MILESTONES OVERVIEW FOR PHD AND MASTER BY RESEARCH CANDIDATES

Graduate Research School

Milestone	PhD	Master by Research	Timing (FTE)	Process
Confirmation of Candidature				
Purpose: Ascertain that a viable research plan of appropriate scope is in place with suitable supervision and resources. The candidate has the necessary writing, research, and presentation skills and a development and progression plan is in place.	**Oral:** *Research presentation* to the School/enrolling unit (20-minutes min, plus 10 min Q&A). **Written:** *Research proposal document* (with project management timeline and budget) aligned with disciplinary expectations for research project proposals and grant applications; *supervision agreement*; and a *writing sample* (e.g., thesis chapter) giving evidence of capacity to carry out the proposed project within the duration of candidature. Assessed by one academic discipline representative outside the supervision team who provides a report prior to the milestone meeting. **Meeting:** Review panel chaired by HDRC, with supervision team, one independent expert reader, and candidate. Review and report on project, supervision, and resources. Identify accomplishments and risks, agree on contingency plans and formulate a development plan, setting goals for the next milestone.	**Oral:** *Research presentation* to the School/ enrolling unit (20-min, plus 10 min Q&A). **Written:** *Research proposal document* (with project management timeline and budget) aligned with disciplinary expectations for research project proposals and grant applications. No writing sample/chapter is required for master by research candidates. Reviewed by one academic discipline representative outside the supervision team who provides a report prior to the milestone meeting. **Meeting:** Review panel chaired by HDRC, with supervision team, one independent expert reader, and candidate. Review and report on project, supervision, and resources. Identify accomplishments and risks, agree on contingency plans and formulate a development plan, setting goals for the next milestone.	**PhD:** 6–12 months after commencement (default 9 months full-time or 18 months part-time) Documents due at least 15 working days prior to meeting. **Masters:** 6 months after commencement (6 months full-time or 12 months part-time). Documents due at least 15 working days prior to meeting.	Before the oral presentation, candidates must complete Orientation, HDR600 Induction, HDR601 Candidature at UNE, Supervision Agreement, ethical clearance (if needed) from the relevant Ethics Committee, and HDR602 Research Data Management requirements. Before submitting milestone documents to the review panel, candidates obtain written feedback on a polished draft from supervisors and an iThenticate (plagiarism and AI detection software) report. HDR Support Officer attends the Confirmation meeting and ensures candidates are advised of School/enrolling unit's requirements. Support Officer facilitates milestone organization and timing, circulates the candidate's abstract and presentation details to the School/enrolling unit and reviewers.* Chair of milestone meeting writes report, sends to HDR SO. On receipt of report, HDR SO sends outcome and feedback to HDR candidate.

MILESTONES OVERVIEW FOR PHD AND MASTER BY RESEARCH CANDIDATES

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Mid-Point Review				
Purpose: Verify that 50% of thesis project is complete at a satisfactory standard.	**Oral:** Evidence of a *research presentation* since confirmation (e.g., UNE Research Pathways conference). **Written:** Updated *project management timeline* and budget demonstrating the project is mid-way to completion: new chapters and/or publications for the thesis have been written and data acquisition and analysis is underway (report on case studies, interviews, fieldwork, experiments, archival research or other discipline-specific progress markers); *peer review report* on new written work for the thesis from one discipline representative outside the supervision team. **Meeting:** Maintain continuity with panel members where possible. Review and report on progress, supervision, and resources, discuss achievements, obstacles encountered and risks foreseen, ascertain whether the project is on track to completion at a satisfactory standard. Update development plan, set goals for the next milestone.	MPR is not mandatory for full-time master by research candidates due to the short term of candidature; however, the HDR Coordinator, Principal Supervisor, or Candidate may request a milestone meeting if the candidate wishes to apply to transfer to the PhD program. .	**PhD:** 12 months full-time or 24 months part-time after Confirmation. Part-time candidates Documents due at least 15 working days prior to meeting.	Mid-Point Review Only - Before submitting milestone documents to the review panel, candidates obtain written feedback on a polished draft from supervisors and an originality report from iThenticate (plagiarism and AI detection software). Annual Review Only – Candidates are to submit written work completed since the last milestone. Mid-Point Review Only - HDR Support Officer obtains verification from Principal Supervisor that the student has completed 50% of project and is ready for MPR prior to facilitating milestone organisation and timing and circulating the candidate's documents to the panel.* Chair of milestone meeting writes report, sends to HDR Support Officer. On receipt of report, HDR SO sends outcome and feedback to HDR candidate.

