



Policy Document Administrator	Edwina Murphy, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Policy Document Approver	Research Committee
Responsible Body/Person	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Edwina Murphy
Next Review date	April 2027
Superseded documents	None
Related documents	Research and Scholarship Policy <i>Supervisors and Supervision Policy</i> <i>Supervisor Register</i> <i>Academic Governance Charter</i> <i>Research and Scholarship Publications Form</i> <i>Request for Review of Research Classification Form</i>
Related HE Standards	4.1, 4.2, 6.3

1. PURPOSE

To ensure that all **University** supervisors of HDR candidates meet or exceed the threshold standards for supervision.

2. DEFINITIONS

Definitions for any words in **Bold** in this document can be found in the [Policy Glossary](#). The first instance of each defined term has been outlined in bold.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all AUT academic staff and HDR supervisors.

4. BACKGROUND

The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 clauses 4.2.3.a and B1.1.2 require all principal supervisors of HDR candidates and academic staff engaged in research student supervision to be active in research and (external) co-supervisors to have relevant research expertise.

Research, according to HESF (2021) B1.3.16, "leads to new knowledge and original creative endeavour."

Scholarship is a broader category than research and is defined in the TEQSA Guidance Note on Scholarship as

those activities concerned with gaining new or improved understanding, or appreciation and insights into a field of knowledge, or engaging with and keeping up to date with advances in the field.

Both research and scholarship are important for the **University**, but research active status is primarily based upon research output.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

The Australian College of Theology values the contribution to knowledge through scholarship and the dissemination of that scholarship. Further, as we are engaged in research training, we are committed to the original contribution made by research.

As an institution, the AUT is committed to research that is 'world standard' measured using best practice indicators. It therefore requires its approved doctoral principal supervisors to achieve the status of **World Standard Research Activity** and all other staff involved in research supervision to be active in research and scholarship.

6. PRINCIPLES

General

- 6.1 All approved doctoral principal supervisors of HDR candidates must have **World Standard Research Activity** status (or have been research active under the previous policy), at the time of their appointment.
- 6.2 A doctoral principal supervisor who does not have **World Standard Research Activity** status will be permitted to complete supervision of any current candidate but will not be permitted to act as the principal supervisor of any additional doctoral candidates until they attain the required status.
- 6.3 **World Standard Research Activity** is defined as one of the following in the Field of Education 091703 Religious Studies in the previous 5 years:
 - a. at least one (1) book classified as research; OR
 - b. one (1) research article/chapter at 'above world standard' or 'well above world standard,' **plus** at least two (2) research articles/chapters classified as research; OR
 - c. three (3) research articles/chapters **plus** at least one (1) other output (research or scholarship).Completed supervision as a principal supervisor of a doctorate will be accepted in place of one research article/chapter.
- 6.4 Output will be assessed by a process overseen by the **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) (DVC-R)** as outlined below.
- 6.5 **Principal supervisors of MTh (Res) candidates and co-supervisors of HDR candidates** who are academic staff must be **active in research and scholarship**, as determined on a case-by-case basis by **Research Committee**. This will include at least one research output in the previous 5 years.
- 6.6 Co-supervisors of HDR candidates who are external to the **University** must have relevant **research expertise**, as determined on a case-by-case basis by **Research Committee**. They need to demonstrate capacity to supervise in the candidate's specialised field of research through qualification and/or publications, industry expertise, professional accreditation and experience.
- 6.7 In assessing the status of a potential supervisor, **Research Committee** may take into account publications which are forthcoming, provided that the final version has been accepted.

- 6.8 All supervisors of **HDR candidates** are listed in the *Supervisor Register* and are subject to the *Supervision and Supervisors Policy*.
- 6.9 **HDR candidates** and their **supervisors** are members of the **Graduate School of Research**.

Research Outputs

- 6.10 Only books, book chapters, journal articles and refereed conference full papers are eligible for assessment. Edited books, book reviews, conference presentations and other outputs are not included. Non-Traditional Research Outputs will be assessed on a case-by-case basis where necessary.
- 6.11 Each output by AUT affiliated staff should normally include the Australian University of Theology as a by-line. It is also appropriate for outputs to indicate the Affiliated College of the author(s).
- 6.12 Academic staff (including external HDR supervisors) use the *Research and Scholarship Publications Form* to report their publications.

