



Curtin University

Malaysia

HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH (HDR) HANDBOOK

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION FOR HDR STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS

2026

CURTIN MALAYSIA GRADUATE SCHOOL

VERSION 3.0

PREFACE

The primary aim of this Handbook is to provide a structured and user-friendly guide for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students and academic staff pertaining to the policies, rules, and regulations governing Higher Degree by Research (HDR) programmes. The information provided below will support more informed, effective and responsible practice with regards to the various rules, regulations and procedures for HDR students and academic staff (supervisors and thesis committee members) involved in the supervision of students.

Please read right through it and use it when needed as you progress in your research/project. If you require more detailed information, please go through Graduate Research School's website (<https://research.curtin.edu.au/postgraduate/>) and/or Curtin Malaysia Graduate School's website (<https://gradschool.curtin.edu.my/>). Otherwise, you can make an inquiry by dropping an email to GradSchool@curtin.edu.my. You may also visit Curtin Malaysia Graduate School Office at CRISP, Hornbill 2, Level 1. The Office is open between 9:00am and 5:00pm Monday-Thursday (with lunch break between 12 and 1pm) and 9:00am and 12:00pm on Fridays.

The policies, rules, regulations and guidelines relating to your studies as an HDR student at Curtin University are given in the following documents:

- a. Statute No. 12 – Admission and Enrolment
- b. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Admission and Enrolment Policy and Procedures
- c. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Student Progression Policy and Procedures
- d. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Supervision Policy and Procedures
- e. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Thesis Examination Policy and Procedures

For Curtin University Malaysia, documents below covering rules and regulations are also applied in Curtin Malaysia.

POL-HDR-01: Curtin Malaysia Post Graduate Research Scholarship (CMPRS) Scheme

POL-HDR-02: Curtin Malaysia Graduate School (CMGS) Tuition Fee Waiver

PRO-CMGS-01: Administration of HDR Enrolment

PRO-CMGS-02: Withdrawal from Supervision of HDR Students

PRO-CMGS-03: Visa Compliance for International HDR Students

Policies and procedures may be amended from time to time. Therefore, please ensure that

you keep abreast of the latest updates.

We hope that this Handbook will contribute to improved understanding and more effective practices among HDR students and those involved in supporting students through their HDR journey.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Vision and Values

Curtin University Malaysia (Curtin Malaysia) is the largest international campus of Curtin University, a university based in Perth, Western Australia. Curtin University is ranked in the top one per cent of universities worldwide in the highly regarded Academic Ranking of World Universities 2025. Curtin Malaysia is among the top-rated universities based on Malaysia's SETARA and MyRA rating systems. The former is for the quality of teaching and learning, while the latter is about our excellence in research.

Curtin Malaysia is in the northern region of Sarawak famed for its natural wonders and biodiversity, cultural heritage, oil and gas industry, and emerging processing and manufacturing industries. With different nationalities represented on our campus, Curtin Malaysia offers students an international and cross-cultural learning environment in a unique Malaysian setting. Curtin Malaysia with a diverse community is committed to creating an inclusive working, learning and research environment that allows all individuals the opportunity to achieve their potentials.

Curtin Malaysia's vision and values statements:

Vision

Working in partnerships we will make a difference for people and our planet.

Values

Our five core values are:

- Integrity : to act ethically, honestly and with fairness
- Respect : to listen, value and acknowledge
- Courage : to lead, take responsibility and question
- Excellence : to strive for excellence and distinction
- Impact : to empower, enable and inspire

By building on a foundation of integrity and respect, and through courage, we will achieve excellence and impact on the communities we serve, bringing a better tomorrow for our students, our communities, and the world.

1.2 General Information on HDR Administration

Research activities take place under the auspices of the Faculty of Engineering & Science (FoES), Faculty of Business (FoB), the Faculty of Humanities and Health Sciences (FoHHS). A Thesis Committee consisting of a thesis chair and a supervisory team comprising a principal supervisor and one or more co-/associate supervisor will be assigned to each student. The principal and co-supervisors are normally academic staff of the University. Meanwhile, the associate supervisor(s) may be academic staff/researchers from other institutions or industries. The principal supervisor within this team will have the primary responsibility for guiding and monitoring the progress of an HDR student.

The Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee (CSGSC), chaired by the Dean of Curtin Malaysia Graduate School (CMGS), oversees HDR activities across Curtin Malaysia from admission to completion including monitoring HDR student progress. CMGS also supports HDR students and staff by providing guidance and advice on policies, rules and regulations that govern HDR programmes administration as well as HDR-related matters such as student welfare, training and professional development, and Curtin Malaysia Postgraduate Research Association (CMPRA) activities and development.

For general information on HDR administration, students should consult the supervisor, Thesis Committee members or Faculty's Associate Dean of R & D (AD, R&D)/Programme Coordinator or Curtin Malaysia Graduate School Office (email: GradSchool@curtin.edu.my). Advice on matters related to accommodation, finance, health, non-academic matters, and visas is available from the [Student Services](#) and/or [International Student Office](#)

1.3 Communication between Curtin Malaysia Graduate School (CMGS) and HDR Students

Generally, the default email address of CMGS Office is GradSchool@curtin.edu.my, which is the primary email account used for communication with students and supervisors. We will not use any other commercial email accounts or social networking sites. Please check your university email account regularly and do not let your inbox exceed your storage limit. You will receive notification via email when you are due to exceed your storage limit. You should take immediate action to free up your storage so that you can continue to receive emails uninterrupted. Students should also check the Official Communications Channel (OCC) in Oasis on a regular basis as this is where official Curtin University's communication comes from.

2 DEGREES AND QUALIFICATIONS

As a research student, a HDR student will be enrolled for a higher degree by research, either as a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) or a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) student.

2.1 Master of Philosophy

Master of Philosophy (MPhil) aims to expand knowledge beyond the undergraduate honours or postgraduate diploma level, culminating in a research thesis. MPhil is a higher degree obtained after a period of study devoted to a significant investigation in the theory or application in an identified research area of interest. The thesis must, in the opinion of the Examiners, be a substantial original contribution to the knowledge or understanding of a field of study and demonstrate the capacity of the candidate to conceive, design and complete independent research. For programme aims, objectives and learning outcomes, kindly visit <https://gradschool.curtin.edu.my/future-students/higher-degree-by-research-hdr-programmes/master-of-philosophy/>

2.2 Doctor of Philosophy

As a doctoral research degree candidate, you will uncover new knowledge either by the discovery of new facts, the formulation of theories or the innovative reinterpretation of known data and established ideas. Your research will use an in-depth understanding of theories and concepts to develop practical solutions for real-world problems.

A higher degree by research differs from other postgraduate degrees in that the main part of your work will be in the form of a thesis written under the guidance of a supervisor and associate supervisor(s). Your thesis must, in the opinion of the examiners, be a substantial original contribution to the knowledge or understanding of any field through the discovery of new facts, the formulation of theories or the innovative reinterpretation of known data and established ideas. It must also demonstrate your capacity to conceive, design and complete independent research.

Throughout your studies, you will have access to resources to support your research, and financial assistance to attend appropriate local and international conferences.

