



University Procedure: UP18/3 Examination of Higher Degree by Research Candidates including Viva Voce

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This document sets out the procedures for the submission of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) student theses and their examination. It should be read in conjunction with the University policy on: Examination of Higher Degree by Research Candidates and the relevant Course Rules (UP18/3).

1. Submission of Thesis for Examination

Students and their supervisors should familiarise themselves with the Course Rules relevant to their project with regard to content and format of the thesis.

2. Intention to Submit

2.1 Students should submit an Intention to Submit form via HDRhub three months prior to submission which will inform the supervisors that the thesis is almost ready for examination, and act as a reminder for them to secure suitable examiners.

3. Nomination of Examiners

3.1 The coordinating supervisor is required to:

- (a) informally invite the nominated examiners for the thesis;
- (b) ensure their willingness and availability to examine within a six week timeframe from commencement of examination;
- (c) advise the nominated examiners that the examination will be managed through an online portal (HDRhub) and the thesis will be accessible electronically for examination (unless a specific request is made for a temporary bound copy); and
- (d) that Doctor of Philosophy examinations where the student was enrolled from 1 January 2018 require attendance of the nominated examiner at a viva voce (Ref to UP18/3 clause 3.4.2).

3.2 Nominated examiners must meet the following requirements:

- (a) be experts of international standing¹ in the field, hold a higher degree or possess professional experience equivalent to the degree they are examining;
- (b) cannot be a current member of staff of the University (The University of Western Australia) or hold a current Adjunct, Honorary or Emeritus position or have been a member of staff, honorary, adjunct or Emeritus in the last five years;
- (c) cannot have acted as a supervisor or co-author of the student or have any other conflict of interest;
- (d) only one examiner can be based within the state of Western Australia;
- (e) in the case of a Doctor of Philosophy, examiners must be prepared to engage in the viva voce process and attend via video conferencing, unless the examiner will be present in Perth, Australia on the nominated date.

3.3 All stakeholders involved in the nomination of examiners have a duty to declare any potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest even if the conflict is not their own. Refer to the [ACGR guidelines matrix](#).

¹Academics (or appropriately qualified industry-based researchers) whose research has global reach and are recognised by relevant international organisations, educational institutions or professional bodies, and whose research publications appear in the leading journals of their discipline or other trusted academic publications.

- 3.4 When the Board receives a declaration of potential, actual or perceived conflict of interest with respect to an examination it must consider the matter according to UP18/3 and its own practice and either:
- (a) determine that a major conflict of interest exists and exclude the relevant party from the examination process; or
 - (b) determine that no prima facie conflict of interest exists, and if so
 - (c) that the conflict is judged to be minor and allows the party to continue to be involved in the examination process.

In either case, the rationale for the determination must be recorded, and noted at the Board and on the student file.

- 3.5 For Doctor of Philosophy students, the schools must nominate at least two Level 2 or Level 3 actively registered UWA supervisors as potential viva voce Chairs at the same time as examiners are nominated.

4. Submission of Theses for Examination

- 4.1 The thesis must be of the length and format outlined in the Course Rules.
- 4.2 If the thesis has a creative practice component, the length of the exegesis must comply with the Course Rules.
- 4.3 Guidelines are available for supervisors and students on the intranet and should be referred to for style, format and editorial assistance prior to submission of theses for examination.
- 4.4 In the exceptional circumstance that a student applies to have their thesis examined without the endorsement of the School, the application will be presented to the Board with an explanation of the circumstances. To support their deliberations the Board may request an assessment of the thesis by an external academic expert of suitable standing. The thesis is not considered to be submitted for examination until approved by the Board.
- 4.5 Except in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the Board, a student is not permitted to withdraw, alter or add to a thesis or work after it has been submitted for examination.
- 4.6 The submission of a thesis for examination will be regarded as the end of the formal period of enrolment.

5. The Examination

- 5.1 Examiners are requested to return their written report and recommendations within six weeks of receiving the thesis.
- 5.2 After the requisite period, the Graduate Research School may elect to replace an examiner if there has been undue delay in receiving the report.
- 5.3 If a thesis requires a confidential examination, the examiners will be required to confirm a non-disclosure statement before commencing examination, acknowledging the confidential nature of the information in the thesis, work or appendix, and undertaking not to disclose or discuss any of the information contained therein without the written permission of the author and the University.
- 5.4 As noted in the Examinations Policy, students, supervisors or heads of school must not discuss the examination with examiners during the examination process. If information needs to be communicated to examiners for any reason this is to be approved by the Dean of the Graduate Research School and communicated through and by the Graduate Research School.
- 5.5 Examiners' reports – For thesis examinations without a viva voce
- (a) Examiners are asked to recommend one of the following classifications:
 - i) PASSED. The thesis be passed with no requirement for correction or amendment.

