



Research degrees at UQ

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Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Queensland (UQ) acknowledges the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which we meet.

We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country.

We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.

*The Brisbane River pattern from A Guidance Through Time
by Casey Coolwell and Kyra Mancktelow.*



Outline

01 What is a research degree?

02 How to apply for research degrees at UQ

03 Questions?

What is a research degree?

Higher Degrees by Research (HDR)

Also referred to as research higher degrees (RHD) or postgraduate research degrees

At UQ:

Master of Philosophy (MPhil)

1.5 – 2 years duration

40,000 words thesis + oral examination

Can 'transfer' to PhD ***conditions apply***

Half the length and duration of PhD

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

3.5 – 4 years duration

80,000 words thesis + oral examination

Highest degree that can be awarded

Advanced qualification required for most academic and research positions

Research degrees are:

- Administered in **Research Quarters (RQ's)**, not semesters:

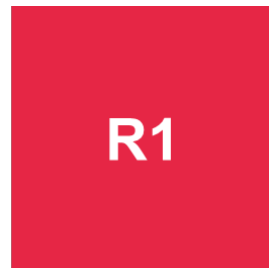
RQ1	January	February	March
RQ2	April	May	June
RQ3	July	August	September
RQ4	October	November	December

- Structured to include **Progress Reviews**, rather than assignments/exams:



Early Candidature Checkpoint

A check-in to make sure you are starting off well.



Progress Review 1

Check the project is achievable and appropriate for the timeframe / identify development needs.



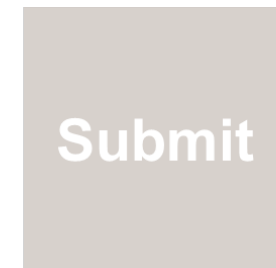
Progress Review 2

Confirm things are on track and resources are there for support / review that you are developing and will complete on time.



Progress Review 3

Check you are on track for completion / ensure scope, originality and quality of thesis are at the standard for examination.



Submission and Examination

Oral examination (aka defense or viva)

Corrections if necessary

Conferral

Funding

scholarships.uq.edu.au → Select 'Postgraduate research (HDR)'

Graduate School Scholarships (UQGSS): Include both Research Training Program (RTP: Australian Government funded) and UQ Research Training (UQRT: UQ funded) scholarships.

Stipend scholarship/Living stipend: A living allowance scholarship paid fortnightly directly to your bank account to help cover your living costs.

Top-up scholarship: A top-up scholarship can only be administered where you are already receiving a base stipend scholarship. It is paid fortnightly directly to your bank account to further help with the cost of living.

Tuition fee offset/Tuition only scholarship: Tuition fees, to cover the costs of your degree, are charged each research quarter, based on the year you commence. Tuition fee offset scholarships cover the cost of your tuition fees – International students need a living stipend scholarship to be eligible for a tuition scholarship.

You may be eligible to receive a number of scholarships during your research, but you can only receive 1 base stipend scholarship. You apply for these scholarships as part of your program application.

Types of scholarships for research degrees

Graduate School Scholarships (UQGSS):	Scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students:	Scholarships to support project grants (Fellowship Support Scheme):	Externally funded scholarships:
\$39,220 stipend per year¹ indexed annually, tax free 3.5 years Phd or 2 years MPhil Single Overseas Student Health Cover for onshore international applicant	\$49,220 stipend per year¹ indexed annually, tax free 3.5 years Phd or 2 years MPhil	Domestic students \$39,220 stipend per year¹ indexed annually, tax free 3.5 years Phd or 2 years MPhil	When considering externally funded scholarships we look for scholarships that: • meet the UQ Living Scholarship rate at a minimum and • support the student for up to 3.5 years for a PhD (up to 2 years for an MPhil). Where that is not the case we look for where supplementary funds may be provided
Dates similar each year	Applications at any time	Application timing varies by project	
Students must secure an Advisor		Work with leading researchers on large projects of national and international significance	
Students must be nominated by their school		Many projects available across a wide range of disciplines	

¹ 2026 rate

Note: UQ scholarships also cover tuition fees, some external providers do not. Check individual scholarship criteria for specific details.

Graduate School Scholarship (UQGSS) dates

2027 – Domestic and Onshore International Applicants

RQ1 or RQ2 start in **2027**:

- Expressions of Interest currently open
- Monday 31 August– Application close
- Monday 07th December – Outcomes from this date (following release of grades)

For:

- Domestic applicants¹, and
- This round is open to graduated and current domestic students, and onshore international students currently studying at any Australian university. International applicants must be in Australia on a student visa when offers are issued.