The aims, objectives and learning outcomes can be obtained from:

<https://gradschool.curtin.edu.my/future-students/higher-degree-by-research-hdr-programmes/doctor-of-philosophy/>

3 HDR ADMISSION AND ENROLMENT

3.1 General Admission Requirements for MPhil

For admission to a Degree of Master programme an applicant shall satisfy at least one of the following eligibility criteria:

- i. Graduated with or qualified for the award of the degree of Bachelor with First Class Honours or Second Class Honours within Curtin University;
- ii. Graduated with or qualified for the award of Postgraduate Diploma within Curtin University;
- iii. Graduated with or qualified for the award of the degree of Bachelor within the University with relevant work experience;
- iv. Obtained qualifications from another institution which are recognised by tertiary admissions authorities in Australia, and which are deemed to be equivalent to any of the above criteria.

3.2 General Admission Requirements for PhD

For admission to a PhD degree programme an applicant normally shall have met at least one of the eligibility criteria below:

- i. Graduated with or qualified for the award of the degree of Bachelor with First Class Honours or Upper Second Class Honours* (CGPA $\geq$ 3.0) within Curtin University which includes the completion of a supervised research dissertation project carrying the equivalent credit of at least 25 percent of an annual full-time load;
**Candidate having Upper Second-Class Honours could be considered for a Doctoral direct entry upon demonstration of research competencies as verified and deemed by the Academic Board at Curtin University Malaysia.*
- ii. Graduated with or qualified for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy or Master of Research within Curtin University which includes the completion of a publically available thesis;
- iii. Graduated with or qualified for the award of the degree Master by Coursework within Curtin University, and the completion of a research dissertation project carrying the

equivalent credit of at least 25 percent of an annual full-time load and which has been awarded an assessed result at or above distinction level;

- iv. Graduated with or qualified for the award of the degree Master by Coursework at or above distinction level within Curtin University, and the completion of substantive and relevant research experience which can be evidenced in at least one of the following forms:
 - a) substantial scholarly papers as sole or primary author, appearing in recognised academic journals or in volumes published by recognised academic publishers;
 - b) published research reports prepared for industry, government or business, which adhere to the broad conventions of academic publishing, and which identify the applicant as sole or primary author; or
 - c) a portfolio of creative work with a published critical discussion of that work, which demonstrates the applicant's development of a scholarly approach to creative work as research investigation, for which the application is identified as sole or primary author;
- v. Obtained qualifications from another institution which are recognised by tertiary admission authorities in Australia, and which are deemed to be equivalent to any of the above criteria.

3.3 Application for Admission

An application for admission into an MPhil/PhD degree programme shall be made on the prescribed form. The prospective student is suggested to discuss and work with a potential supervisor(s) in preparing for the research proposal and completing the prescribed form. If it is necessary, the applicant may liaise with Associate Dean of R&D from the respective Faculty to identify the potential supervisor(s). The application for admission form should then be recommended and approved by Head of Enrolling Area (Dean or Associate Dean of R&D) before it is submitted (together with all the supporting documents) to the Office of Curtin Malaysia Graduate School (CMGS) for admission consideration. The application for admission will be reviewed by CMGS and recommend to Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee (CMGSC)

for approval. Once the Committee approves the application, Letter of Offer will be issued to the prospective student.

3.4 Enrolment and Duration of Study

Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Programmes are time-based and not semester based. Students are allowed between one (1) and two (2) years equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL) or between two (2) and four (4) years equivalent part-time student load (EPTSL) for a master by research degree (MPhil) and between two (2) and four (4) years equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL) or between four (4) and Eight (8) years equivalent part-time student load (EPTSL) for a doctoral degree (PhD), respectively. However, international students must enroll as full-time students to satisfy the visa regulations.

The programme time limits will be adjusted for approved periods of leave of absence (LOA). To know more about LOA, kindly visit <https://gradschool.curtin.edu.my/current-students/important-information-while-you-study/>. Applications are to be made formally via the submission of the [Application of Leave from HDR Studies](#) form to the Graduate School prior to the start date of your proposed period of leave.

For students who receive scholarships in the form of monthly stipend and/or tuition fee waiver should take note that the maximum period of scholarship is typically three (3) years for PhD students. Students are strongly recommended to complete their study within three years to avoid having to self-fund the remaining period of study. Tuition fee waiver only extension (with valid justification) may be granted subject to approval on a case-by-case basis.

For MPhil students under external grants, the stipend from the grant is usually applicable for a maximum of two years. Tuition fee waiver administered by CMGS will only be approved from the date of enrolment to the project end date and this duration may only be 1.5 years or less. Tuition fee waiver extensions may be granted subject to good progress of the project and approval from CMGS on a case-by-case basis. Thus, it is advisable that students complete their study within 1.5 years to avoid having to have self-fund for the remaining period of study.

Please contact your supervisor and/or CMGS Office at GradSchool@curtin.edu.my for further details on tuition fee waiver extension.

4 HDR SUPERVISION AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS AND STUDENTS

4.1 Supervisory Team

All HDR students are assigned to a Thesis Committee consisting of a thesis chair, a principal supervisor and one or more co-supervisors and/or associate supervisor(s). The minimum number of a thesis committee including the thesis chair is three (3) and a maximum six (6). The thesis chair has mainly administrative and mentoring roles and this position is the only member of the committee who is not assigned a contribution percentage.

The supervisory team should consist of experts from the relevant discipline who will technically benefit the project supervision. The principal supervisor will have prime responsibility for the design and progress of HDR project and providing academic advice to HDR students under supervision. Co- and associate supervisors are appointed to provide additional expertise and guidance. Among the thesis committee members and/or between one or more thesis committee members and HDR student should not have perceived or actual conflict of interest such as a family relationship. Below are the standard guidelines for appointing a thesis committee to minimise potential conflict of interest:

- i. Thesis committee must not consist of thesis chair and principal/co-supervisor who are partner/married.

Special exception can be made if there are limited eligible chairs and only if the chair's spouse is an associate supervisor. This exception will be subject to approvals from AD, R&D and Chair of CMGSC.

- ii. The thesis committee must not comprise principal and co-supervisors who are partner/married.

Exceptions can be made if special expertise is required, there is another independent co-supervisor, and the couple is in the principal and associate supervisory roles. This exception will also be subject to approvals from AD, R&D and Chair of CMGSC.

The minimum supervisor contribution percentages allocation is 10% and all allocation must be in 5% increments. With exception to the mentoring supervision arrangements, the main supervisor will always have the highest contribution percentage as they are administratively

responsible for the student. For this reason, if there are only two supervisors in a thesis committee, a 50-50% split between main and co-supervisor is not normally permissible.

To be appointed as thesis chair, principal supervisor, co-supervisor or associate supervisor of HDR students, it is mandatory that they are registered as Curtin University registered supervisors as follows:

- i. Thesis Chair (an experienced registered Level 1 HDR supervisor)
- ii. Principal Supervisor (must be a Registered Level 1 Supervisor)
- iii. Co-Supervisor (either a Registered Level 1 or Level 2 Supervisor)
- iv. External Co-Supervisor and/or Associate Supervisor (if applicable)

Supervisors are to ensure they have appropriate workload available prior to agreeing to supervise a student.

The full list of registered supervisors can be found at https://research.curtin.edu.au/search-results/?search=*&type=supervisors.

Supervisors are important in:

- i. Maintaining links with the professional and/or practice base of the discipline.
- ii. Providing a role model and/or mentor role to students.
- iii. Providing a mentor role to junior supervisors.
- iv. Maintaining quality for Curtin in research training.