- ii) PASSED SUBJECT TO MINOR REVISION. The thesis be passed subject to minor revision as indicated and carried out to the satisfaction of the supervisor/s and Graduate Research Coordinator.
- iii) PASSED, SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIVE AMENDMENT. The thesis be passed subject to substantive amendment, as indicated and carried out to the satisfaction of the supervisor/s and Graduate Research Coordinator, with a report to the Board.
- iv) RESUBMIT. The thesis does not meet the required standard but has the potential to do so with additional data, substantial re-evaluation of the data, substantial re-writing, and/or additional significant material. The thesis will be re-examined within a 12-month limit to recommend either Pass or Fail.
- v) AWARD THE DEGREE OF MASTER². The thesis does not meet the standard to be awarded the Doctoral degree but be passed for the appropriate degree of MASTER.
- vi) FAIL. The thesis does not meet the standard to be awarded the Doctoral degree or the degree of Master and the student is not permitted to resubmit the thesis in a revised form.

(b) Examiners' reports are reviewed by the Board of the Graduate Research School within 10 working days before resolving on a classification outcome.

5.6 Preliminary reports - For thesis examinations with a viva voce

- (a) Examiners are asked to recommend:
 - i) Proceed to viva and select a preliminary classification recommendation; or
 - ii) Do not proceed to viva
- (b) If both examiners recommend 'Proceed to viva', the preliminary reports are reviewed by the Board of the Graduate Research School within 10 working days before they are released to the student and supervisors.

5.7 Divergent examiner's reports

- (a) If the examiners present divergent recommendations and at least one examiner recommends that the thesis be resubmitted, fail (or, for some doctoral course examinations, awarded the degree of master) the following process will be adopted:
 - i) the reports will be sent to the supervisory team and Graduate Research Coordinator of the relevant School, who will be asked to provide comments on the reports from a subject specialist perspective.
 - ii) Neither the supervisor nor the Graduate Research Coordinator share the content of the reports or commentary with the student, nor do they recommend a classification.
- (b) The report made to the Board is to remain confidential regardless of the outcome.
- (c) Where possible the Board makes a determination on a classification but may decide to take further action – such as appointing an additional examiner for the thesis.
 - i) In the exceptional case where an additional examiner(s) is appointed, that examiner will independently examine the thesis and recommend a classification.
 - ii) This additional report carries the same weight as those already received and all reports will be reviewed again on receipt of this additional report.
 - iii) The Board will determine the final classification.

6. Viva Voce (for Doctor of Philosophy students)

6.1 The viva voce panel comprises an internal Chair and two independent external examiners where:

- (a) The Chair will be a member of UWA staff from a cognate discipline who is independent of both the student and supervisors with regard to the project under examination, who would normally be registered as a Level 2 or Level 3 supervisor, have extensive supervision experience and preferably, experience as a Higher Degree by Research external examiner;
- (b) A Chair and reserve Chair will be nominated by the appropriate supervisors, approved by the Graduate Research Coordinator and appointed by the Dean of the Graduate Research School; and
- (c) The examiners will be nominated by the appropriate supervisors, approved by the Graduate Research Coordinator and appointed by the Board.

6.2 Prior to submission of the thesis, an application for a support person in a Viva Voce or any other special arrangements in relation to the examination must be made in writing to the Dean of the Graduate Research School.

