Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervision Policy and Procedure

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1 PURPOSE

This policy and procedure outlines the principles for the appointment, roles, and responsibilities of supervisors involved in the supervision of Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates at the Australian School of Business Pty Ltd trading as Australis Business School (Australis). It establishes clear expectations for the quality, integrity, and governance of HDR supervision, ensuring alignment with Australis' academic standards, research integrity framework, and regulatory obligations.

This policy and procedure applies to the supervision of all Higher Degree by Research awards offered by Australis, including research master's degrees and professional doctorates.

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with Australis' *HDR Examination Guidelines, HDR Assessment and Examination Policy and Procedure, HDR Candidate Progress Procedure, HREC Terms of Reference*, Higher Degree Research Committee Terms of Reference (in the *Governance Charter and Delegations Framework)* and relevant external frameworks, including *TEQSA's Guidance Note: Research and Research Training* and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)*.

2 SCOPE

This policy and procedure applies to all individuals involved in the supervision of HDR candidates at Australis, including Principal Supervisors, Associate Supervisors and external Adjunct Supervisors. It also applies to HDR candidates enrolled in Australis' HDR courses. This policy and procedure governs HDR supervision roles, responsibilities, and conduct. Award-specific candidature requirements, progression milestones, and examination processes are addressed in the *HDR Candidate Progress Procedure, HDR Assessment and Examination Policy and Procedure* and *HDR Examination Guidelines*. This policy and procedure applies across all HDR awards, including research master's degrees and professional doctorates.

3 DEFINITIONS

See the Australis *Glossary of Terms* for definitions.

4 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Commitment to Research Excellence

Australis is committed to ensuring the highest standards in research training and HDR supervision. Australis' key responsibilities include:

a. Provide detailed and accurate information to all HDR candidates before enrolment, ensuring transparency and clarity on course requirements.
b. Ensure HDR candidates' intellectual property (IP) is protected, and IP management aligns with national laws.
c. Maintain effective oversight of HDR supervision and research progress to ensure HDR candidates are appropriately supported throughout their candidature.
d. Implement an institutional research policy framework in line with the TEQSA guidelines for research governance and integrity and provide regular training for staff on the principles of academic integrity.
e. Ensure research infrastructure and facilities are fit for purpose and support the needs of HDR research activities.
f. Ensure all supervisors are familiar with TEQSA's current and evolving research and supervision standards and other relevant regulations, including the AQF and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.
g. Promote a culture of research integrity, academic freedom, inclusivity, and respect, and ensure HDR candidates have equitable access to supervision, resources, and scholarly engagement opportunities.

4.2 Policy Principles

Australis will maintain a register of supervisors who are actively engaged in research and meet the required criteria for HDR supervision. These supervisors will provide effective guidance and support, ensuring that students are mentored in line with ethical standards and research best practice.

Australis' HDR supervision process is governed by the following principles:

a. HDR supervision is a collaborative process in which supervisors and HDR candidates work together to achieve high academic standards and research outcomes appropriate to the requirements of the relevant HDR award and the Australian Qualifications Framework.
b. All HDR supervision and research activities must comply with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and Australis' research integrity and ethics policies. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that HDR candidates understand and meet these requirements throughout their candidature.
c. Principal Supervisors are expected to provide structured guidance, timely feedback, and appropriate academic oversight, and to be actively engaged in research or scholarly practice relevant to the HDR candidate's field of study.
d. All HDR candidates will be supported by a Student Supervisory Panel (SSP), comprising a Principal Supervisor and at least one additional supervisor. The composition of the SSP may include Associate and external Adjunct Supervisors, as appropriate to the HDR award, research project, and supervisory capacity at Australis.

