

ACGR Good Practice Guidelines for

# Quality Graduate Research Supervision

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AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF  
GRADUATE RESEARCH

## About these Guidelines

ACGR recognises the critical role of supervisors in training and supporting HDR candidates to become the researchers and innovators of the future. It also recognises that supervisors will require support and resources to ensure the highest quality of supervision in a competitive higher education landscape.

## Using the Guidelines

In response to Priority Issue 4 Goal 3 of the ACOLA Implementation Plan, the ACGR developed these Guidelines to support institutions in promoting and ensuring a quality supervision experience for HDR candidates. Institutions are encouraged to consider the following recommendations when developing supervision frameworks, bearing in mind their specific institutional requirements.

This document is part of a suite of Good Practice Guidelines<sup>1</sup> that are designed to support institutions as they develop their strategies and processes in particular important areas of operation. It supports the Australian Graduate Research Good Practice Principles<sup>2</sup> which articulate a set of standards considered to be essential for the delivery of graduate research programs and should be read alongside the Graduate Research Good Practice Principle 5 on Graduate Research Supervision.

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<sup>1</sup> [Australian Graduate Research Good Practice Guidelines](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Australian Graduate Research Good Practice Principles](#)

# Recommendations

ACGR makes the following recommendations to universities.

## Policy and governance

1. Set out in policy the the institution's principles in relation to best practice in supervision that supports the institution's strategic goals.
2. Ensure that eligibility requirements for appointment as a principal, co-supervisor or other designated supervisory role are transparent and rigorously applied.
3. Provide advice and guidance on appropriate supervisory workloads.
4. Clearly articulate eligibility for and responsibilities of supervisors who are not members of the institution's staff.

## Performance

5. Regularly appraise the performance and development of staff in relation to supervision in a way that informs the institution's more formal performance evaluations.
6. Develop indicators to inform reviews, such as:
  - time to completion
  - attrition
  - progress (eg. achievement of milestone)
  - examination reports
  - complaints and grievances
  - prizes and awards
  - contributions to HDR supervisory practice
  - leadership in supervision.

## Registration and accreditation

7. Put in place a register or accreditation system for supervisors.
8. Ensure that the system includes the ability to suspend or remove those supervisors who do not meet expectations.
9. Recognise different levels of supervisory experience, including both scholarly and practice based, that provide candidates with support for all aspects of their research.

## Continuing Professional Development

10. Have a clear strategy for supervisory professional development.
11. Make available a suite of online and face-to-face supervisor professional development modules that ensure knowledge of best practice.

12. Make Continuing Professional Development mandatory for all supervisors and ensure that it is repeated on a regular basis.
13. Provide all new supervisors with mandatory orientation to the rules and practices of the institution.

## **Rewards**

14. Recognise and reward supervision best practice in various ways, including through registration levels, promotions, awards and commendations.