²Only applicable to some doctoral courses

- 6.3 Viva voce scheduling is done in consultation with the examiners prior to informing the Chair and student. Due to differing time zones, the viva voce may not be scheduled during normal working hours. Students are normally given at least four weeks advance notice of the date and time and are expected to ensure their availability to attend. Requests to reschedule will only be considered in extenuating circumstances and must be submitted with supporting documentation to the Graduate Research School.
- 6.4 Examiners will submit their preliminary reports on the thesis within six weeks of receipt and at least three weeks prior to the intended date of the viva voce.
- 6.5 The preliminary reports will be assessed by the Board and classified as "Proceed to viva" or "Resubmit" where the student will revise and resubmit prior to undertaking their viva voce.
- 6.6 Where the student is approved by the Board to proceed to a viva voce, the examiners' reports on the thesis will be circulated to examiners, students, supervisors and Chairs no less than five working days prior to the viva voce. Any delay in receipt of reports may result in the viva voce being rescheduled.
- 6.7 The student is not required to make amendments to the thesis prior to the viva voce.
- 6.8 The Graduate Research School will make arrangements for examiner attendance, normally via video conference and, where the date and time for the viva voce falls within normal working hours, book a venue for the student and Chair.
- 6.9 The student is required to present a current UWA student ID card before commencement of the viva voce for verification.
- 6.10 At the start of the viva voce, the Chair of the panel will meet with the examiners to discuss their reports to set an agenda with agreed questions and topics for exploration.
- 6.11 All discussions must be in English and must be carried out in a fair and respectful manner.
- 6.12 Once the student commences their viva voce, they will be invited to give a ten-minute oral presentation before examiners begin their questioning and will be invited to make any closing remarks at the end of the oral examination.
- 6.13 The Chair will record the examiners' feedback and requested revisions in the Chair report and be responsible for submitting the completed form to the Board for approval.
- 6.14 The student must be advised of the recommended classification and any revisions to be undertaken at the end of the viva voce once the examiners have conferred privately.
- 6.15 In the unlikely event that the examiners cannot agree on the outcome of a viva voce, all reports will be forwarded to the Board for a decision.

7. Classification of Thesis

- 7.1 At the end of the examination, a classification is recommended to the Board of:
- (a) PASSED. The thesis be passed with no requirement for correction or amendment; or
 - (b) PASSED SUBJECT TO MINOR REVISION. The thesis be passed subject to minor revision as indicated and carried out to the satisfaction of the supervisor/s and Graduate Research Coordinator;
 - (c) PASSED, SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIVE AMENDMENT. The thesis be passed subject to substantive amendment, as indicated and carried out to the satisfaction of the supervisor/s and Graduate Research Coordinator, with a report to the Board.
 - (d) RESUBMIT. The thesis does not meet the required standard, but has the potential to do so with additional data, substantial re-evaluation of the data, substantial re-writing, and/or additional significant material. The thesis will be returned to the examiners for re-examination within a 12 month limit to recommend either Pass or Fail.

- (e) *AWARD THE DEGREE OF MASTER. The thesis not be awarded the relevant Doctoral degree but be passed for the appropriate degree of MASTER
- (f) FAIL. The thesis be failed and the student not be awarded the relevant Doctoral degree or the degree of Master and not be permitted to resubmit the thesis in a revised form.
(*only applicable to some doctoral courses)

- 7.2 Where the examiners recommend a classification of any of the options in 7.1 (d), 7.1 (e) or 7.1 (f), clear justification must be provided in the report.
- 7.3 Where the examination report recommends a classification of 7.1 (a), 7.1 (b) or 7.1 (c) the Dean of the Graduate Research School may approve on behalf of the Board. Such approvals will be noted in Part IV of the next meeting of the Board.
- 7.4 Revisions to the thesis specified in the examination report under 7.1 (a), 7.1 (b) or 7.1 (c) must be carried out within three months of the date of notification of the classification.
- 7.5 Where the Board classifies as "Resubmit" the student shall complete the required revisions in consultation with their supervisors and the Graduate Research Coordinator within 12 months of notification of the decision.
- 7.6 All revisions must be endorsed by the supervisor and Graduate Research Coordinator and approved by the Board prior to the submission of the final version of the thesis.
- 7.7 Where a thesis submitted for a Doctoral examination is recommended by examiners for the award of Master, the School will be asked to consider what revisions are required to be made to the thesis to ensure that it meets AQF Level 9 requirements, and ensure that these revisions are completed by the student within three months of notification of the decision.
- 7.8 In exceptional cases and when examiners believe a Doctor of Philosophy thesis could be considered for a Master of Philosophy award after further extensive revision, a student will be permitted to revise their thesis for a Master examination.