Responsibilities of the Supervisors are to:

- i. Meet/communicate regularly with students.
- ii. Provide technical advice and constructive feedback on the project execution to ensure good progression and timely milestone attainments for all students.
- iii. Facilitate provisions of adequate research resources and specific training as needed.
- iv. Engage with the student on research integrity.
- v. Read carefully all written work and provide timely feedback.
- vi. Ensure supervision takes place at least once in three weeks with complete online supervisory record for each student.

4.2 Supervisory Relationship between Students and Supervisors

When the student first becomes acquainted with the supervisory team, it is vital that discussions on the proposed research are carried out to ensure that the student and supervisory team agree with the research direction and plan. This early clarification can minimise any possible future disagreements and conflicts. The student should also discuss the expectations of the supervisory role among supervisors as well as getting to know the supervisors' expectations of research progress to establish a common understanding regarding the timeline for research activities leading to completion.

4.3 Responsibilities of HDR Student

The student and the supervisors should establish some agreed upon schedule and guidelines on the frequency of supervisory meetings. The mandatory frequency is at least once in three (3) weeks, and all meeting records must be lodged in the system which can be obtained from <https://csapp.curtin.edu.my/supervisorymeeting/login/login.php?>

Tips to optimize/maximise HDR meetings:

- i. Establish regular meetings with the supervisor (weekly/fortnightly/at least once in three weeks) and prepare relevant written material.
- ii. Take notes during the meeting and create a list of outcomes so that you and your supervisors are clear about the objectives that have been achieved as well as outlining a focus for follow up meetings. Supervisory meeting notes/records must be lodged as stated above.
- iii. Set up the next meeting before you depart, as this will allow your supervisor time to consider the agreed focus for the next meeting and to read any materials you may have presented.
- iv. Create a timeline for your research and thesis completion. This plan should be realistic and timely for you to meet your Milestone requirements. Please ensure that you allocate sufficient time for data collection/analysis.
- v. Ensure you read the [Guidelines for Establishing the Higher Degree by Research Supervisory Relationship](#)

At the start of the project, students will be closely guided by the supervisory team and are expected to follow closely the advice given. Students should be self-motivated and

demonstrate their own initiative as they progress in their PhD journey, especially towards the end of their candidature to demonstrate that they can work independently and possess the ability to apply knowledge, concepts and skills in their respective disciplines. This does not mean that students should ignore the advice of the supervisory team.

The University has certain expectations from HDR students. Students are expected to be:

- i. responsible, conscientious, and diligent in their work and research,
- ii. compliant with rules, regulations and guidelines, and
- iii. participating and contributing to HDR and University's R&D activities such as attending/presenting research presentations organised by CMGS, Office of R&D, Faculties and CMPRA.

It must be emphasised that Curtin Malaysia has a HDR supervision monitoring system in place whereby at least once in three weeks student and supervisor(s) are required to submit an online supervisory meeting record outlining students' work progress, to CMGS for recording and monitoring purposes. Students who fail to have supervision meetings, respond to official communications or attend HDR training and meetings as requested by supervisors for 4 weeks or more can be classified as Absent Without Leave and this can lead to termination of enrolment.

The link here is the online depository of supervision records. If students and/or principal supervisor have issues in accessing this online system <https://csapp.curtin.edu.my/supervisorymeeting/login/login.php?> , please contact CMGS at GradSchool@curtin.edu.my should you need help.

5 HDR PROJECT EXECUTION AND RESOURCES

5.1 Getting the Project/Research Started

In the early stage of PhD research, time will be spent on formally defining the research topic in greater detail and depth as well as planning the research progress timeline. Students will find that they need considerable advice and guidance during this stage. This continuing re-definition and planning should however continue throughout the research journey. The supervisory team will be the main source of guidance, but increasingly the students may access other sources for advice.

One of the first major activities in an HDR project is a critical review of the relevant literature in the relevant area of research. This could be initiated by suggestions from the supervisory team on some key references to read to develop a critical review that will form part of the Milestone 1, 2 and 3 submissions (see Section 6). Students should begin to write as soon as possible and not procrastinate, every word written contributes to work progress.

It is essential that students review and revise the project plan frequently in consultation with the supervisory team. Consider how well the research project has been progressing since the last review, whether any interesting results justify a change of direction, and whether the current plan is still realistic, and put it in more details in the research plan. Should there be a need to make a change in the research plan due to changes in circumstances, the student should consult the supervisory team. One thing worth noting is that a significant change in the research direction may require the submission of a new Application of Candidacy.

5.2 Logbook, Reports, and Papers

It is advisable for students to keep proper records of their research progress. It is essential for students to keep a logbook of research works. This will be a diary of the students' day-to-day activities. Please do ensure that you include information such as name (your name), enrolling area, supervisors, address and telephone number, in case of loss. It is a document which records research work activities. Your logbook establishes the credibility of your work and the progress you make.

The logbook should contain the actual research results unless these become voluminous; it

should contain a cross-reference to the print-out, file, graph, computer disk, report, etc., where the actual results are kept. There should be an entry in the log in strict chronological sequence, and every entry should be properly dated.

Students will be required to write review reports from time to time for their progression, and the logbook together with the associated results will provide the raw material for these reports. However, students may also find it useful to write short reports at the end of each module of work. These help to assess the significance of what has been accomplished, pull it into a logical order and find patterns or gaps in the data. These reports can provide a basis for longer reports or manuscripts later.

When students have completed a self-contained piece of work, the supervisory team may decide that it is worth publishing in a scientific or professional journal or at a conference. Normally, such papers are jointly authored by the research student and their supervisors, and possibly other people who have **contributed substantially** to the work.

Regarding the publication of materials involving sponsored research, written agreement from the sponsor needs to be obtained since it may be related to publishing commercially confidential information. Please check with the sponsor first before embarking on publishing to make sure students, supervisors and sponsors agree with the research/publication plans.

5.3 Research Facilities and Support

Once enrolled, students should have appropriate access to laboratory, library, computer, workshop and other facilities to support their research work. Most of the resources and facilities available in the University are managed by the respective Faculty or department. The enrolling school will ensure that students have adequate and appropriate access to relevant on-campus facilities.

5.3.1 Research Support Grants

For HDR students enrolled from **1st July 2025** who meet the relevant eligibility criteria can apply for up to two research support grants (Dissemination and Engagement grants) during their candidature. Students who **enrolled between 1st August 2024 to 30th June 2025** will be given consideration for research support grants (Dissemination and Engagement grants).

The table below shows some examples of research activities that can qualify for dissemination and engagement grants.

	Engagement Grant	Dissemination Grant
Value	PhD RM6500	PhD RM6500
	MPhil (RM4000 Max across both grants)	
Grant Eligibility	Successfully completed Milestone 1 and be on Good Standing	Successfully completed Milestone 2 and be on Good Standing. Applications must be received prior to the Milestone 3 due date
Activities	1. Conference/workshop/symposium/ colloquium/seminar support (incl. registration, Travel/accommodation/living) where the student is actively participating. 2. Fieldwork activities that are relevant to the research project and supported with evidence of confirmation or planned activities. 3. Mobility activities (local/international) - for RTP Internship or active engagement with a recognised Research Centre, Higher Education Provider, Curtin campus or Industry partner. 4. Research incentives (vouchers for participants). 5. Ground transport, mileage claim.	1. Thesis production costs - The costs of engaging an external party to proofread a thesis, or part of a thesis. 2. Creative production costs - for public exposure/ dissemination. For the approved research project (design, technical support, post-production and editing, studio hire, fil and developing, exhibition space hire) 3. Journal paper publication costs (including open assess costs) - see the details in guideline of dissemination grant.

