for you or if you are finding it hard going, there are a number of resources available to help you. In addition to your faculty academic support (supervisor and/or RAO) and GRS, Student Services offers support for health and wellbeing, financial help, accommodation, and other common areas of student concern.

3. Research Scholarships and Funding

At UTS we know that providing financial support can give you more time to focus on your studies, so we offer a range of research scholarships and funding schemes for domestic and international applicants.

Our scholarships are divided into the following three categories:

UTS competitive scholarships (automatic assessment)
UTS scholarships by application
External scholarships by application

When you submit your online application to study at UTS, you will be automatically assessed for the UTS 'automatic assessment' scholarship schemes providing you have ticked the box that says 'I want to be considered for UTS scholarships' on the online application form. The schemes include living allowance stipends and tuition fee scholarships (for international students). Notification of outcomes is via email. In addition, GRS manages schemes which provide you with additional support, such as the Thesis Completion Equity Grant, Vice Chancellors' Conference Fund. GRS will assist you manage your scholarship throughout its duration.

Please visit Research Scholarships for further information.

4. Research Integrity

4.1 Responsible Conduct of Research

As a graduate research student you are required to successfully complete the GRS Research Integrity Module. This module is designed to support you to engage in responsible research practices that are carried out to the high standards of conduct and practice including honesty and integrity, respect for human participants, animals and the environment, acknowledgement of the contributions of others in research, and responsible communication of results. All students are required to complete this module prior to their stage 1 assessment.

Research governance at UTS comprises the principles, requirements, standards and oversight of research. These principles, requirements and standards are encapsulated in our research policies, which align with relevant Australian legislation and guidelines. Oversight of research at UTS is provided through the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and a number of research committees.

5. HDR Capability Framework

UTS HDR Capability Framework is a pedagogical framework for higher degree research student development that aims to embed the capabilities required to develop research knowledge and skills relevant to a diverse range of careers and to deliver a range of research outputs meeting the requirements of the discipline or field of study.

This framework is a specialised HDR student version of UTS's wider Research Outcomes Capability Framework. It serves to situate UTS HDR students as highly valued members of the research community and forms a key aspect of the HDR student experience at UTS. Using this dedicated framework HDR students will develop a distinctive research identity—a UTS researcher.

6. Researcher Development and Support

6.1 Researcher Development and Support

The UTS HDR Capability Framework is underpinned by a Researcher Development and Support Program. This program draws on expertise from across UTS including the Graduate Research School (GRS), the Library, the Research Office (RO), Information Technology Unit (ITU), Student Services Unit and Faculties and Institute/Centres.

The Researcher Development and Support program supports you through five main aspects of your HDR study:

- **Integrating into a culture of research excellence**: a series of orientation workshops that prepare you to take your place in the UTS researcher community

- **Demonstrating integrity and respect**: complete a research data management plan and the mandatory modules on Consent Matters and Research Integrity

- **Designing your research degree journey**: take ownership of your Graduate Research Study Plan

- **Developing your career**: make the most of the professional development opportunities presented by HDR study and become 'world-ready'

- **Cultivating your wellbeing:** make wellbeing an integral component of your UTS HDR experience

You can browse and register for upcoming events here.

6.2 Library Programs

The UTS Library's services for students and researchers has a suite of services on topics such as Research Data Management, Publishing and Metrics, Copyright, Writing, English skills and more.

7. Campus

The UTS campus contains information for students on how to get to, from and around UTS and to gain a sense of the scope of facilities and services offered at the Campus:

Use the campus information to:

- Understand campus precincts and the building and room numbering system
- Locate a building, hall or lecture theatre or the library
- Use preferred paths to avoid traffic or find out about campus shuttle buses
- Find food, drink and retail outlets on campus
- Locate showers, changing rooms and bike racks
- Identify academic facilities such as study and social spaces, computing and printing
- Know how to get to support services such as student centres, health, counselling, accommodation and careers advice
- Find out what's available around UTS
- Find out about child care and accommodation options at UTS

7.1 Places and spaces

At UTS, more than 20 campus buildings accommodate hundreds of teaching, research, student and staff spaces. Our Alumni Green is the green heart of the campus, which also includes five student residences, two childcare centres and many more facilities that support our community.

UTS continues to invest in and transform our campus to support our vision of being a world-class university of technology. We are developing work and study spaces to accommodate future education and research needs, as well as future growth.

7.2 Communication

You will be allocated an email address upon enrolment at UTS. Official communications from UTS are sent to your UTS student email address (see Student Rules). All graduate research students must use their UTS student email address when communicating with the University.

As a graduate research student, you are obliged to check your UTS email regularly for official communications from the University, including the Faculty and the GRS. Information about candidature management and researcher development workshops and activities is available from the Graduate Research website. Check with your faculty for faculty specific online resources, including websites, intranets and wikis.

