

HDR Posthumous Submission and Examination Guidelines

These guidelines provide information on the process for posthumous submission and examination of research undertaken by an HDR candidate who passes away before being able to complete their degree and would be considered eligible according to criteria detailed in section (95) of the Submission and Examination Procedure. Allowing posthumous submission and examination is regarded as respectful recognition of the amount of effort made by the candidate and their supervisory team in progressing the research to a near-complete stage.

Review of the Research

The senior supervisor will request that the process for a posthumous submission and examination is initiated normally within one year of the death of the candidate. The Senior Supervisor should contact the Dean/ Head of School, Delegated Authority and notify SGR that this process has commenced.

The HDR Delegated Authority (HDR DA) in consultation with the senior supervisor, will identify two assessors to be appointed to review the available work to determine whether the research is substantially complete and of an appropriate level to be examined for the degree.

Assessors must be independent of the supervision of the research but need not be external to the university.

The senior supervisor must provide a brief statement outlining the research to facilitate the assessors' understanding of the candidate's research contribution, and, in cases in which the work is not complete, outline the remaining work which was planned.

Assessors must unanimously agree that sufficient papers, reviews, laboratory or project work, or other verifiable evidence, have been completed by the candidate so that a coherent summary of the research can be given to the examiners.

Where minor amendments to the work are recommended, these should be clearly specified by the assessors. Minor amendments can include tasks such as preparation of table of contents, pagination of the document, arrangement of materials into appendices where this had not been done, minor textual amendments for clarity or to account for gaps left by the candidate, or any additions to the text of the candidate's work necessary to prepare it for examination. The changes to the text must fall short of substantive additions to this text.

Approval to proceed to examination.

Once the work has been assessed as being appropriate for examination, a written request for posthumous submission and examination of the research must be made to the Graduate Research Committee (GRC) Executive group by the HDR DA in the school where the candidate was enrolled.

The senior supervisor must prepare the request and include the:

- candidate's full name
- student identification number
- name of the qualification for which the individual was a candidate
- name/s and address/es of the next-of-kin who endorse the request
- two assessors' reports

The GRC Executive has final approval for the request to proceed with the examination.

Preparation of Research for examination

If posthumous examination is approved, the examination process and the possible outcomes will be explained to the next-of-kin by the senior supervisor.

If the assessors or the GRC Executive require minor amendments to be made to the research prior to its examination, it is the responsibility of the senior supervisor to undertake these within two months of the GRC approval for the examination.

A list of any minor amendments or modifications to the research by the senior supervisor must be added to the statement outlining the research, this statement will be provided to examiners.

Submission

The usual process for nominating examiners is followed.

The research is submitted for examination following the usual submission process with the following changes:

- the senior supervisor lodges the submission for examination via email to the SGR Examinations team,
- there is no requirement for a current enrolment,
- the supervisors should provide an updated statement for presentation to the examiners to explain the candidate's research contribution to the work to be examined.

Examination

Examiners are advised of the circumstances of the posthumous submission. A modified version of the examination report pro forma and the guide for examiners reflecting the modified examination criterion are sent for this purpose.

In the case of the candidate having been undertaking research which would normally be examined through an experiential presentation the requirement for a presentation and defense of the research is waived, although can still continue if it is a vital part of the submission and examination.

Examiners will be provided with:

- Candidate's thesis
- Supervisory statement
- Research Outputs declaration (if applicable)
- Any artefacts (if applicable)
- Modified Examiner Guidelines
- Modified Examiner Report form
- Examiner honorarium claim form

Examiners must recommend one of the following outcomes:

R1 - Yes, evidence exists to indicate that, had the candidate lived, and in the normal course of events, the requirements for the degree would have been satisfied – degree to be conferred.

R2 - Yes, evidence exists to indicate that, had the candidate lived, and in the normal course of events, the requirements for the degree would have been satisfied – degree to be conferred subject to minor amendments.

R5 - No, there is insufficient evidence to indicate that, had the candidate lived, and in the normal course of events, the requirements for the degree would have been satisfied – the degree will not be conferred.

For the award to be granted both examiners' reports must record that there exists a reasonable expectation that, had the candidate lived, and in the normal course of events, the requirements for the degree would have been satisfied.

Death of a Candidate During Examination

In the unfortunate event that a candidate dies while their HDR submission is being examined, and examiners recommend revisions to be made, the senior supervisor may choose to undertake the revisions on behalf of the candidate. (Archival of Thesis and Completion sections).

Post-examination

After the examination has been classified, SGR sends advice to the members of the supervisory team, the Dean/Head of School and the HDR DA. A separate notification is sent to the examiners to advise them of the examination classification.

The Dean/Head of School is responsible for advising the candidate's family of the examination outcome.

If the examination has a successful outcome, the senior supervisor is responsible for the submission of the final archival version of the research.

The senior supervisor will be required to complete any amendments as required by the examiners reports and provide a document detailing the amendments made. These amendments need to be approved by the Dean/Head of School and once approved an archival version of the thesis submitted to SGR Examinations team.

The examination outcome is recorded against the last semester of the candidate's enrolment.

In order for the award to be conferred the Conferral and Graduation Policy and associated procedure must be followed.

Once the archival and completion are processed it is the responsibility of the supervisory team to notify the next of kin of the completion and award, if the next of kin wish to attend the graduation ceremony on behalf of the candidate this can be arranged by the Graduations team.