8. Resubmission of Thesis

- 8.1 A written report must detail the changes made and be submitted with the revised thesis.
- 8.2 The second examination should involve at least one of the original examiners where possible.
- 8.3 At least two examiners will be involved in the second examination to note whether the revisions requested have been completed. Examiners should not introduce new areas of concern in the re-examination that were not raised in the first examination reports.
- 8.4 The revised thesis, examiners' reports from the first examination and corrections report will be sent to the examiners, who will recommend to the Board that the thesis:
 - (a) Passed with no requirement for revision (other than for minor typographical errors); or
 - (b) Passed subject to minor revisions; or
 - (c) FAIL
- 8.4.1 Minor revisions referred to in 8.4 (b) include but are not limited to:
 - i) Corrections to calculations or equations
 - ii) Rewriting of sections to improve clarity of argument
 - iii) Addition of references and discussion of the material therein
 - iv) Typographical and presentation errors
 - v) Amendments to incorrect citations or omissions
 - vi) Addition or deletion of tables and figures
- 8.5 In the event that one examiner fails to submit their report within a reasonable time the Board may, at its discretion, either classify the thesis on the basis of the single report received or appoint an additional examiner.

8.6 Where a viva voce will need to take place after resubmission of the thesis, the outcomes are Proceed to viva (Pass) or Do not proceed to viva (Fail). In the event of divergent reports, the matter will proceed to the Board as outlined in 5.7.

9. Revisions and Final Version

9.1 Once a student has fulfilled the requirements of the examination process, the student will confirm their thesis title and 100-word abstract when submitting the final version. Once this is completed, the student will receive confirmation from the Graduate Research School that degree requirements have been met, and a completion letter will be issued to the student.

9.2 If a case is made by the student and/or coordinating supervisor that amendments cannot be completed satisfactorily within the prescribed time according to the classification outcome, the Graduate Research School may grant an extension. This extension will be no more than three months.

9.3 If the final version is not received within the prescribed time including the three-month allowance, and no case has been made, the student may face a course exclusion and will not be permitted to re-enrol.

9.4 A thesis which is not re-submitted within the prescribed time according to the assessment outcome will, in the absence of evidence of exceptional circumstances, be deemed by the Board to have failed.

9.5 The final digital version of the thesis should include an appropriate record of creative works, e.g., photographs, video recording. Personal information such as student numbers or home addresses should be removed by the student prior to submission of the final digital version. Signatures of the student, supervisors and other parties will be redacted by the University Library from the front matter of the final digital version submitted online.

9.6 A student is not permitted to alter or add to a thesis or work after lodgement of final version.

10. Access to a thesis

10.1 The UWA Profiles and Research Repository provides an open-access platform to capture, store, index, and distribute globally a wide range of research outputs produced by the University's researchers and postgraduate students. HDR students are required to submit a digital copy of their completed thesis to the repository and participation in this program is mandatory except where permission is given via a Restricted Access request.

10.2 The student, as author, is asked to:

- (a) Grant to UWA Profiles and Research Repository, a non-exclusive licence to store and/or communicate the thesis on the terms outlined in Repository Terms.
- (b) Warrant that they have all the necessary permissions to reproduce and communicate all copyright material contained in the thesis (including from the Publishers of their own published works) and to make the thesis available and accessible in an open institutional repository.
- (c) Confirm that all the necessary permissions to reproduce and communicate all photos and images in the thesis has been granted and to make the photos and images available and accessible in an open institutional repository.

10.3 Having met all the conditions for award, the final electronic thesis submitted to the Graduate Research School will be made accessible (where possible) in the UWA Profiles and Research Repository.

11. Restricted Access

11.1 The Board may, after consultation with the student, the Chair of the Intellectual Property Committee, and others where appropriate, restrict access to a thesis, other work or an appendix to a thesis for a period of time not normally exceeding two years from the date the thesis is classified as Passed.

11.2 A thesis, work or appendix will normally only be restricted if it contains confidential material, content for future publishing, or if it was a condition imposed by the owner of private records and material used by the student, or if the student was in an employment or other contract relationship with a third party that made the restriction a condition of the contract.

11.3 A thesis will be made publicly available on the indicated expiry date, unless another application to extend the restricted access has been requested by the student and approved by the Graduate Research School. The request must be received at least one month prior to the original expiration date.

12. Dean's List

12.1 Students may be recommended by the Board for inclusion in the Dean's List after consideration of the examiners' written reports and ratification subject to satisfactory performance at the viva.