Kindly refer to the link below for further details on the Dissemination and Engagement

Grants:https://www.curtin.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2024/03/2024-HDR-Dissemination-Grant-Guidelines-01_March_2024.pdf

https://www.curtin.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2024/03/2024-HDR-Engagement-Grant-Guidelines-01_March_2024.pdf

5.3.2 Internship Incentives

Doctoral students who undertake an eligible internship during their candidature are eligible to receive internship incentive funding. MPhil students and Master of Research students are not eligible. This incentive is open to all PhD students who organize an internship project (in writing) within 18 months of course commencement (or part-time equivalent) with an eligible industry partner/research end-user (external to academia), and the internship must be related to student's area of research and consisting of R&D activities. This internship is for a minimum period of 3 months (60 full-time equivalent days) and structured at a time to suit student's study and industry partner. Students who are interested in taking up an industry internship are required to express their interest by ticking in the appropriate box when submitting Milestone 1 application.

For more details, kindly visit

https://www.curtin.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2024/10/Student-Internship-flyer_31Oct2024.pdf

This internship incentive support is only available for internships that meet the RTP Internship criteria (see guidelines at <https://www.curtin.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2022/07/Guidelines-for-RTP-Eligible-Doctoral-Degree-Internships.pdf>)

- i. Doctoral students who complete an eligible internship can receive up to RM9000.00 in funding distributed as follows:
 - a. Tranche 1 – 50% of the incentive will be issued upon submission of a signed RTP internship contract
 - b. Tranche 2 – the remaining 50% will be issued upon completion of the RTP internship
- ii. Students must submit an application form and the supporting documents to receive internship incentives.
- iii. Students who received trench 1, but do not complete an eligible RTP internship will not qualify for this incentive. In such cases, the equivalent amount already paid will be deducted from the student's eligibility for the Engagement grant or Dissemination

grant or any other initiatives provided by Curtin Malaysia.

5.3.3 Mobility and Consumable Funds

Students who enrolled **before 1st August 2024** will continue to be eligible for **mobility and consumable funds** if they meet the relevant eligibility criteria.

i. Mobility support

All PhD students who enrolled before 1st August 2024 are eligible for funding in mobility support for travels related to their project, such as visiting and working in other institution's labs or attending a reputable conference. A maximum of RM2,500 in funding is available during their course of research. Normally, students are permitted to attend a conference after completion of Milestone 2 and prior to Milestone 3. Such funding support is not generally available for MPhil students. The use of this fund is subject to official approval from CMGS. Application form is available via <https://gradschool.curtin.edu.my/hdr-forms-resources/>

ii. Support for Consumables

Students are entitled to Consumables Allowance of RM2000.00 a year. This allowance is available for 3 years for PhD and 1.5 years for MPhil and only accessible after Milestone 1 is approved. **The use of consumable allowance will also be based on the proposed budget officially recorded in the approved candidacy proposal (M1).**

The allowance can be used for the following purposes:

- a. Scholarly books/ texts
- b. Research participant time/cost reimbursement
- c. Journal paper publication costs
- d. Creative production costs
- e. Transcription and translation services
- f. Thesis editing and binding
- g. Other miscellaneous costs as approved by CMGS

Application form is available via <https://gradschool.curtin.edu.my/hdr-forms-resources/>

5.4 Conduct of Research and Ethics

The University requires that all activities be undertaken in an appropriate manner within a proper ethical framework, and that due ethical consideration is given to all undertakings, be they research, teaching, enterprise or other.

- i. The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007 - Curtin University is committed to its staff and students abiding by the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research. The Code may be downloaded from <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/australian-code-responsible-conduct-research-2007> (updated 2018).

- ii. Ethics Clearance

Before conducting research that involves humans or animals as subjects, you must receive approval from the Ethics Panel. The Ethics Panel does not grant retrospective ethics approval. Kindly visit <https://research.curtin.edu.my/ethics-clearance/> for information about applying for ethics clearance.

5.5 Student Funding Supported by External Sponsors

Many research projects are externally funded by industry or a government body, and students may be funded through external grants. Students who are funded through external grants may be required to regularly report the research activities. It is important to recognize the differences between the student's research interests and the sponsor's vested interest in the funded research may arise from time to time. In relation to this, your supervisor/thesis committee should be able to guide you in handling potential differences related to research. Since sponsors have a financial stake in a project, the agreement should specify any IP arrangement. This usually gives sponsor some (but not all) rights over the ultimate results/research outcomes. Students and the thesis committee must respect these rights. Any information pertaining to research outcomes and/or information relating to any promising potential for IP must be kept secure and confidential. Please avoid any kind of publicity about the research results and findings which could bring negative consequences for the sponsor such as jeopardizing patent application or competitiveness of the sponsor's business in the industry.

5.6 Academic Integrity

Academic integrity, at its core, is about honesty, responsibility, and transparency, and is fundamental to Curtin's expectations of you. This means that all your work at Curtin should be your own and should be underpinned by integrity, which entails acting ethically, honestly, and with fairness. The University Academic Integrity can be found here, <https://students.curtin.edu.au/essentials/rights/academic-integrity/>. As a student, you are asked to uphold the University's principles of academic integrity to ensure high standards of academic conduct. The University takes the issue of academic integrity very seriously and has provided online programmes to address this issue. Curtin staff and students are encouraged to participate in the [Online Study Skills Programmes](#) to enhance their understanding of academic integrity.

Comprehensive guidelines on avoiding plagiarism are available from: <https://uniskills.library.curtin.edu.au/academic-writing/writing/integrating-sources/>

5.7 Health and Safety

Health and safety are important in all work carried out across the University. We have a moral obligation to ensure that everything we do is carried out using the safest means possible. Alongside this, we have a legal obligation to do so. It is the responsibility of students and employees to take care of their health and safety and of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. No person will intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety, or welfare.

To assist the University in meeting these obligations, Health and Safety of Curtin Malaysia manages health and safety across the University. To ensure health and safety, any person planning to work in a laboratory or workshop area will be required to complete lab induction on procedures to be followed before access to the laboratories is granted. This will be carried out by the appropriate University staff. The induction procedure is given in **Appendix 2**.

Students will be asked to undertake a risk assessment of any experiment where there are hazards present which have a significant risk of causing harm. This written statement on how to cope with the hazards in an acceptable way must be conducted in accordance with the

University's safety policy and procedures, under the supervision of the student's supervisor and must be handed in to the laboratory where the work is to be carried out. Students must obtain prior approval from the relevant technical staff before working in the laboratory outside normal working hours.

If you are required to do research in the field, the [Fieldwork Safety Guidelines](#) must be strictly adhered to. This document, together with the associated "[Working Alone or in Isolation risk assessment forms](#)", can be found on the [Graduate School website](#) under the "Fieldwork" section.