e. SSP's will include research-active academics with relevant supervisory experience. External supervisors can be from other academic institutions or industry partners. Refer to the *Professional Development and Scholarly Activity Policy and Procedure* for details regarding research and scholarly activity expectations of Australis academic staff.
f. Junior supervisors may be appointed as an Associate Supervisor. Associate Supervisors become eligible to be Principal Supervisors once they have successfully completed three or more HDR students (AQF level 9 or above), unless approved by the HDR Director.
g. The Principal Supervisor will actively mentor Associate Supervisors who are less experienced. Principal Supervisor insights and support of Associates becoming Principal supervisors will play a part in the decision to "promote" an Associate as does student comment and feedback.
h. Associate Supervisors eligible to be Principal Supervisors will need formal endorsement from both the HDR Director and the Principal Supervisors with whom the Associate has supervised.
i. The supervision process must be transparent, with clear guidelines for the roles and expectations of supervisors and candidates. Regular progress reviews and feedback mechanisms are in place to ensure that candidates meet their research milestones and that any concerns are addressed promptly (see also *Student Supervisor Agreement Template* and *HDR Candidate Progress Procedure* for details).
j. When HDR research involves external or third-party collaboration, Australis ensures that supervisory arrangements adhere to the same ethical standards and research integrity as those prescribed within Australis. Clear agreements and induction processes must be completed to ensure that all parties are aware of Australis' research expectations and ethical obligations.
k. Australis is committed to providing HDR candidates with access to necessary research facilities, infrastructure, and resources that support HDR student research. Appropriate resources will be identified during the research proposal development process. Where necessary, and within reason, expenses such as software licensing, lease agreements, travel and printing costs will be met in part or in whole by Australis depending on resources committed by research partners (academic or industry). Refer also to the *Professional Development and Scholarly Activity Policy and Procedure* for examples of available resources.
l. HDR candidates have the right to raise concerns regarding supervision and research progress. Australis provides clear channels for addressing grievances and appeals in line with institutional procedures, ensuring that candidates receive appropriate support and resolution of issues (for details refer to the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*).
m. Supervisors must disclose any actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest to the HDRC, including any current or previous personal or financial relationships with the candidate. In such cases, the HDRC will review and resolve the conflict, which may include the re-assignment of supervisory roles.

n. Supervisors must ensure that HDR candidates follow ethical standards as outlined in the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and Australis' *Research Ethics and Integrity Policy*.
o. All supervisors are responsible for guiding candidates in obtaining necessary ethical clearances (e.g. human ethics approval) and ensuring compliance with relevant ethical frameworks throughout the research process.

5 PROCEDURES

5.1 Oversight

HDR supervision and candidate progress at Australis are overseen through a combination of supervisory panels and Australis governance arrangements.

Overall oversight of HDR supervision is exercised by the HDRC, which reports to the Academic Board. The HDRC is responsible for assuring the quality, integrity, and consistency of HDR supervision and for addressing significant issues, exceptions, or risks relating to HDR candidature.

The HDR Director is responsible for the operational management of HDR supervision, including the appointment of supervisors, the formation of Student Supervisory Panels (SSPs), and the coordination of supervision arrangements in accordance with this policy and procedure.

Each HDR candidate is supported by a SSP, which provides academic guidance and monitors progress throughout the candidature. The SSP is responsible for assessing progress at key stages and making recommendations where required.

The Principal Supervisor has primary responsibility for day-to-day supervision of the HDR candidate, supported by Associate and Adjunct Supervisors (as required) as members of the SSP.

5.2 Supervisor Eligibility, Appointment and Responsibilities

5.2.1 Principal Supervisors

5.2.1.1 Eligibility and Capability

Principal Supervisors must meet the following criteria:

a. Be an Australis employee or hold an appointment with Australis that carries formal responsibility and accountability for HDR supervision.
b. Hold a doctoral qualification (e.g. PhD) and have a track record of research or scholarly activity relevant to the HDR candidate's field of study.
c. Demonstrate appropriate expertise in the relevant business, organisational, or professional research domain aligned with the HDR candidate's research project.

d. Will have demonstrated their ability to work in relevant business/industry settings and in so doing provide facilitated access of students to data/resources/knowledge to the benefit of colleagues and students.
e. Have a demonstrated record of successful HDR supervision or equivalent research leadership experience appropriate to the level of the HDR award, as determined through Australis' supervisory approval processes.

5.2.1.2 Appointment Process

Potential Principal Supervisors are identified by the HDR Director, having regard to the HDR candidate's research interests, domain preferences, and the availability of appropriately qualified supervisors.

The HDR Director will facilitate engagement between HDR candidates and proposed supervisors to confirm supervisory suitability and agree supervisory arrangements.

