SUPERVISION OF RESEARCH HIGHER DEGREE CANDIDATES PROCEDURES

PURPOSE

A research degree is a program of supervised research and study leading to the submission of a thesis. It is expected that all students for higher degrees by research, will have the benefit of full and effective supervision throughout the period of candidature. While there is no simple definition as to what constitutes "effective" supervision, the Research Higher Degrees Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee) has determined the following guidelines for the supervision of research higher degree candidates.

PROCEDURE

1 Role of Supervisor(s)

The supervisors shall, in the main, be responsible for guiding a candidate towards satisfactory completion of a higher degree research program within an appropriate time. All candidates undertaking a higher degree by research shall have a principal supervisor and at least one other supervisor. The principal supervisor shall be a member of the staff of the University. The principal supervisor shall be responsible generally for the direction of the research program, for determining that the academic requirements of the University are being met, and that the candidate is making satisfactory progress. In discharging these responsibilities, it is expected that the principal supervisor shall consult with the other supervisor(s).

2 Defining the Research Topic/Program

The supervisors will provide guidance about the nature of the research and the standard expected, about the planning of the research program, about literature and sources, and attendance at requisite classes. In particular, the supervisors shall be responsible for determining a program of research and study which is within the candidate's abilities, of a nature that will lead to the preparation of a thesis within the prescribed period, and which can be supported using available resources.

3 Ethical Clearance

Where the proposed research involves human and/or animal and/or biosafety issues, the supervisors must alert the candidate to the institutional requirements for the ethical clearance of such research.

4 Consultation

The supervisors shall be responsible, following discussion with the candidate, for determining a schedule of continuing and regular contact for the purposes of consultation and advice. The supervisor may require the candidate to submit such written work as deemed appropriate from time to time and shall provide constructive criticism of such work.

5 Rules and Regulations

While it is the candidate's responsibility to ensure complete familiarity with the rules relevant to their degree (thereafter referred to as the Rules) and their responsibilities in respect of candidature, the supervisors shall provide guidance as to the application of the Rules. Where research higher degree candidates are being sponsored by an external agency, the supervisors shall be completely familiar with the conditions of sponsorship

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and ensure that the candidate's research topic and/or thesis shall not be limited by undue confidentiality arrangements.

6 Progress Reports

Progress reports are designed to make effective reviews of the candidate's progress towards completion. It is most important that the supervisors shall be responsible for advising the candidate of the means of overcoming any shortcomings and of obtaining a satisfactory standard of performance. Where such advice has been provided to the candidate and no improvement is evident, it is the responsibility of the principal supervisor to recommend appropriate action to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee.

7 Supervision of Thesis Preparation

It is expected that candidates will submit to their supervisors for comment, draft sections of the thesis. The supervisor will peruse this material and anticipate any possible criticisms from the examiners; this relates both to the content and presentation. Candidates are required to give at least 12 weeks notice of the intention to submit a thesis. The principal supervisor shall certify on this notice that the candidate has completed all studies prescribed for the degree and will be able to submit the thesis in a form suitable for examination by the indicated date. Such certification is not intended to pre-empt the decision of the examiners and does not hold the supervisor responsible for any deficiencies in the thesis as perceived by the examiners. The principal supervisor is not required to endorse the notice where there is any doubt as to whether the candidate is ready to submit the thesis. The principal supervisor is required, however, to advise the candidate and the Committee of the reasons why support has not been forthcoming. The candidate may elect to appeal to the Committee, through the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee, for the thesis to be submitted for examination. While it is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the Submission, Presentation and Lodgement of Research Theses and Portfolios Procedures have been met, the principal supervisor shall read the thesis and certify that the standard of presentation satisfies the requirements of the University and that the thesis is in a form acceptable for examination. Where the principal supervisor chooses not to provide such endorsement, it is expected that the candidate will be informed of the perceived deficiencies and the necessary corrective action.

8 Examination

It is expected that the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee shall consult with the principal supervisor with regard to possible examiners. Provision is made in the Rules for a candidate to be awarded the degree provided textual errors are corrected and/or certain passages are revised to the satisfaction of the Chair of the Examining Board. Where resubmission is required, the thesis may be re-examined. As a matter of normal practice, the supervisors and the Chair of the Examining Board shall guide the candidate through the required amendments/revisions within the prescribed time.

9 Change of Supervisor(s)

There is provision in the Rules for either a supervisor or a candidate to request a change in supervisor. There are occasions when differences of a personal and professional nature may threaten the close working relationship that should exist between a supervisor and a candidate. Where it is likely that a candidate will be adversely affected by such a situation, the procedure for changing a supervisor should be used.

10 Conflict of Interest

Where supervisors of students and/or research trainees recognise a potential or actual conflict of interest, either on personal or professional grounds, the supervisor must advise the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research) in writing under confidential cover.

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11 Supervisor Training

Staff who are part of a supervisory panel for research higher degree candidates at CQUniversity are required to have been involved in supervisor training and/or relevant professional development in the most recent three years.

DEFINITIONS

All terminology used within this policy is consistent with definitions in the CQUniversity Glossary**.**

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee is responsible for ensuring these procedures are followed.

RECORDS

All records relevant to these procedures are to be maintained in a recognised University recordkeeping system.

Approval Authority	Academic Board
Administrator	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Original Approval Date	
Amendment History	Academic Board 1 June 2011
Date of Next Review	1 June 2014
Related Documents	

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