12.2 A candidate for Dean's List would normally:

- (a) have been recommended for a Pass or Pass with minor revisions by all external examiners;
- (b) received a ranking of either 1 (exceptional – of the highest merit) or 2 (Excellent – strongly competitive at international levels) in all criteria (and the scoring of the first criterion should normally be at graded at 1, particularly in the case of PhD theses;
- (c) be ranked in the top 5% theses of those the examiner has examined.
- (d) be supported by extremely strong statements in each examiner's report about the extent of the contribution of the work to the wider discipline, or its capacity to transform work in the area.

12.3 A BGRS/Candidature Committee member is assigned as Reader once examination reports are available for committee endorsement. If the Reader nominates the student as potentially eligible for Dean's List, the Reader will be asked to expand on their review of the reports and their recommendation at the next HDR Candidature Committee. The review will focus on:

- (a) the extent and substance of revisions required by examiners.
- (b) the scores against the merit criteria, confirming neither examiner has scored any category lower than 2 (or if they have done so what is the exceptional case for consideration for Dean's List);
- (c) close review of the written reports. identifying key phrases or themes that underscore the examiner's view of the high value of the work produced; and
- (d) an exceptional HDR student's thesis is judged purely on the strength of the commendations of the external examiners and not on the basis of citations or impact factors of journal publications, quality of supervisors, or quality of performance in oral examination.

12.4 The decision of the HDR Candidature Committee is final.

13. Robert Street Prize

13.1 All Doctor of Philosophy students nominated for the Dean's List will be considered for the Robert Street Prize by the relevant committee.

13.2 Given that all theses on the shortlist have been deemed 'outstanding', the committee will need to agree on what makes the winner exceptional.

13.3 The shortlist is collated, and the selection is made by either online or in person voting at the end of each year.

13.4 The decision of the Board is final.

14. Appeals

14.1 Students wishing to appeal an examination decision should follow the process laid out in the University Policy on: Review and Appeal of Academic Decisions for Courses Managed by the Graduate Research School UP18/4.

14.2 The only grounds for appeal available are that *'...the examination and classification were conducted other than according to the relevant rules, policies and procedures or were otherwise unfair'*.

ACGR Guidelines - Managing Interests Matrix

Please note that this matrix is not intended to be comprehensive. While the matrix presents the examples in minor and major categories, it is recognized that such conflicts exist on a continuum and are influenced by other dependencies. A Glossary of Terms is provided below this matrix to assist with interpretation.

(1) Between Candidate-Supervisor

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
Supervisor has a current professional relationship with the candidate (such as shared membership of a Board or Committee, including editorial and grant decision boards) or has general oversight of the candidate in an employment setting (for example, a casual or short-term appointment)	Supervisor is the direct line manager or has significant line management responsibilities (e.g. appointment and performance management) for the candidate, and the conflict cannot be managed through other structures
	Supervisor is currently in, or has had, a business or commercial relationship with the candidate within the last five years (for example, partners in a small business)
	Lack of an appropriate contractual agreement to manage commercial or other interests between supervisor(s) and institution (e.g. stipends) to manage the project arrangements as well as the dispute resolution process
Personal or social relationships	
Minor	Major
Supervisor has, or has had, personal contact with the candidate that may give rise to the perception that the Supervisor may be dealing with the candidate in a less than objective manner	Supervisor has, or has had, a close personal relationship or other social, personal or legal relationship (e.g. landlord or lessee) with the candidate, irrespective of the date of that relationship

(2) Between Candidate-Examiner

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
Examiner has a current professional relationship, such as shared membership of a Board or Committee (including editorial and grant decision boards) with the candidate, but the duties do not require close collaboration and/or contact is limited	Examiner and candidate have professional association, board or committee duties which involves close collaboration and interaction (e.g. both are office bearers)
Examiner is one of multiple authors on a publication or research output with the candidate and/or has been involved in editorial or related	Examiner has co-authored a paper or other research output with the candidate within the last five years, where there was close collaboration
activities, where it is clear that there has been limited contact amongst contributors (for example, the candidate has a chapter or article published in a book or journal edited by examiner)	During the production process

