



Gap Analysis on the Good Practice Framework (GPF)

Overview:

The GPF must encompass all aspects of research training that promote quality in higher education institutions, with the aim of identifying and sharing good practice principles, processes and quality assurance measures. Many institutions will exemplify good practice in various areas of the GPF. In other cases, the Framework will enable institutions to align their research training procedures with national good practice guidelines and identify possible gaps and areas for improvement. This Gap Analysis is a tool that can be used to identify areas of excellence and those that require improvement.

Definitions:

Dimensions and Components: From the GPF, the dimensions are critical high level aspects of HDR programs in Australian institutions; and the Components are sub themes in each dimension that exemplify good policies and practices that promote research training excellence.

Person Responsible: The individual responsible, or their delegate, for the management, review or action of the result in the gap analysis.

Ratings of Quality: Responses are to range from being the most evident of quality outcomes to showing the least amount of evidence in quality. See below.

Yes - Effective strategies are implemented successfully across the faculty.

Yes, but - Good strategies in place, some limitations or some further work needed.

No, but - This area hasn't yet been effectively addressed, but some significant work is being done across the faculty or institution.

No - Effective strategies not developed.

Rationale for rating: Responses are to provide an explanation for the rating of quality.

Evidence: relates to the information which supports the rating 'yes' or 'yes but' and rationale under each quality assurance measure. There needs to be a clear correlation between the rating and the evidence provided.

Gaps/ Opportunities: relates to the information that supports the rating 'no' or 'no but' under each quality assurance measure. Where possible a timeframe for addressing the gap or opportunity is included.

Audience:

HDR University Committees, Deputy Vice-Chancellors or Provosts Research, Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies and others interested in improving quality in research training.

Instruction:

This Gap Analysis document should be read in conjunction with the Good Practice Framework for Research training in Australia.

Please complete the attached. You will need to identify a 'yes', 'yes, but' 'no, but' or a 'no' response in accordance with the definitions above. In the next column you will need to complete the corresponding colour (traffic light).

This exercise then requires you to provide the evidence according to your response, for example, if you responded 'yes but' you will need to provide information that supports this evidence, but you may also have an initiative that will support the response in the future so you may want to put this under Gaps/Opportunities.

Gap Analysis on the GPF

Dimensions and Components	Person(s) responsible (delegated responsibility)	Rating of Quality Assurance [Four point scale] Yes, Yes BUT, No BUT, No	<div style="background-color: red; color: black; padding: 2px;">Red (no)</div> <div style="background-color: yellow; color: black; padding: 2px;">Amber (no but, yes, but)</div> <div style="background-color: green; color: black; padding: 2px;">Green (Yes)</div>	Rationale for the Rating	Evidence of Institutional Alignment (Quality Assurance)	Gaps/Opportunities for improvement (actions in place)
1. Governance Institutions ensure there is an efficient and effective research higher degree governance framework, which assures and enhances research training quality.						
1.1 HDR Committee Does the institution regularly audit the central HDR committee for compliance in : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseeing rules, policies and procedures for HDR candidates; • Monitoring HDR candidate performance; • Monitoring HDR compliance; • Promoting quality research training environment and outcomes; • Overseeing new, and reviewing current HDR programs; and • Reporting against internal and external reference points? 						
Are these communicated appropriately to stakeholders?						
1.2 HDR Policies Are there processes for reviewing and approving policies?						
Are there mechanisms are in place to ensure compliance with policies?						

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			Amber (no but, yes, but)			
			Green (Yes)			
1.3 HDR Candidate Representation Is there a policy on HDR candidate representation?						
Is there a HDR candidate representative on HDR committee(s)?						
1.4 Grievance Procedures and Appeals Does the institution monitor the number of grievances and appeals?						
Are there mechanisms to address the areas of concern identified from grievances and appeals?						
1.5 Collaborative Research Support Are there clear guidelines on how to set up joint research degrees and other research training partnerships?						
Are there minimum standards about what should be covered in these agreements?						
1.6 Responsible Program Management Does the institution have sound processes and practices to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the appropriate use of federal block grants • Meet federal reporting requirements for RTP and other HEIMS HDR data collection • Responsibly budget for and manage the expenditure of scholarship funding 						
Are there policies in place to ensure that all candidates have access to required infrastructure and support,						

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regardless of enrolment type and location?						
1.7 Legal and Regulatory Compliance Are there processes in place to ensure legal and regulatory compliance of all programs including international collaborations and other third party agreements?						
2. Program and Outcomes The institution has a program that requires candidates to produce quality research as part of their degree program. In the case of doctoral candidates, this must be a significant body of original research and contribution to knowledge under the supervision of active researchers in the field of the research project. The program provides relevant and accessible training programs that are available to all candidates and educates them about research practice/management, inculcates an ability to disseminate knowledge to the wider community, and engages them in advancing their chosen careers. Learning outcomes are aligned with institutional statements on graduate attributes.						
2.1 Program Evaluation Are reports available with data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion rates; • Time to completion; and • Retention rates. Do these reviews consider particular and distinct cohorts including those in that may be delivered to part time candidates or those working online or at external locations?						
Is there a regular audit of the program alignment with the strategic directions of the institution?						
Is there a regular audit of the program alignment with the graduate attributes set by the institution?						

