



Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Appeals and Complaints Procedures

1. COMPLIANCE OBLIGATION SUPPORTED

[Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Grievance and Appeals Policy](#)

2. PROCEDURAL DETAILS

- 2.1. An applicant or student who is subject to a decision to revoke, cancel or refuse enrolment on non-academic grounds, has three weeks from the date of the notification to appeal.
- 2.2. A student attending an interview associated with an appeal may be accompanied by a support person.
- 2.3. Any student that is not satisfied with the result or conduct of any formal internal appeal process may access an external right of complaint or appeal.

2.4. Appeals against cancellation of enrolment

- 2.4.1. A student may appeal against cancellation of enrolment within three weeks of the date of the notification that the recommendation for the cancellation of enrolment has been upheld. The appeal must be in writing and addressed to the Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor Research Excellence (ADVCRE).
- 2.4.2. Upon receipt of an appeal, the ADVCRE is to:
 - (a) convey the submissions of the student to the relevant Director of Graduate Research of the Enrolling School and the principal supervisor (where appropriate); and
 - (b) determine if a prima facie case exists for reconsideration of the student's cancellation of enrolment.
- 2.4.3. If the ADVCRE determines that a prima facie case does exist they are to convene an Appeals Committee comprising:
 - (a) two Directors of Graduate Research, neither of which is to be the Director of Graduate Research of the student's Enrolling School, or a person who has been, at any time, the student's supervisor or Thesis Chair; and
 - (b) a Doctoral research student nominated by the Curtin University Postgraduate Student Association on behalf of the Curtin Student Guild, who must not be the appellant and who is free from conflict of interest with any of the parties involved in the matter.
- 2.4.4. The Appeals Committee is to resolve either to uphold the cancelled enrolment or to permit the student to resume their course under any conditions determined by the Committee.
- 2.4.5. The decision of the Appeals Committee is to be final.

2.5. Appeals against classification of thesis

- 2.5.1. A student whose thesis has been classified as failed may appeal within three weeks of the date of the letter of notification of the failed classification. An appeal is to be in writing and addressed to the ADVCRE. An appeals will be permitted only on one or both of the following grounds:
 - (a) procedural irregularities in the examination of the thesis or in the conduct of any examination which forms part of the determination of the result. In this case it is necessary for the student to demonstrate that an aspect(s) of the examination process was not appropriately followed and that this caused, or was likely to have substantially contributed to, the failed classification; or
 - (b) documented evidence of bias on the part of one or more of the examiners.
- 2.5.2. Upon receipt of an appeal, the ADVCRE is to:
 - (c) convey the submissions of the student to the Director of Graduate Research of the Enrolling School and the principal supervisor (where appropriate); and

- (d) determine if a prima facie case exists for reconsideration of the classification of the thesis.
- 2.5.3. If the ADVCRE determines that a prima facie case does exist they are to convene an Appeals Committee comprising:
- (a) two Directors of Graduate Research; and
 - (b) a Doctoral research student nominated by the Curtin University Postgraduate Student Association on behalf of the Curtin Student Guild, who must not be the appellant and who is free from conflict of interest with any of the parties involved in the matter.
- 2.5.4. On hearing the appeal, the Appeals Committee is to resolve that:
- (a) the student be permitted to resubmit the thesis for examination by a new examiner(s) in accordance with the [Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Thesis Examinations Procedures](#), who is to examine the thesis and submit a written recommendation under the same provision as the original examiner(s);
 - (b) the thesis and examiners' reports are to be sent to an adjudicator in accordance with the [Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Thesis Examination Procedures](#); or
 - (c) the failed classification be confirmed.
- 2.5.5. The decision of the Appeals Committee is to be final.

2.6. Complaint processes

- 2.6.1. A student who has a complaint regarding supervision or other matters affecting progression in their course is to report, in the first instance, to their Thesis Chair.
- 2.6.2. Notwithstanding the above, all complaints are to be considered in accordance with the University [Complaints Procedures](#).

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities are as set out in Section 2.

4. SCOPE OF PROCEDURES

These procedures apply to all staff, students and HDR supervisors involved with HDR courses at Australian and global campuses.

5. DEFINITIONS

(Note: Commonly defined terms are located in the [Curtin Common Definitions](#). Any defined terms below are specific to this document)

Nil

6. SCHEDULES

Nil

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS/LINKS/FORMS

Internal

- [Complaints Procedures](#)
- [Conflict of Interest Procedures](#)
- [Course Approval and Quality Manual](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Thesis Examination Procedures](#)
- [Statute No. 10 – Student Disciplinary Statute](#)
- [Complaints Portal](#)
- [Curtin Values](#)
- [Line Manager Guidelines – How to effectively deal with complaints](#)
- [Complaint Handling Checklist](#)

- [ISU webpage – Advice and Assistance \(Accessibility Options\)](#)
- [ISU webpage – Public Interest Disclosure \(PIDs\)](#)
- [ISU webpage – How to make a complaint](#)

External

- [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 \(Cth\)](#)

Policy Compliance Officer	Melinda Fitzgerald , Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Research Office at Curtin
Policy Manager	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research
Review Date	1 st April 2024

REVISION HISTORY

Version	Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded	Date	Committee / Board / Executive Manager	Approval / Resolution Number	Key Changes & Notes
New	Approved	04/08/2020	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research	EM2043	Effective upon gazettal of Statute 12 (24/07/2020) and promulgation of the Admission and Enrolment (HDR) Rules (03/08/2020) and relevant policy