Examiner has attended a candidate's milestone meeting or conference presentation but did not participate in the assessment process; or there was limited intellectual contribution to the direction or outcomes of the work; or the contribution was made as part of a double-blind review process	Examiner has worked with the candidate on matters regarding the thesis development or provided significant input to research design and analysis (e.g. is a current or previous member of the supervision or advisory team or was external reviewer of an assessment piece during candidature)
	Examiner has employed the candidate or vice versa within the last five years.
	Examiner is in negotiation to directly employ the candidate or vice versa.
	Examiner has acted as a referee for employment of the candidate or vice versa within the last five years
	Examiner is currently in or has had a business relationship with the candidate within the last five years (for example, partner in a small business)
	Examiner has previously assessed the candidate's research, either within the current or any previous higher degree candidatures, within the past five years
	Examiner has a direct commercial interest in the outcomes of the candidate's work
Personal or social relationships	
Minor	Major
Examiner has, or has had, personal contact with the candidate that may give rise to the perception that the examiner may be dealing with the candidate in a less than objective manner	Examiner has, or has had, a close personal relationship or other social, personal or legal relationship with the candidate, irrespective of the date of that relationship

(3) Between Supervisors

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
Some power imbalance exists between the supervisors, but it is not expected to materially affect the relationship and can be managed through other structures	Significant power imbalance exists between supervisors (e.g. line management, senior leadership roles) which may materially affect the supervisory relationship and cannot be managed through other structures
	(e.g. adding diversity to the supervisor team or developing a candidate/supervisor agreement)
Personal or social relationships	
Minor	Major
Supervisors have, or have had, a limited personal relationship, or other social, legal or commercial relationship, which may place the candidate at a disadvantage if they wish to raise concerns about supervision with either member of the team	Supervisors have or have had a close personal relationship or other social, legal or commercial relationship, which may place the candidate at a disadvantage if they wish to raise concerns about supervision with any member of the team

(4) Between Assessor- Supervisor or Assessor-Candidate

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
Some power imbalance exists between the assessor and supervisor(s) assessor and candidate, but it is not expected to materially affect the role of the assessor and can be managed through other structures	Significant power imbalance exists between the assessor and supervisor(s) or assessor and candidate (e.g. line management, senior leadership roles) which may materially affect the role of the assessor and cannot be managed through other structures.
Personal or social relationships	
Minor	Major
Assessor and Supervisor have, or have had, a limited personal relationship which may place the candidate at a disadvantage	Assessor has, or has had, a close personal relationship or other social, legal or commercial relationship with the Supervisor(s) or candidate

(5) Between Examiner and members of the Supervision team

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
Examiner has a current professional relationship, such as shared membership of a Board or Committee (including editorial and grant decision boards), with a member of the supervision team	Examiner was a candidate of any member of the supervision team within the past five years or vice versa
Examiner and Supervisor are part of multiple authorship on a publication or research output and/or have been involved in editorial or related activities, where it is clear that there has been limited contact amongst contributors (for example, the Supervisor has a chapter or article published in a book or journal edited by examiner)	Examiner has co-authored/edited a publication or output which has required close collaboration with any member of the supervision team within the last five years ³ .
	Examiner holds, or has held, a grant with any member of the supervision team within the last five years ⁴ .
	Examiner holds a granted patent with any member of the supervision team and the term of the patent is still in force
	Examiner has directly employed the supervisor, or vice versa, in the past five years
	Examiner has co-supervised with any member of the supervision team in the past five years

³ Mitigating circumstances may exist, for example where the paper in question has a large author list and where the examiner and supervisor have not collaborated directly.

⁴ Mitigating circumstances may exist, for example where the grant in question is held by a large consortium of relatively independent researchers.

	Examiner is currently in, or has, had a commercial relationship (for example, partner in a small business or employment) or other contractual relationship (e.g. landlord/lessee) with any member of the supervision team within the last five years.
	Examiner is in negotiation to directly employ any member of the supervision team or vice versa
Personal or social relationships	
Minor	Major
Examiner has had limited personal contact with any member of the supervision team that may give rise to the perception that the examiner may be dealing with the candidate in a less than objective manner	Examiner has, or has had, a close personal relationship or other personal, legal or commercial relationship with the supervisor irrespective of the date of that relationship

(6) Between Examiner-University⁵

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
Examiner is currently working for the University pro bono or for a small fee (for example, serving on a review panel or delivering a one-off workshop/training event)	Examiner has an ongoing paid contractual relationship with the University
Examiner has a current professional relationship with the University (for example, holds membership of a Board or Committee)	Examiner is currently in negotiation with the University regarding employment or work contract (other than examining the thesis)
	Examiner has received an Honorary Doctorate or other ceremonial award from the University within the past five years.
	Examiner graduated from the University within the past five years
	Examiner is a current member of staff or has a current Honorary, visiting scholar, Adjunct or Emeritus position with the University or has had such a position during the candidature or within the last five years
	Examiner has examined for the University two or more times in the past 12 months and/or five or more times in the past five years
	Examiner has had a finding of misconduct or formal grievance with the University, including any case currently under investigation

⁵ In this context, 'University' will be the institution(s) at which the candidate is enrolled, including partner institutions in cotutelle or other joint delivery higher degrees by research.