7.3 Support for graduate research students off campus

At UTS, currently there is no 'distance mode' offering for research degrees. However, it is understood that many students will be based off campus at some point in their degree or be enrolled offshore due to circumstances such as Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent border closures. Arrangements for adequate supervision and support of the student and the project must be agreed and approved before the off-campus period begins. Further information can be found in the Graduate Research Candidature Management, Thesis Preparation and Submission Procedures.

8. Equity and Diversity at UTS

UTS integrates equity and diversity principles within all its decisions and operations:

The Provost oversees the development of policies and practices to promote equity and eliminate discrimination amongst students and staff and continue to develop a diverse, inclusive and accessible university environment

The Equity & Diversity Unit provides specialist advice and support on policy development, training and development, equity-related complaint resolution and social justice initiatives
All UTS staff with management / supervisory responsibilities have a range of equal opportunity accountabilities.

All UTS staff and students have a responsibility to avoid discrimination or harassment in their personal interactions with other staff and with students. Discriminatory or harassing behaviour is a serious breach of UTS policy and can lead to disciplinary action being taken under the relevant award (for staff) or University Rules (for students)

The Equity & Diversity Unit promotes social inclusion and widening participation initiatives at UTS, including:

- Access to education and employment for people from diverse backgrounds

- Grievance handling advice and assistance for matters relating to discrimination and harassment

- Design and facilitation of equity and diversity training

- Guest lectures and presentations on equity and diversity issues to student and staff groups

The unit also advises on equity issues as they arise at UTS. For information, contact the Equity & Diversity Unit on 9514 1084 or email.

9. Academic Governance

Governance at UTS operates within the framework prescribed by the UTS Act and By-law, and the rules, policies and procedures as determined by the authoritative decision-making bodies of the University. Decisions are implemented in accordance with the delegations as approved by the UTS Council. Consistent with its values and mission, the University pursues its strategic objectives and priorities through this framework.

Research governance comprises the principles, requirements and standards of research. These principles, requirements and standards are encapsulated in our research policies. All our research policies are there to promote a good research culture and practice.

9.1 Academic Board

The UTS Academic Board is the principal advisory body to the UTS Council on academic matters. Academic Board is concerned with policy development as it relates to the University's academic programs in education, scholarship and research, and community service. It refers policy recommendations to Council and discusses matters referred to it by Council. It plays a key role in the UTS community in providing a forum for the discussion and debate of the academic directions of the University as well as the quality of its academic programs.

The Academic Board is led by an elected Chair and Deputy Chair and has a membership of ex-officio positions (representing senior staff of the University), associate deans nominated by each faculty, academic staff and students elected from each faculty plus an elected postgraduate research student. Please visit the UTS Governance site for further information.

9.2 Graduate Research School Board

The Graduate Research School Board (GRSB) is a sub-committee of Academic Board and is responsible for the development of all governance instruments related to research degree candidature including supervision, course transfer, review of progress, candidature assessment, scholarship conditions and thesis examination. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Higher Degree Research), is chair of the Board and has responsibility for ensuring that these governance instruments support quality assurance and effective management of graduate research candidature.

9.3 Research Committee

The Research Committee is a university-wide advisory and consultative committee, established by Academic Board. It deals with matters pertaining to the strategic planning and policy directions for research as well as the development of the university's research culture and research profile.

9.4 Student Representation

UTS encourages you to represent your peers and bring students' experiences, values, insights and interests to the work of the UTS committees, boards and groups that deal with student matters. Through participation on the university's committees, you can contribute to discussions and decision making on academic, faculty and research matters, as well as in areas of scholarship, governance and community service. You will also gain valuable experience in advocacy, negotiation and teamwork.

All formal university committees include student membership and some committees have designated positions for graduate research students, including the Higher Degree Research Board. In addition to UTS wide committees, faculty boards and some research or research degrees' committees may also have current graduate research students or recent graduate as members. Please visit the UTS Student Representation for further information.

9.5 Faculty Boards

Each faculty or research centre/institute has a research degrees' committee or equivalent to ensure appropriate support for graduate research students and to develop local level governance instruments and quality assurance strategies. They also have a Responsible Academic Officer (RAO) who is responsible for supporting the graduate research students in their area. The development of all faculty graduate research procedures is coordinated by the faculty RAO and must be submitted for approval to Higher Degree Research Board.

10. Rules and regulations

These guidelines are provided in consultation with the following companion documents. You are encouraged to familiarise yourself with these:

- Graduate Research and Supervision Policy
- UTS Student Rules
- Graduate Research Candidature Management, Thesis Preparation and Submission Procedures
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
- UTS Research Policy
- Student Travel and Expenses Policy