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			Green (Yes)			
2.2 Candidate Performance Are reports available with data on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student surveys including PREQ and Exit surveys; and • Examination outcomes? 						
2.3 Tailored Coursework and Research Training Skills Are annual reports based on coursework, research training outcomes and student satisfaction prepared and reported to the appropriate committee? Have any changes been implemented as a result of these reports?						
Are there mechanisms to consider the research training needs of individual candidates and assure the attainment of the skills need to complete the research project?						
2.4 Professional Skill Development Are reviews conducted on the quality and effectiveness of the professional skills development course?						
Are there trends in the number of candidates attending professional development?						
Are there trends in the perceived value of the professional development?						

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2.5 Program Delivery Can the institution be assured that course work and skills training is readily accessible to all candidates, regardless of location or mode of delivery of the program?						
2.6 Candidate Feedback Mechanisms Are mechanisms other than PREQ in place to obtain feedback on the HDR student experience, including research training and the training environment?						
Are mechanisms in place to evaluate and use this feedback to improve the overall quality of the HDR student experience?						
Are HDR students and relevant stakeholders informed about improvements made as a result of their feedback?						
3. Selection and Admission The institution ensures that selection and admissions procedures are easily accessible and clearly, consistently and equitably applied.						
3.1 Provision of Information at Initial Enquiry Are selection and admission processes clearly communicated to prospective candidates?						
3.2 Entry Pathways Are entry pathways audited regularly?						

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Do the entry pathways align with institutional policy on entry pathways?						
3.3 Transfer and Advanced Standing Are the candidates who have transferred between HDR degrees meeting the milestones (e.g. confirmation of candidature, completing progress reports etc) in the degree?						
Are the candidates who have been given advanced standing been meeting the milestones (e.g. confirmation of candidature, completing progress reports etc) in the degree?						
3.4 Matching Needs, Resources and Supervision Are the adequacy and availability of the resources (such as a suitable supervisor/ supervisory team, infrastructure and financial support) for candidates being regularly reviewed and are the changes being implemented?						
3.5 Selection, Approval and Offer Are transparent selection and admission processes in place and systematically applied and comply with the institution policies?						
3.6 Enrolment Are transparent enrolment processes in place and systematically applied?						

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Are data being collected on the turnaround times from application to enrolment for domestic and international, and are there any trends?						
Is a record maintained on complaints related to enrolments and how these were dealt with?						
Are data being collected on the proportion of take up of offers from the total of offers made?						
4. Supervision The institution provides HDR candidates with a supervisory team that has an appropriate mix of expertise in the discipline(s) of the candidate’s research, the relevant research methods, and in supervising successful research degree completions. The supervisory team must mentor and actively assist the candidate, meet the academic and administrative requirements of the institution, tailor their practice to the needs of individual candidates and provide access to pastoral care as required.						
4.1 Supervisory Team Are mechanisms in place to ensure appropriate supervisory arrangements are made? (E.g. policy provisions).						
4.2 Supervisor Capacity Is supervisory workload factored into the overall workload model?						
4.3 Supervisor Eligibility Are regular audits carried out showing the proportion of compliant supervisors?						

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Is there a regular review of supervision capacity (i.e. number of eligible supervisors available) in different programs?						
Does the university have a system for recording supervisor eligibility?						
Are the requirements for and responsibilities of external supervisors clearly articulated?						
4.4 Supervisor Development and Support Are professional development and mentoring opportunities available for all supervisors to improve their practices and is feedback collected on these?						
5.1 Responsibilities of Supervisors and Candidates						
Are supervisors and candidates expected to sign a statement of responsibility?						
Are the statements of responsibility regularly reviewed and updated?						

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5.2 Orientation and Induction Are inductions held at all levels university/faculty/school and what proportions of candidates are attending the inductions?						
Is feedback collected on the effectiveness of the inductions/orientation?	Dean, Graduate Research School Postgraduate Coordinator Head of School					
5.3 Confirmation of Candidature Are there regular reviews conducted that show the number of candidates confirmed on time, the number of candidates not approved and the length of time to confirmation of candidature?	Dean, Graduate Research School					
5.4 Monitoring Progression Are processes in place to monitor and review student progression?	Dean, Graduate Research School					
Are there mechanisms in place to report on the number of Progress Reviews conducted within the required timeline and the review has been deemed satisfactory?	Dean Graduate Research School					
5.5 Variations to Candidature Are annual reviews of the variations to candidature carried out identifying any trends and/or areas of concern and attention?	Director Student Services					
Responsible Conduct of Research						