If you have any issues concerning health and safety, please contact the University Health, Counselling and Disability Services at HealthCounsellingDisability@curtin.edu.my or +60 85 630 100 ext. 2709/2710. In case of EMERGENCY within the Campus Premises, students and supervisors must call our Emergency Response Team (on 24-hour standby) at **+60 85 630081 ext. 2683 or +60 85 630082 ext. 2684**. Security Hotline (After Office Hours/Weekends/Public Holidays): **+60 85 443 930 / +60 85 443 999**. On-Campus Internal Emergency Number: **3930 or 3999**

5.8 Complaints and Grievance Resolution Procedures

Curtin University provides a framework for managing the resolution of appeals and complaints for HDR students (please see the links below). If students have a complaint or grievance regarding supervision or other matters affecting their candidature (not including examination process or termination of enrolment), students are advised to approach the following people in the order listed below.

- i. Supervisor(s)
- ii. Thesis Chair
- iii. Faculty Associate Dean, R&D
- iv. Dean of faculty
- v. Chair of Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee

Please note that students may be required to demonstrate that they have made a reasonable effort to resolve the issue at each earlier level of this hierarchy before assistance can be

provided by the next level in the hierarchy. The links below are about the policy and procedures of the University regarding Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Appeals and Complaints.

Related policies and procedures:

[HDR Appeals and Complaints Policy](#)

[HDR Appeals and Complaints Procedures](#)

5.9 Leave of Absence

If students are unable to pursue their study for an extended period e.g. due to illness or bereavement, they may be granted Leave of Absence and have their enrolment suspended for a period of one to twelve months by the Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee on the recommendation from the supervisor. Single or cumulative leave of absence periods can be extended for longer than 12 months under genuine, exceptional circumstances. Students are required to lodge the application for Leave of Absence using the prescribed form, **prior to the start date** of the proposed period of leave if possible. Applications for retrospective periods of Leave of Absence may be considered only in exceptional circumstances. Leave of Absence, except for illness, will not normally be approved by the Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee until after Milestone 1 is approved. Students who are overtime will not normally have their application for leave of absence approved.

During the period of Leave of Absence, student enrolment will be suspended. Students will not normally be allowed to remain on campus to conduct any research or work. For scholarship holders, the scholarship (fee and stipend) will also be suspended. For International Students, approval of Leave of Absence is subject to their student visa requirements.

A candidate who takes leave not on approved Leave of Absence will have his/her status changed to Absent Without Leave, which can lead to termination of enrolment.

5.10 Annual Leave

Students are entitled to 20 days annual leave each year, calculated on a pro-rata basis. Students should obtain the supervisor's consent prior to taking any leave. Leave application must be made using the prescribed [leave application form](#) which can be obtained from Graduate School

website.

Once the application is supported by supervisor, the form must be submitted to CMGS at GradSchool@curtin.edu.my. Annual leave may not be accumulated from year to year. If you are a scholarship holder, please check the conditions of the scholarship to confirm your entitlement for annual leave, and notify CMGS at GradSchool@curtin.edu.my before you apply for any leave. For scholarship holders, taking leave without the consent from the supervisor and CMGS or taking leave of more than 20 days may result in automatic suspension of the tuition fee waiver and stipend.

5.11 Residency Requirement

Full-time students must normally spend the bulk of their time at the University. Students who are unable to spend the whole of their time at Miri Campus must have an agreed scheme for supervision with the supervisory team. Please note the University may withdraw its visa sponsorship of students who do not attend and participate in their studies as required for their study.

5.12 Part-time Study Mode

Although most of our students follow a full-time (F/T) research degree course, we offer part-time (P/T) enrolment options for MPhil and PhD. P/T enrolment can be appropriate if someone is employed F/T in a suitable research and development environment where elements of their work may form part of a submitted research dissertation. We recognise that this entails significant commitment on the part of the students, including evenings and weekends working on their dissertation (and a suitable understanding with their employers) and the timings of the progression milestones reflect the need to allow more time. In brief, all the same course and progression requirements apply but can occur at intervals twice as long as those expected for the F/T study mode. It is possible to switch between F/T and P/T registration as circumstances warrant. **P/T students must ensure they regularly check their university emails and the Official Communications Channel (OCC) on Oasis, as these are the main channels in which all communications will be made.**

5.13 Termination of Enrolment

If a student's performance is determined to be unsatisfactory, or if the student does not comply with the Rules and Regulations of the University, student enrolment may be terminated.

The process for the Cancellation of enrolment is detailed in the [Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Student Progression Policy](#) and [Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Student Progression Procedures](#).

5.13.1 The Procedure for Termination of Enrolment

The Chair of Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee (CMGSC) (or appropriate alternate) acting on behalf of ADVCRE may terminate a student enrolment when the student:

- i. Has failed to respond to repeated communication from their supervisor, supervisory committee or ADR or has been on Absence Without Leave for 4 weeks or more
- ii. Is on conditional status and whose progress is deemed unsatisfactory by the ADVCRE or delegate
- iii. Is on good standing and Chair of Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee deems there are exceptional circumstances for termination.

After receiving the recommendation from the thesis committee and Associate Dean of R&D, CMGS informs the student, in writing via Official Communication, regarding intent to terminate and requests that the student show cause as to why the student's enrolment should not be terminated. The student will be provided 20 business days from date of letter issuance to provide a show cause statement. It is recommended that the statement does not exceed 10 pages (not including supporting documents) to the Chair Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee or delegate for why the termination of their enrolment should not proceed.

The Chair of Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee (or appropriate alternate) together with Associate Dean of R&D, based on the evidence from the show cause statements or the student's failure to respond, reviews the case and will make one of the following recommendations:

- i. The student is accorded good standing status or conditional status (with existing conditions and timelines or new conditions and timelines); or

- ii. The recommendation for termination of enrolment is supported with appropriate justifications specified.

CMGS is to notify the student of the ADVCR's or delegate's decision and grounds for the decision via the Official Communication Channel. As per the Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Appeals and Complaints Procedures, a student may appeal a decision to terminate enrolment. If, on the date the appeal period has expired no appeal has been received, the enrolment is taken to have been terminated on that date.

A student may appeal against termination of enrolment within three weeks of the date of the notification. The appeal must be in writing. Any appeal will be reviewed by Chair of Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies Committee and/or Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Excellence. For more details, please refer to the link: [HDR Appeals and Complaints Procedures](#)

5.13.2 International Students

If you are an international student studying on a student visa, a breach in student visa conditions can result in the termination of enrolment. This will lead to your visa being cancelled by the Immigration Department. If you have any questions on visa issues, please contact the International Student Office at internationalstudentoffice@curtin.edu.my.

6 MILESTONES AND PROGRESS MONITORING

During enrolment, students' progress will be formally monitored at three milestones.

- i. Milestone 1
- ii. Milestone 2
- iii. Milestone 3

HDR students will complete three milestone reviews in accordance with the timeframes specified in the Milestone timetable. The table below shows the Milestones due date for full-time and part-time students for both the PhD and MPhil programmes.

Milestone	Milestone date: Measured from the thesis start date in the HDR course, excluding periods of leave of absence. For students commencing on or after the approval date of these procedures.							
	Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) from Thesis Enrolment		Doctoral Course		Master of Philosophy		Master of Research	
	<i>Full-time student</i>	<i>Part-time student</i>	<i>Full-time student</i>	<i>Part-time student</i>	<i>Full-time student</i>	<i>Part-time student</i>	<i>Full-time student</i>	<i>Part-time student</i>
1	6 months*	12 months*	6 months*	12 months*	3 months*	6 months*	waived	waived
2	14 months*	27 months*	18 months*	36 months*	12 months*	24 months*	2 months*	4 months*
3	35 months*	69 months*	39 months*	78 months*	22 months*	44 months*	9 months*	18 months*
*or earlier at the request of the supervisor or the Director of Graduate Research for the Enrolling School (DGR) and no later than 3 months after the Milestone due date.								