(7) Between Examiners

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
Examiners have a current professional relationship, such as shared membership of a Board or Committee (including editorial and grant decision boards)	
Examiners hold, or have held, a grant or have co-published with another examiner within the last five years	Examiners hold multiple grants or have frequently co-published in the last five years
Examiners have worked at the same institution in the last five years	Examiner works in the same institution as another examiner
Personal or social relationship⁶	
Minor	Major
	Examiner has, or has had, a close personal relationship or other social, personal or legal relationship with another examiner, irrespective of the date of that relationship

(8) Between Industry Partner-Candidate⁷

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
A power imbalance exists between the industry partner and candidate, but is either not expected to materially affect the relationship, or is appropriately managed through other structures (including contractual arrangements)	Lack of an appropriate contractual agreement between institution, industry partner and/or candidate, to manage the project arrangements as well as the dispute resolution process.

⁶ Noting that a close personal relationship between examiners would need to be disclosed by those individuals, rather than by a member of the Supervision team. Where it occurs, the University would consider the matter accordingly.

⁷ It is recognised that industry partners, by their nature, exert control over the provision of resources and support for the project/candidature. Such arrangements are ordinarily described in and managed through the contractual arrangement between the institution and industry partner and/or the scholarship agreement between the institution and candidate. The above table focuses on instances where an appropriate contract is absent, or where interactions are evident outside of the contractual terms and which may influence the industry partner and candidate relationship (e.g. candidate is an employee of the industry partner or has a pre-existing personal or social relationship).

Personal or social relationships	
Minor	Major
Industry partner and candidate have, or have had, a limited personal relationship which may place the candidate at a disadvantage	Industry partner has, or has had, a close personal relationship or other social, legal or commercial relationship with the candidate, irrespective of the date of that relationship

(9) Between Industry Partner-Supervisor

Professional or working relationships	
Minor	Major
	Lack of an appropriate contractual agreement between institution and industry partner to manage the project arrangements as well as the dispute resolution process
Personal or social relationships	
Minor	Major
Industry Partner and Supervisor have, or have had, a personal relationship which may place the candidate at a disadvantage	Industry partner has, or has had, a close personal relationship or other social, legal or commercial relationship with any member of the Supervision team

Glossary of Terms

Assessor: This includes any internal or external members of panels or other milestone events (such as confirmation of candidature) where a significant contribution is being made to the assessment of a candidate's progress or other decisions about candidature.

Close Personal Relationship: Includes known relative, friend, associate or mentor; an existing or previous emotional relationship including de facto or marriage; legally recognised family member (for example stepfather, sister-in-law etc.); a financially dependent person; a current or former legal guardian or dependent; or one who has power of attorney for another.

Examiner: a person who participates in or is nominated to participate in, examination of a HDR candidate's thesis (including creative works and/or performances and oral examinations).

Industry Partner: an individual in a professional setting outside higher education who agrees to host a candidate for an internship or placement; or who acts in a supervisor capacity for the candidate; or who provides significant resourcing for the candidate and/or project (e.g. scholarship stipend, background intellectual property).

Minor Risk: a conflict that can be appropriately managed through monitoring and a management strategy (e.g. to avoid, reduce or share the conflict); noting that the existence of multiple low-level conflicts would generally change the rating to 'major risk'. Furthermore, minor risk would normally be defined where not more than one individual has a 'minor' conflict of interest.

Major Risk: a significant duality or conflict of interest, generally indicating a need to find an alternative arrangement in order to appropriately manage the risk, such as appointing an alternative examiner, supervisor or assessor.

Publications/research outputs: outputs of variously different forms, that meet the definition of research and have been published or brought into the public domain. This may include books, journal articles, conference publications, original creative works, live performances of creative work, curated exhibitions, patents and research reports for an external body or a portfolio.

Supervisor/Supervision team: A person or persons appointed to oversee the academic direction of the candidature's work throughout the design, execution and dissertation activities. Note that some universities may use the term 'Advisor' to signify academics appointed to support the candidate's research training.