Books

- 6.13 To be eligible to be classified as research, books must: be a major work of scholarship; be offered for sale (hard bound/CD-ROM/e-books, on subscription or fee basis); have an International Standard Book Number (ISBN); be written by a single author, or by joint authors who share responsibility for the whole book, and; be published by a commercial publisher (or if only available online, and not published commercially, have been through an acceptable peer review process and otherwise meet the relevant eligibility criteria).

Book Chapters

- 6.14 To be eligible to be classified as research, books chapters must: be a contribution, consisting substantially of new material, to an edited compilation in which the material is subject to editorial scrutiny; if published previously, constitute substantial new knowledge and original research; be a chapter in a book that is offered for sale (hard bound/CD-ROM/e-books, on subscription or fee basis); be a chapter in a book that has an ISBN; be a chapter in a book published by a commercial publisher (or if only available online, and not published commercially, have been through an acceptable peer review process and otherwise meet the relevant eligibility criteria).

Journal articles

- 6.15 To be eligible to be classified as research, journal articles must have appeared in a journal that: uses an acceptable peer review process; publishes original research; is a scholarly publication; and has an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN). In general, the journal will have appeared in a previous ERA list.

Refereed Conference full papers

- 6.16 To be eligible to be classified as research, refereed conference papers must have: been published in full; been through an acceptable peer review process; and been presented at a conference, workshop or seminar of national or international significance.

Assessment Process

- 6.17 The Research Department, drawing on additional expertise where required, will individually assess each output submitted to the repository and classify it as either **Research** or **Scholarship**. A judgement will be made as to whether the output type best fits within the Boyer (1990) category of 'discovery' (and is therefore classified as **Research**), or best fits within the categories of 'integration' and 'application' (and is therefore classified as **Scholarship**). An output will be judged as **Research** where it demonstrates substantively new knowledge in keeping with the ERA definition (this can include cases of synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative).
- 6.18 The assessment of outputs by the Research Department is independent of the author of the output. Where a member of the Research Department is an author of an output, they will not make an assessment of their output.
- 6.19 **AUT Ranking Lists** provide a guide to journals and publishers that are more likely to publish research, however, these **Lists** are not the primary basis for a decision about classification as **Research** or **Scholarship**. Outputs designed to inform (ministry) practitioners on existing knowledge in a professional field are unlikely to be classified as **Research**.
- 6.20 Research outputs will be further assessed as to whether their level of research excellence is above world standard (AWS), or well above world standard (WAWS), based on the research quality of the output and using **AUT Ranking Lists** as a guide.

Review

- 6.21 Affiliated staff may request that the **Research Publications Assessment Panel** review the classification of their publications and make a recommendation to **Research Committee**. Any changes to research output classification and/or research active status as a result of **Research Committee's** decision will be recorded by the Research Department.

Reporting

- 6.22 While the AUT records and assesses the outputs of both **academic staff** (including honorary staff) and external HDR supervisors in order to monitor research active status for supervision purposes, outputs of HDR supervisors whose primary affiliation is elsewhere will not be included in AUT figures.

7. RELATED LEGISLATION

[*Australian Qualifications Framework \(AQF\)*](#)

[*Higher Education Standards Framework \(HESF 2021\)*](#)

[*Higher Education Support Act \(HESA\) 2003*](#)

8. REFERENCES

[*Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2018\)*](#)

9. VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Changes made
1	R&RSC	19 November 2007	19 November 2007	new
2	R&RSC	2 May 2008	2 May 2008	
3	R&RSC	17 April 2009	17 April 2009	
4	R&RSC	22 February 2013	22 February 2013	
5	R&RSC	8 May 2015	8 May 2015	
6	R&RSC	28 April 2017	28 April 2017	Reformat and restructure, updated due to new standards
7	R&RSC	27 April 2018	27 April 2018	Output categories removed and changed, other minor changes
8	R&RSC	22 February 2019	22 February 2019	Added doctoral option for co-supervisors
9	R&RSC	20 July 2021	20 July 2021	Brought into compliance with HESF (2021)
10	R&RSC	01 October 2021	01 October 2021	Amendment to clause 6.5
11	R&RSC Chair & Board Executive	17 November 2021	17 November 2021	Aligned with ACT Research and Scholarship Strategy
12	RC	7 October 2022	7 October 2022	New category of World Standard Research Activity, clarification of requirements
13	Board of Directors	5 June 2023	5 June 2023	Process for assessing and reporting outputs

				integrated and clarified
14	RC	April 2025	April 2025	Update to university; classification of outputs and requirements changed.

10. *Any hard copy of this electronic document may not be current as the AUT regularly reviews its policies. The latest version can be found online at aut.edu.au*