6.1 Milestone 1 (M1)

On receipt of the official notification of enrolment, a student will be considered a provisional candidate until application for Milestone 1 is approved by the Curtin Malaysia Graduate Studies (CMGS). Please be aware that prior to Milestone 1 being approved the following limitations apply to students' enrolment:

- i. Students cannot commence any data collection. This includes the conduct of surveys, questionnaires and interviews.
- ii. Students cannot access Research Support Funds or Mobility Support funding.

6.1.1 What is Required for Milestone 1 Application?

Students are to submit their Milestone 1 (M1) application via the online form, no later than one month before their M1 due date. Milestone 1 provides candidates with the opportunity to gain feedback on their proposed research project from members of the associated research cluster, Department or Faculty and this process is designed to assist candidates to refine their research project and plan as well as to broaden their research support networks at Curtin. M1 will comprise of:

- i. An online application form
- ii. A written research proposal (including a budget on spend for consumables/research support funding)
- iii. Evidence for successful completion of Research Integrity Training (RIT)
- iv. An oral presentation of the research proposal
- v. A completion timeline
- vi. A data management plan
- vii. A plagiarism report (e.g. Turnitin) and
- viii. The Research Initiation Guide (RIG) Feedback form

The thesis committee should review and comment on the quality of students' research proposal first. Only a high quality of research proposal is permitted to proceed to internal assessment process and oral presentation. Milestone 1 application must be assessed and approved by the thesis committee and Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D of the enrolling school which will proceed to arrange for an oral presentation for the student. The research proposal and presentation will be assessed by two reviewers who are usually members of academic staff listed on the Register of Supervisors. The reviewers will assess and provide feedback on:

- i. the scope of study and appropriateness of project design
- ii. the originality and/or innovation of the study

- iii. the feasibility of the study
- iv. the requirements for the ethical conduct of research

Following the oral presentation, the two reviewers will provide their feedback to the Thesis Chair who is to provide a progression summary and a recommendation to the CMGSC Chair that the submission for M1 be:

- i. approved
- ii. approved subject to further conditions being met (such as foreign risk review, ethics approval, etc.)
- iii. amended and resubmitted with major amendments; or
- iv. failed

Students will achieve Good Standing if M1 is approved. Conditional Status will be accorded to students whose outcome of M1 is to amend and resubmit with major amendments. If the student does not meet the approved amendment and resubmission conditions by the agreed-upon deadlines, the student will be recommended for Termination of Enrolment. Please refer to the section on Approval below.

Please consult your supervisor/Thesis Committee for more detailed information or you can visit <https://gradschool.curtin.edu.my/current-students/milestones/>.

Milestone 1 application and research proposal will be reviewed by two assessors listed on the Register of Supervisors who have appropriate familiarity with the research topics. These two assessors should be nominated by the thesis committee and the signed nomination forms must be approved by Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D and submitted to Curtin Malaysia Graduate School (CMGS) before the internal assessments are carried out. These assessors should not have actual/perceived conflict of interest with the students and any member of the thesis committee. If the assessor is unable to continue his/ her job as an assessor, the thesis committee is advised to nominate another assessor.

Oral Presentation

For Milestone 1, a student will be required to prepare and present an oral presentation on the research proposal to the faculty. Once approved, the faculty will arrange a time and venue for this presentation. The approval will be based on:

- i. Assurance from the thesis committee that the research proposal is in an academically satisfactory state of iteration and is therefore ready for oral presentation.
- ii. Confirmation that the thesis committee, internal assessors, AD, R&D and faculty delegates are confirmed to attend the presentation.
- iii. Confirmation that at least 50% of the members of academic staff of the host faculty/ department will be present; and
- iv. A suitable period of advertising for the presentation must be at least one week.

During the oral presentation, additional feedback from the internal assessors and other attendees may be given to the research proposal. After the presentation, a meeting, chaired by thesis chair, will then be conducted to discuss the student's performance and outline recommendations for the research proposal. Students will be informed of the outcome of their M1 research proposal and recommendations for improvements. Afterward, the thesis committee will work closely with the students to make all necessary amendments and prepare a final research proposal to be submitted to AD, R&D. HDR Programme Coordinator will then submit the final proposal (that has addressed all comments and recommendations), relevant documentations and a list of staff and HDR student oral presentation attendance to CMGS for approval.

6.1.2 Approval

Based on the documents submitted, CMGS will determine whether the application for Milestone 1 is accepted or rejected. Once the decision (whether accept/reject) is made, the student will be informed, and the outcome will be updated in StudentOne (S1). It is important for students to take note that candidacy approval is only valid when a notification from CMGS is received indicating that the candidacy has been approved.

If an application for a milestone is rejected, the student will be required to make all the necessary corrections based on the comments and recommendations given as per the outcome of the assessment of their research proposal. The thesis committee team will advise and guide the students on the corrections/amendments to be carried out. A second round of presentations will be arranged.

6.2 Milestone 2 (M2)

Milestone 2 provides students with the opportunity to reflect on the progress made in their research project and finalise a strategy for the timely completion and dissemination of research findings. To be eligible to submit Milestone 2, a student must have passed Milestone 1.

The following conditions are considered by the Enrolling Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D (or Delegate) in reviewing Milestone 2 application:

- i. Satisfactory progress in your research, including the timely completion of any confirmation tasks set out in your Milestone 1 application.
- ii. Attainment of the necessary level of knowledge and skills to proceed with the proposed research.

The thesis committee should review and comment on students' research progress report. Only high-quality written work and good dissemination plan are allowed to proceed to review process and oral presentation.

6.2.1 What is Required for Milestone 2 Application?

Students will submit their M2 via the online form, no later than one month before their M2 due date. Milestone 2 will comprise the following:

- i. Milestone 2 Application Form with the relevant sections completed.
- ii. A written output of at least 3000 words from the HDR research. It can take the form of a draft thesis chapter, a draft or published journal article, a research report or another appropriate format (Please discuss with your supervisor/Thesis Committee).
- iii. Turnitin originality report ($\leq 30\%$) for your written work. This is not required if you are submitting a published paper.
- iv. A completion and dissemination plan. This should include details of how you will disseminate the results of your HDR study.
- v. Authorship agreements; and
- vi. An oral presentation reporting the progress made in the research project.

For Milestone 2 application, written work (research progress report) and dissemination plan will be reviewed by two assessors listed on the Register of Supervisors who have appropriate

familiarity with the research topics. If these assessors have been nominated before (also evaluating Milestone 1), the thesis committee needs not to re-nominate them. However, if these two assessors have not been officially nominated previously, the thesis committee should nominate them by obtaining an approval from Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D and submitting the signed nomination forms to Curtin Malaysia Graduate School (CMGS) before the internal assessments can be carried out. If the assessor is unable to continue his/her job as an assessor, the thesis committee is advised to nominate another assessor.

Oral Presentation

The process for organizing an oral presentation for M2 candidate is the same as the process for M1.