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Research training is supported by academic structures, policies and practices that facilitate require and promote academic research integrity, responsible research and ethical scholarship.						
6.1 Academic Integrity Are reports prepared on the proportion of staff and candidates who have attended training programs dealing with academic research integrity such as responsible authorship, conflict of interest etc?						
Have there been incidents of reported breaches of the academic integrity policy?						
6.2 Ethics Are reports prepared on the proportions of academic staff and candidates who have attended training programs dealing with ethics?						
Have there been incidents of reported breaches of the ethics policy?						
6.3 Intellectual Property Is candidate feedback collected on the satisfaction of support provided on the management of intellectual property and commercialisation issues?						
Are reports available on the number of projects involving intellectual						

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property and are areas of growth identified from these?						
5. Candidate Support The institution ensures that HDR candidates have access to resources required that enable timely completion of a quality degree including appropriate physical, financial, administrative, academic, counselling and disability support services. The institution is committed to providing a research environment for research candidates that is engaging, culturally sensitive, locally and globally relevant and supportive of diversity.						
7.1 Scholarships Are scholarship conditions regularly reviewed to ensure alignment with government or institution policy changes?						
Are reports prepared on the number of candidates supported by RTP and other scholarships; time to completion of scholarship holders compared to non-scholarship; and time to withdrawal of scholarship holders compared to non-scholarship holders?						
7.2 Research Culture and Engagement Are regular surveys (including PREQ) conducted on the levels of satisfaction with the research culture and intellectual climate?						
7.3 Resources and Infrastructure Are adequate resources and facilities provided to students to assist them throughout their candidature? (access to desk, computer, lab/specialist equipment, meeting rooms, social spaces etc)						

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Is there a dedicated budget at University/Faculty/School level for HDR resources?						
7.4 Travel Support Is travel support provided to HDR candidates?						
Is feedback collected from HDR candidates on the academic outcomes from their travel support?						
7.5 Pastoral Care Is there accessible information on pastoral care for HDR candidates?						
Is feedback regularly collected, reviewed and presented to the relevant committees on pastoral care matters?						
Does the institution provide support for Postgraduate Associations?						
7.6 Support Services for Diversity Is feedback regularly collected and reviewed on support services for diversity?						
Are the DDoGS Best Practice Guidelines for Indigenous HDR candidates available on the institution website?						
7.7 Post Thesis Submission Support Is feedback regularly collected and reviewed on post thesis submission support?						

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<p>6. Supporting Career Progression The institution supports HDR candidates in their progression towards their chosen career, and prepares candidates to be competitive and successful in both academic and non-academic careers (where appropriate). The institution works with the candidate to determine short, medium and long-term goals for career progression. Attention to career development needs to be given during candidature, and also after submission of thesis for examination.</p>						
<p>8.1 Curriculum Vitae (CV) and Portfolio Does the institution have a system to support curriculum vitae (CV) and portfolio development?</p>						
<p>8.2 Career Development Is there any targeted career development support provided to assess the career needs of, and promote career opportunities for, HDR candidates?</p>						
<p>Do career services, HDR unit/personnel and faculties collaborate to provide this support?</p>						
<p>Does the institution collect feedback on employer requirements from industry?</p>						
<p>8.3 Impact and End User Engagement Does the institution encourage and monitor end user engagement by HDR candidates? Are candidates encouraged and supported to consider the potential impact of their research?</p>						

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			Green (Yes)			
8.4 Connecting Graduates, Employers and Alumni Does the institution collect information on the number of alumni and employers invited to present and discuss career opportunities to HDR candidates?						
Is feedback collected on the effectiveness of presentations of alumni and employers?						
8.5 Interdisciplinary Awareness Are interdisciplinary seminars and events being held?						
Does the institution have interdisciplinary seminars projects?						
8.6 Mobility and International Awareness What proportion of candidates travel internationally as part of their research degree program?						
7. Examination Work submitted for examination meets international standards and the examination processes ensures successful candidates merit the award of the degree.						
9.1 Pre-submission Review Are pre-submission reviews conducted and an assessment grade of HDR cohort collected?						
Are the assessment grades ranked?						

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			Green (Yes)			
9.2 Appointment of Examiners Is there a policy regarding the criteria for the appointment of examiners?						
Is there a mechanism for ensuring that the examiners who are appointed meet the institution's criteria?						
Are the ACGR Best Practice Guidelines for Conflict of Interest Guidelines for the Appointment of Examiners available on the institution website and adequately promoted?						
9.3 Examination of Thesis Is there an audit on the examination process that ensures that the examination process is in accordance with the policy or guidelines?						
Are data available and reported on time to submission and candidate satisfaction with the examination process?						
9.4 Conferral of Award Are data collected and reported showing the length of time between submission, examination result and conferral?						