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Milestone	PhD	Master by Research	Timing (FTE)	Process
Thesis Review				
Purpose: Review progress and prepare for thesis submission and examination.	**Oral:** Presentation to School/enrolling unit (20 min + Q&A) OR evidence of *presentation of research findings and contribution to the field* since MPR. **Written:** *Thesis completion timeline, thesis preliminary pages (including abstract), sample from works cited. Peer review report from journal or discipline reader may be required for a thesis extract that has not previously been reviewed.* Lab work, fieldwork, and all data acquisition must be completed and approx. 75% of the drafted. **Meeting:** Maintain continuity with panel members where possible. S*upervisor(s) prepare questions that may be raised by examiners during the presentation or meeting*. Verify the thesis is near completion and at an examinable standard and supervisory relationships are satisfactory. Check abstract, keywords, title, declarations, and formatting of preliminary pages. Provide advice on work to be done prior to submission, including possibilities for industry placement. Nominate Chair of Examiners; shortlist thesis examiners and check conflicts of interest; finalise arrangements for IP, archive data (RUNE), embargoes, and confidentiality issues.	**Oral:** Presentation to School/enrolling unit (20 min + Q&A) OR evidence of *presentation of research findings and contribution to the field* since Confirmation. **Written:** *Thesis completion timeline, thesis preliminary pages (including abstract), sample from works cited. Peer review report from journal or discipline reader may be required for a thesis extract that has not previously been reviewed.* Lab work, fieldwork, and all data acquisition must be completed and approx. 75% of the thesis drafted. **Meeting:** Maintain continuity with panel members where possible. S*upervisor(s) prepare questions that may be raised by examiners during the presentation or meeting*. Verify the thesis is near completion and at an examinable standard and supervisory relationships are satisfactory. Check abstract, title, keywords, declarations, and formatting of preliminary pages. Provide advice on work to be done prior to submission. Nominate Chair of Examiners; shortlist thesis examiners and check conflicts of interest; finalise arrangements for IP, archive data (RUNE), embargoes, and confidentiality issues.	**PhD:** 12 months full-time or 24 months part-time after MPR/ 3-6 months before thesis submission. Documents due at least 15 working days prior to meeting. **Masters:** 12 months full-time or 24 months part-time after Confirmation/ 3-6 months before thesis submission. Documents due at least 15 working days prior to meeting.	Before submitting milestone documents to the review panel, candidates obtain written feedback on a polished draft from supervisors and an originality report from iThenticate (plagiarism and AI detection software). HDR Support Officer obtains verification from Principal Supervisor that the student has completed 75% of project and is ready for TR prior to facilitating milestone organisation and timing. Support Officers circulate documents* and plan for examination. Chair of milestone meeting writes report, sends to HDR Support Officer. On receipt of report, HDR Support Officer sends outcome and feedback to HDR candidate. *At each milestone, circulation of documents may take place via UNE's Postgraduate Research Platform.*

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Annual Review – All candidates must complete a milestone once per year during their candidature. If a candidate has not undertaken any of the specified milestones, they are required to complete an annual review. This requirement may apply if the candidate is part-time or if there has been a delay in their candidature.				
Purpose: To verify that the candidate is progressing and that the project is on track for completion.	Annual reviews are required for part-time candidates to ensure timely progress. This may involve completing a questionnaire or report by the candidate and their supervisor, which is then reviewed by the School.	Annual reviews are required for part-time candidates to ensure timely progress. This may involve completing a questionnaire or report by the candidate and their supervisor, which is then reviewed by the School.	Candidates must complete an annual review once every 12 months if no other milestone has been completed during that period.	On receipt of report, HDR SO sends outcome and feedback to HDR candidate.