During the oral presentation, additional feedback from the internal assessors and other attendees may be given to the research progress report/written work. A meeting, chaired by thesis committee chair, will then be conducted after the presentation to discuss the candidate's performance and outline comments and recommendations for the progress report and the research works moving forward. The student will receive feedback on the report and afterward the student should work with the thesis committee to address the comments and finalise M2 application. Students are usually required to submit a document setting out how assessors' comments have been appropriately addressed at the time when students submit the finalised application. The thesis committee will work closely with the student to make all the necessary amendments and prepare a final progress report to be submitted to Faculty AD, R&D. Faculty Programme Coordinator will then submit this report, relevant documentation and list of staff and HDR student oral presentation attendance to CMGS.

6.2.2 Approval

Once the internal assessment and oral presentation have been carried out and the sample of written work has been amended based on the assessors' comments and feedback during the oral presentation, then final progress report will be forwarded to CMGS after the approval by the thesis committee and Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D. Based on the documents submitted, CMGS will determine whether the application for Milestone 2 is accepted or rejected and the

student will be informed. The outcome will be updated in StudentOne (S1).

If an application for a milestone is rejected, students will be required to make all the necessary corrections as per the outcome of the assessment of their research proposal. The thesis committee team will advise and guide the students on the corrections/amendments to be carried out. A second round of presentations will be arranged.

6.3 Milestone 3 (M3)

To be eligible for Milestone 3, a student must have passed Milestone 2. M3 provides students with the opportunity to present the research findings as completion of the project is coming closer. It enables students to demonstrate the research outcomes and to outline the contribution of their work to the field of research.

Milestone 3 application and thesis will be reviewed by two internal assessors. If these two assessors have served as assessors at M1 and/or M2, no re-nomination is required. However, if these two assessors have not been officially nominated previously, the thesis committee will nominate them by obtaining approval from Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D and submitting the signed nomination forms to Curtin Malaysia Graduate School (CMGS). If the assessor is unable to continue his/her job as an assessor, the thesis committee is advised to nominate another assessor.

6.3.1 What is Required for Milestone 3 Application?

The following conditions are considered by the Enrolling Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D (or Delegate) in reviewing Milestone 3 application. Submission for application for M3 must be made via the Milestone 3 form, no later than one month before their M3 due date. M3 will comprise the following:

- i. The Milestone 3 application form
- ii. A written output of at least 3,000 words from the HDR research, distinct from the written output produced at M2. Each faculty may impose further specific requirements on the written output (such as a complete thesis and Turnitin originality report) to address discipline specific requirements; and

- iii. A final oral presentation of the entire research project.

Before the internal assessments and oral presentation are conducted, it is important for students to submit Milestone 3 application and a complete thesis to the thesis committee. The thesis committee should review and provide comments for students to address before proceeding further in the M3 application process. Only a high-quality thesis is allowed to proceed to review process and oral presentation.

Oral Presentation

For Milestone 3, students are required to prepare and present an oral presentation on the research findings. The procedure for setting the oral presentation is the same as in M1 and M2. During the oral presentation, additional feedback from the internal assessors and other attendees may be given. A meeting, chaired by the thesis committee chair, will be conducted after the presentation to discuss the student's performance and outline comments and recommendations for the thesis. The thesis committee will work closely with the students to ensure that the necessary amendments are made and prepare a final thesis to be submitted to AD, R&D. Faculty Programme Coordinator will then submit this thesis, relevant documents including a table outlining how assessors' comments and recommendations have been addressed, and list of staff and HDR student oral presentation attendance to CMGS.

6.3.2 Approval

Once the internal assessment and oral presentation have been carried out and the thesis has been amended based on the assessors' comments and feedback during the oral presentation, the final thesis will be forwarded to CMGS after review and approval by the thesis committee and Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D. Based on the documents submitted, CMGS will determine the outcome of the application for Milestone 3. If M3 application is successful, CMGS will inform the student and will update the record in StudentOne (S1).

If an application for M3 is rejected, students will be required to make all the necessary corrections as per the outcome of the assessment of their research proposal. The thesis committee team will advise and guide the students on the corrections/amendments to be carried out. A second round of presentations will be arranged.

6.4 Supervision Record and Monitoring

It is mandatory for HDR students to submit supervisory meeting records at least once in three weeks for full-time enrolment and every six weeks for part-time enrolment.

6.4.1 Supervisory Meeting Record System (Monthly Progress Report)

It is a record of meetings between HDR students and their supervisors. For supervisory team, only the main supervisor is required to submit this report. It is the responsibility of the principal supervisor to ensure that student understands this requirement and meets the mandatory requirements for supervision records to be uploaded.

HDR Students who fail to show evidence of supervision record/communication for consecutively 4 weeks or more may result in their scholarship being suspended and their enrolment being terminated.

Please also refer to 2.5 and 2.7 [of Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Student Progression Procedures](#).

7 THESIS PREPARATION, SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION

7.1 Thesis Preparation

A research thesis must be a substantial, original contribution to the knowledge or understanding of a field of study and must demonstrate the capacity of the candidate to conceive, design, carry to completion and appropriately present independent research. The maximum length of a doctoral thesis is 100,000 words, while the maximum length of a master thesis is 60,000 words. A decision on the format of a thesis should be made early in candidacy and with advice from the candidate's Thesis Committee. Guidelines for thesis preparation can be found here:

<https://www.curtin.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2022/11/Guidelines-for-Thesis-Preparation-and-Submission.pdf>

Irrespective of the format of the thesis, it must demonstrate that the candidate has:

- i. Adequately surveyed the literature relevant to the thesis
- ii. Demonstrated appropriate skills in the gathering and reporting of critical analysis

- iii. Demonstrated the capacity to conceive, design and carry to completion independent research; and
- iv. Made a substantial, original and significant contribution to the knowledge or understanding in the field of study.

The supervisor or the thesis chair will start the thesis submission process by completing the “[Nomination of Examiners](#)” online form, no later than 6 weeks prior to a student’s intended thesis submission date. Examiners shall possess a Doctoral qualification with recognised standing in the field of study or be deemed by the Chair of Graduate Studies Committee to be of equivalent status. The Examiners should not have perceived or actual conflict of interest with the candidate, supervisory team and university. Please refer to the details in

<https://www.curtin.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2021/11/Guidelines-for-Conflict-of-Interest-for-Thesis-Examination.pdf>

It is the main responsibility of the supervisor or the thesis chair of the thesis committee to ensure that the nominated examiners have been officially confirmed to be available and able to carry out the thesis examination duties. The composition of the panel of examiners is:

- i. For Masters students one examiner will be external to Curtin and the other may be internal or external. Internal examiners will be from a different enrolling school to that of the student and the primary supervisor. At no time will an examiner be part of the student’s Thesis Committee.
- ii. For Doctoral students both examiners must be external to the University. At no time will an examiner be part of the student’s Thesis Committee.

The approver in the online examiner nomination form will be the Associate Dean (R&D) of the respective faculty. The form will be submitted to the Faculty three months before the expected thesis submission date. The Associate Dean (R&D) evaluates the nomination of examiners based on their eligibility, research expertise, and any potential conflicts of interest. Once the examiners are approved, the nomination is then submitted to the Thesis Examination Office at Perth campus. The name of an examiner is not to be released to the student until after the examination process is completed and then only if the examiners specifically approve the release of their identity or where the University is required to by law.