Domestic applicants are:

- a citizen of Australia or New Zealand
- an Australian permanent resident
- a Pacific Engagement visa holders
- a holder of an Australian permanent humanitarian visa

Onshore International students are:

- on a student visa and currently studying on student visa in Australia
- not a citizen of Australia or New Zealand
- not an Australian permanent resident
- a temporary resident (visa status) of Australia

How to apply for research degrees at UQ

1. Check your eligibility

- Eligibility differs for MPhil and PhD. Check the research degree options at study.uq.edu.au

Eligibility centres around your preparation for HDR study by:

- Having completed some research experience,
- Having completed an approved university degree, and
- Meeting the English language requirements.

The requirements are different for the MPhil vs the PhD.

For example, approved degrees:

MPhil	PhD*
----	Master of Philosophy (or another research master's degree); or
Bachelor's degree from an approved university with at least honours class IIB or equivalent, which includes relevant experience; or	Bachelor's degree from an approved university with at least honours class IIA or equivalent; or
----	Coursework master's degree with an overall grade point average of 5.65 on the 7-point UQ scale which includes relevant research experience, approved by the dean; or
Postgraduate degree (at least one year full-time or equivalent) with an overall grade point average of 5 on the 7-point UQ scale, together with relevant experience, approved by the dean; or	Postgraduate degree (at least one year full-time or equivalent) with an overall grade point average of 5 on the 7-point UQ scale, together with demonstrated research experience equivalent to honours class IIA will be considered on a case-by-case basis; or
Bachelor's degree plus at least 2 years of documented relevant experience, approved by the dean; or	Bachelor's degree plus at least 2 years of relevant research experience, including research publications.
Other qualifications or experience that show you can meet admission standards.	

* An approved degree for a PhD needs to be in an area relevant to your proposed PhD project and completed no more than 10 years ago.

2. Research UQ Supervisors

- Over 2,000 research experts at UQ
- Find them at [UQ Experts](#)
- You do not have to contact advisors directly by email, the expression of interest form has been set up to help you approach them.

Professor Evonne Miller, [How to get a rock star supervisor](#), The Thesis Whisperer blog, 19 April 2017

UQ – [How to find a PhD supervisor](#)

Jabre, L., Bannon, C., McCain, J.S.P., & Eglit, Y. (2021). Ten simple rules for choosing a PhD supervisor. PLoS Computational Biology, 17(9): e1009330.
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pcbi.1009330>

Conroy, G. (2020). How to choose the right PhD supervisor. Nature Index. Downloaded 28 August 2023 from <https://www.nature.com/nature-index/news/how-to-choose-the-right-phd-supervisor>

3. Prepare your documents

- Find what you'll need to apply for research degrees at study.uq.edu.au :
 - Academic curriculum vitae (CV) / Resume
 - Academic transcript
 - Degree certificate
 - English language documents
 - Passport
 - References / letters of recommendations
 - Other documents (e.g., change of name etc.)
- Not in English? Get it translated.

The CV/Resume document is used to determine your readiness to commence a higher degree by research program.

Include as much information as you can about your **research experience and skills**.

Follow the guidelines provided in the '[How to apply](#)' tab – these outline the headings to be used and the type of information required.

Provide the names and contact details of two referees who will support your application. Choose people who can provide insight into your research experience.

The Graduate School uses the contact details you provide to ask your referees for a written report.

Your Administering Organisational Unit (AOU) may also require additional documentation, such as a research proposal or an extended abstract for your proposed thesis topic. Check with your potential advisory team.

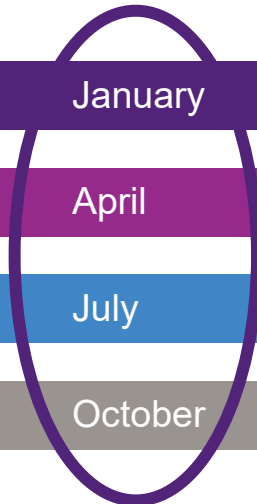
Applications usually take around 12 weeks from when the student submits, to receiving an offer letter. This includes time for:

- Missing documents to be chased up
- Areas to confirm they are supporting the applicant
- Referees to return their reports
- Genuine Student and Sanctions Checks to be conducted

Applications can take longer when things don't line up and can only be assessed once referee reports have been provided and all outstanding documents and school/institute endorsements have been received.

Applicants applying in a scholarship round need to apply by a set deadline so make sure you are aware of any due dates. Scholarship round applications take longer to assess and you will not receive a notification until the outcome date of that scholarship round.

You can start in the first month of any Research Quarter.



RQ1	January	February	March
RQ2	April	May	June
RQ3	July	August	September
RQ4	October	November	December

4. Apply online

- Complete the online applications
- Want to be considered for a Graduate School Scholarship (UQGSS)? Just tick the box!
- Start your application at apply.uq.edu.au/



Contact

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