5.2.1.3 Responsibilities

Principal Supervisors are key to ensuring that HDR candidates successfully navigate their research projects. Their responsibilities include:

a. Guiding the development and implementation of the HDR candidate's research plan, ensuring alignment with Australis' academic standards and ethical requirements.
b. Supporting the HDR candidate to progress through candidature in a timely and appropriate manner, having regard to the requirements of the relevant HDR award.
c. Providing academic guidance on research design, methodology, data analysis, and thesis or research project preparation.
d. Ensuring that HDR research is conducted in accordance with Australis' *Research Ethics and Integrity Policy and Procedure*, including supporting the HDR candidate to obtain and comply with required ethics approvals.
e. Engaging regularly with the HDR candidate and maintaining appropriate academic contact throughout their candidature, in accordance with agreed supervisory arrangements.
f. Participating in SSP activities, including progress reviews and assessments, and contributing written feedback and recommendations where required.
g. Supporting the HDR candidate to identify and access appropriate research resources, training, and development opportunities relevant to their research.
h. Ensuring that a Student–Supervisor Agreement is established and maintained, setting out agreed expectations regarding communication, meeting frequency, feedback, and supervisory responsibilities.

5.2.2 Associate Supervisors

5.2.2.1 Eligibility and Capability

Associate Supervisors must meet the following requirements:

a. Hold a doctoral qualification or demonstrate equivalent research or professional expertise relevant to the HDR candidate's research project.

b. Have research, scholarly, or professional expertise that complements the expertise of the Principal Supervisor and supports the HDR candidate's research objectives.
c. Be actively engaged in research, scholarship, or professional practice relevant to the HDR award and research context.
d. Demonstrate the capacity to contribute effectively to HDR supervision and to support the development of the HDR candidate and, where applicable, the supervisory capability of less experienced supervisors.
e. Be eligible for appointment as a Principal Supervisor subject to demonstrated supervisory experience, research engagement, and endorsement through Australis' supervisory approval processes.

5.2.2.2 Appointment Process

Associate Supervisors are appointed by the HDR Director as members of the SSP, in consultation with the Principal Supervisor and having regard to the needs of the HDR candidate's research and the overall balance of supervisory expertise within the panel.

5.2.2.3 Responsibilities

Associate Supervisors support the HDR candidate and the Principal Supervisor through active participation in the supervision process. Their responsibilities include:

a. Providing academic, scholarly, or professional guidance relevant to their area of expertise and the HDR candidate's research project.
b. Contributing to the supervision of the HDR candidate, including providing feedback on research work, as agreed within the supervisory arrangements.
c. Participating in SSP meetings, progress reviews, and research presentations, and contributing to progress reporting where required.
d. Supporting supervisory continuity in the event of short-term absence of the Principal Supervisor, where appropriate.
e. Working collaboratively with the Principal Supervisor to address research challenges and support the HDR candidate's progress.
f. Raising concerns regarding research progress, supervision, or research integrity with the Principal Supervisor or HDR Director, where appropriate.
g. Conducting supervisory activities in accordance with Australis' Research Ethics and Integrity Policy and Procedure and relevant HDR policies.
h. Supporting the maintenance of an agreed Student–Supervisor Agreement.

5.2.3 Adjunct Supervisors

5.2.3.1 Eligibility and Capability

Adjunct Supervisors may be appointed to the SSP where additional academic, professional, or industry expertise would enhance the HDR candidate's research project. Adjunct Supervisors must meet at least two of the following requirements:

a. Hold a doctoral qualification in a discipline relevant to the HDR candidate's research project, or demonstrate equivalent professional or research expertise.

b. Possess specialist academic, professional, or industry experience directly relevant to the HDR candidate's research topic or methodology.
c. Where employed by another higher education provider, demonstrate an active research or scholarly profile relevant to the HDR project.
d. Where employed outside the higher education sector, demonstrate senior professional or industry standing and experience relevant to applied or practice-based research.
e. Be able to contribute expertise, access to data, professional networks, or resources that materially support the HDR candidate's research.

5.2.3.2 Appointment Process

Adjunct Supervisors are appointed by the HDR Director as members of the SSP, in consultation with the Principal Supervisor and having regard to the needs of the HDR candidate's research project.