7.2 Thesis Submission and Examination

Upon passing Milestone 3, students are required to submit the title page of the thesis to the Thesis Examinations Officer (Perth) to be checked. If approved, students and the supervisor need to complete the [Copyright and Release of Thesis for Examination Form](#) and submit them to the Thesis Examinations Officer (Perth).

Students should then email an abstract, or short summary, of the thesis of not more than 75 words to the Thesis Examinations Officer for inclusion in the Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement.

Finally, students should submit an electronic copy of thesis via online [thesis submission link](#) (HDR student access only). Temporarily bound copies may also be required if the external examiners prefer so. The Thesis Examinations Office (Perth) will then send student's thesis to the examiners. Examiners are requested to examine a thesis within six weeks of receipt. If any examiner is unable to complete the examination within three months, the Faculty's Associate Dean of R&D in consultation with the thesis committee may recommend a replacement examiner.

Once the thesis has been examined by examiners, the examiners' reports and other relevant documents are sent to the Chair of the Thesis Committee. Thesis Chair will notify students the outcome of the thesis examination.

If revision is required (in nearly all cases), the thesis needs to be revised under the direction of the Chair (not the supervisor) of the Thesis Committee. However, in the revision process, students may consult their supervisor and/or co-supervisor/associate supervisor on how the revisions of the thesis can be best carried out.

The Chair of the Thesis Committee must ensure that the thesis is revised within the timeframe as set out in the examination report. Once the revision of the thesis is completed, the Thesis Chair makes a recommendation (pass or fail) on the revised thesis and submits the recommendation to the AD R&D or Faculty Dean for endorsement.

The endorsed recommendation and all the other relevant documents ([Exit survey form](#), [HDR clearance form](#), rebuttal form and endorsed Thesis chair report) are sent to CMGS for onward submission to the Thesis Examination Office (Perth) for the Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor,

Research Excellence to make a final recommendation to the Curtin University Council.

Students should upload the Submission of Digital Thesis form and a digital copy of the final version of the thesis to an online link "[Deposit of Final Thesis](#)" (HDR student access only).

The final step will involve the Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Excellence (Perth) who will recommend your graduation and the Thesis Examination Office will then send an Approval for Graduation to you and the Thesis Chair.

7.3 Oral Examination

Students who enroll into a PhD or DBA from **1 January 2026** onwards will be required to undertake an oral examination as a part of their Thesis Examination. While students who enroll into a Master of Philosophy from 1 January 2027 onwards will be similarly required to undertake an oral examination as a part of their Thesis Examination.

The main objectives of the oral defence are to:

- i. provide the research degree student with an opportunity to defend their thesis and reply to criticism or challenges to their arguments while enabling examiners to clarify issues in the thesis
- ii. provide the research degree student with an opportunity to discuss their work in depth with their examiners and to interact directly and in person with leaders in their fields of study
- iii. facilitate the examiners reaching agreement on an examination result
- iv. facilitate the examiners providing to the research degree student an agreed, single, set of corrections or revisions required to be made before the award of the qualification can be made.

In preparing for the oral examination, students and the Thesis Committee will consult the Oral Examination Preparation and Assessment Guidelines.

- i. The oral examination will occur within 12 weeks of the student submitting their thesis for examination.
- ii. A student's Thesis Chair will be responsible for the coordination of the Viva process.
- iii. The GRS will notify the student of the final result.

The link below is intended to provide you with more information on oral defence.

<https://s30991.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2025/11/Viva-guidelines-4.pdf>

7.4 Conferral of Award and Graduation

When the University Graduate Studies Committee has classified your thesis as Passed, your name will be placed on the graduation list for Conferral of the Award by the Council of the University. The Chair of the University Graduate Studies Committee will advise you of this and therefore you do not have to complete an application to Graduate. The Graduations Officer will write to you in due course with the option of attending the appropriate ceremony or receiving the Award by mail.

Appendix 1 - Procedure to Submit Record of Supervisory Meeting On-line

To comply with the procedure set out in PRO-CMGS-01 Administration of HDR Enrolment, every HDR student is required to submit (upload) a record of supervisory meetings once in three weeks (part-time students once every 6 weeks) to CMGS.

This record is to be submitted online via the HDR supervisory meeting record website: <https://csapp.curtin.edu.my/supervisorymeeting/login/login.php>. The login credentials are the same as the user's Windows login details. After the meeting in which a record is taken, the student should then log in to the website, enter the details and send the record to his/her supervisor for confirmation or revision. When satisfied with the recorded details, the supervisor then confirms the record.

Since all students have more than one supervisor, the online system imposes no restriction regarding which supervisor sends the confirmation, both the principal and the co-supervisor has the access to submit. The system can also accommodate the submission on a more regular basis, which can be agreed by the supervisor and the student. All supervisors, including the thesis chair, have access to view the confirmed reports of students.

Appendix 2 – Induction Procedure for Students Conducting Research in Laboratories

1. HDR student notifies Lab Technical Officer and copies Project Supervisor

The HDR student sends a formal email to the lab technical officer to enquire about equipment availability and the laboratory induction procedure and copies the project supervisor in the email. The induction should be scheduled for at least one week before the student begins work in the laboratory.

2. Lab Technical Officer provides details on laboratory induction procedure

The Technical Officer briefs the HDR student on equipment availability, booking procedures, and the appropriate staff responsible for each piece of equipment. The Technical Officer also advises the HDR student to submit one e-ticket per laboratory request, as different laboratories are supervised by different Technical Officer.

3. Technical Officer replies to the e-ticket submitted to set a date for laboratory induction

Upon receiving a request for laboratory induction, the Technical Officer will respond to the student and schedule an induction session within three days.

4. Risk assessment forms

The Technical Officer will provide the risk assessment forms to the student during the induction. After the laboratory induction is completed, the student must fill in the forms under the supervision of their project supervisor, and both parties must sign them. The signed forms must be submitted to the Technical Officer before any laboratory work begins.

Important Note:

This procedure must be followed for the admission of a new research student in the laboratory. Students will not be allowed to start work in the laboratory until all of Steps 1 to 4 have been completed.

RESPONSIBILITIES				
Policy Manager		Chair of Graduate Studies Committee		
Contact Officer		Administrative Officer, Graduate Studies		
Telephone E-mail		085 630100 Ext. 2548 GradSchool@curtin.edu.my		
Approval Authority		Academic Board		
Date of Approval		18 th January 2021		
Assigned Review Period		3 years (unless there are significant changes in HDR policies and procedures)		
Date of Next Review		18 th January 2024		
REVISION HISTORY				
Version	Approved/ Rescinded	Date Approved/ Rescinded	Resolution Number/ Minutes Reference	Reason for & Details of Amendment
1.0	Approved	2 nd July 2020	Curtin Malaysia Academic Board meeting held on 16 th June 2020	Procedures and policies are updated to be consistent with Curtin University Australia's HDR policies
2.0	Approved	18 th January 2021	The resolution was circulated to Curtin Malaysia Academic Board via email on 15 th January 2021 for an approval	Procedures and policies are updated to be consistent with Curtin University Australia's HDR policies and MQA's programme entry requirements.
3.0				Procedures and policies are updated to be consistent with changes made in Curtin University's HDR policies/procedures. The document is revised to reflect new processes at Curtin Malaysia. All references to Director of CMGS are now changed to Dean, CMGS.