Where the Adjunct Supervisor is employed by an external organisation, appropriate agreements will be put in place, where required, to clarify supervisory roles, access to resources, and compliance with Australis' research integrity and ethics requirements.

5.2.3.3 Adjunct Supervisor Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Adjunct Supervisor include:

a. Providing support, ensuring that HDR candidates successfully navigate their research projects bring to bear their specific academic/industry/practitioner expertise and perspective with a different set of skills to the Australis Supervisors.
b. Providing advice on the feasibility of the research topic and comment on the overall contribution to the research topic to knowledge either practical or theoretical.
c. Attending as many SSP meetings as possible but expected to attend at least one SSP meeting per semester (where early expectations are set and agreed); and at least one meeting where the research feasibility and impact is discussed; and at least one meeting where the student presents his or her detailed plan (to identify and help access necessary resources); and to be present for the final student presentation prior to their submission of the thesis (to provide advice where appropriate on how research outcomes may be translated into practice).
d. Facilitating access to appropriate sources of data and facilities and resources, as required and where possible and appropriate.
e. Adherence to Australis policies and procedures.

5.3 Supervision Load and Capacity

Australis will actively manage HDR supervision workloads to ensure that supervisors have the capacity to provide appropriate academic guidance, timely feedback, and effective support to HDR candidates.

Supervision load will be considered in relation to a supervisor's role, experience, employment fraction, and other academic responsibilities, including teaching and research commitments.

The nature and intensity of supervisory involvement, including whether a supervisor is acting as a Principal, Associate, or Adjunct Supervisor, will be taken into account.

The HDR Director is responsible for monitoring supervision workloads and ensuring that supervisory capacity is maintained across HDR programs. Supervisors are expected to advise the HDR Director where their supervision workload, or other professional commitments, may affect their capacity to meet supervisory responsibilities.

Where supervision capacity concerns are identified, the HDR Director may take appropriate action, including adjusting supervisory arrangements, appointing additional supervisors, or limiting further supervisory appointments.

The HDRC will have oversight of supervision capacity and workload risks and may review supervision arrangements where systemic or ongoing concerns are identified.

5.4 Candidate-Supervisor Communication and Meetings

Effective communication between HDR candidates and supervisors is essential to support progress and address research challenges in a timely manner.

HDR candidates and supervisors are expected to engage regularly throughout candidature, with the frequency and mode of communication agreed and documented through supervisory arrangements, including the Student–Supervisor Agreement.

Records of supervisory engagement and key outcomes may be maintained in a form appropriate to the nature of the supervision and stage of candidature, and may be used to inform progress reviews and SSP discussions.

Supervisors and HDR candidates should work collaboratively to identify and address research challenges as they arise. Where significant concerns regarding progress, engagement, or supervision are identified, these should be raised with the SSP or HDR Director, as appropriate.

5.5 HDR Candidate Responsibilities

HDR candidates at Australis must:

a. Engage regularly with supervisors and maintain steady progress in their research, adhering to the timelines established in their research plan.
b. Collaborate with supervisors to develop a structured research plan, ensuring that they comply with all ethical, safety, and institutional guidelines, as outlined in the *Research Ethics and Integrity Policy and Procedure*.
c. Actively participate in Australis' research training activities, including seminars and workshops, to develop advanced research skills as required by the AQF.
d. Seek ethical approvals before starting research and ensure continued compliance throughout the project, as per the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and other relevant institutional guidelines.

e. Ensure the final thesis or research project meets all formatting and submission requirements as outlined by Australis policies and guidelines.
f. Notify supervisors of any planned absences, such as leave, and take reasonable steps to ensure that these do not adversely affect research progress.

5.6 Supervision Issues, Review, Resolution and Appeals

HDR candidates who experience difficulties with supervision should, in the first instance, seek to resolve the issue with their Principal Supervisor. If issues persist, the HDR candidate may escalate the matter to the HDR Director or HDRC for review, mediation, or resolution, as appropriate.

A formal change of supervisor can be requested, if necessary, subject to approval by the HDRC.

Supervisors who encounter challenges in their supervisory role, including concerns about a candidate's progress or engagement, must report these issues to the HDRC.

The HDRC will work with the supervisor and candidate to implement corrective measures or recommend changes where appropriate.

HDR candidates may request a change in their research topic or supervisory arrangement. Any significant changes must be approved by the HDRC following consultation with the student's supervisors.

In cases where a supervisor resigns or becomes unavailable, the HDRC will appoint a suitable replacement to ensure minimal disruption to the student's research.

HDR candidates and supervisors may request a formal review of supervision arrangements or progress evaluations by the HDRC if disagreements or concerns arise.

Requests for review must be submitted in writing, and the HDRC will organise a mediation meeting if necessary.

Appeals related to supervision arrangements or performance evaluations must be addressed through Australis' formal appeals process, as outlined in the *Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*.

5.7 Supervisory Training and Development

All supervisors must participate in regular professional development programs, ensuring they remain updated on the latest research practices, Australis' evolving policies, and TEQSA standards for HDR supervision. For further details, refer to the *Professional Development and Scholarly Activity Policy and Procedure.*

All supervisors must complete the Australis HDR Supervisor Training Program before being assigned supervisory duties and a refresher to be completed at least every four years. This program will focus on:

- Understanding the HDR supervision framework at Australis.

- Research ethics and compliance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.
- Methods for monitoring student progress, providing effective feedback, and resolving challenges in a timely manner.
- Best practices for supporting HDR candidates, including those with industry partnerships or specific learning needs.

Supervisors are required to engage in regular professional development activities to ensure they maintain high standards of supervision and stay updated with current research practices.

The HDR Director will be responsible for organising these professional development activities as part of Australis' *Research Training and Induction Policy*, which outlines the structure and scope of professional development.

Professional development sessions will focus on supervisory best practices, emerging trends in research supervision, ethical conduct, and institutional policies.

Supervisors must participate in these training sessions as part of their ongoing role and commitment to effective HDR supervision.

Relevant guidelines on best practices in supervision, research integrity, and ethics will be monitored and reported to the HDRC. These updates will be incorporated into regular refresher professional development activities for supervisors, to be undertaken at least every four years.

Australis will keep a register of professional development activities undertaken by supervisors via annual review to ensure currency and compliance with relevant guidelines.

6 MONITORING AND REVIEW

HDR supervision at Australis is subject to ongoing monitoring and periodic review to ensure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of supervision arrangements across all HDR awards.

The HDRC, reporting to the Academic Board, is responsible for oversight of HDR supervision practices, including consideration of systemic issues, supervision capacity, and compliance with relevant policies and regulatory requirements.

Monitoring of individual HDR candidate progress, including the timing and completion of key candidature milestones, is managed in accordance with the *HDR Candidate Progress Procedure* and related assessment and examination policies.

This policy and procedure will be reviewed periodically to ensure continued alignment with Australis' HDR strategy, regulatory requirements, and best practice in research supervision.

7 RELATED DOCUMENTS, EXTERNAL REFERENCES AND VERSION CONTROL

7.1 Related/Referenced documents

- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Governance Charter and Delegations Framework
- Graduation and Awards Policy and Procedure
- HDR Candidate Progress Procedure
- HDR Examination Guidelines
- HREC Terms of Reference
- HREC Standard Operating Procedures
- Records and Information Management Policy
- Research Ethics and Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Research Training and Induction Policy
- Student Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- Student/Supervisor Agreement

7.2 Related legislation and external references

- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)
- Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000
- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021
- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (Revised 2025)
- TEQSA Guidance Note: Research and Research Training (Version 2.0, September 2022)
- Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) Act 2011

7.3 Version Control

Version	Date	Reviewed/approved by	Key notes/changes
1.0	11/07/25	Higher Degree Research	Updated based Australis response to TEQSA Assessment report

		Committee (HDRC) Working group	
1.1	22/07/25	HDRC	Updated based on HDRC 22/07/25 meeting feedback.
1.2	29/07/25	Expert review	Updated based on expert review feedback.
1.3	31/07/25	Academic Board (AB)	Reviewed and approved at the AB 31/07/25 meeting.
1.4	19/02/26	HDRC	Updated by the HDRC
1.5	26/02/26	AB	Reviewed and approved at the AB 26/02/26 meeting.
2.0	05/11/26	AB	References updated and editorial improvements incorporated.

7.4 Document Review

To be reviewed at least every five (5) years from the date of final approval