

Confirmation of Candidature

Summary

Doctoral students are initially admitted provisionally into their programme of study. In order to transition from provisional to full candidature, doctoral students must prepare a detailed research proposal, for Confirmation of Candidature.

Purpose

This protocol outlines the requirements and process for doctoral students applying for confirmation of candidature.

Scope

This protocol is to be used by doctoral students when undertaking the confirmation of candidature process.

Application

Timeframes

Doctor of Philosophy

The transition from provisional admission to full registration (Confirmation of Candidature) normally occurs no later than 12 months for full-time students and 24 months for part-time students after enrolment in the programme. Students are expected to commence the confirmation of candidature review process after nine months (for full-time) and 18 months (for part-time) of provisional admission to the doctoral programme with a view to submitting the completed Confirmation of Candidature form to the University Postgraduate Research Board (UPRB) within 12 months (full time) or 24 months (part-time) of provisional admission.

Professional Doctorates

Students in a professional doctorate will normally submit a full research proposal at the end of the last coursework component.

Unsatisfactory Progress and Withdrawal

Students who have not submitted their confirmation of candidature within the timeframes, noted above, will be sent a letter by the faculty reiterating the timeframes and stating an expectation that it be completed within six months. If the confirmation of candidature is not submitted within this period, then the unsatisfactory progress process will be initiated, giving students a further six months. Should the confirmation of candidature not be submitted at this stage the student will be withdrawn from the programme.

Note:

In exceptional circumstances, an extension to the confirmation of candidature submission date may be considered only when a student has extenuating circumstances and will be considered on a case-by-case basis in discussion with the Associate Dean (Postgraduate). If approved, the student is required to submit a progress report.

Submission Against Supervisors Advice

Students may submit the confirmation of candidature for review even though the supervisor(s) may not believe it to be of a suitable standard. Such instances must be clearly identified in the confirmation of candidature form signature section. In place of a signature by the supervisor's state "submitted without supervisor approval".

It is important for the student to acknowledge that it is not recommended that confirmation of candidature be submitted without the supervisor's support. If the confirmation of candidature is not approved the student may be

withdrawn from the programme. If the confirmation of candidature is approved a change of supervisors may be required.

Content

Guidelines on the expected content and format can be found on the Confirmation of Candidature form and should be considered along with the following:

Approval of Pilot Study

If collection of data prior to confirmation is required, for the purposes of completing a pilot study that pertains to the student's research topic, this needs to be outlined in the students' 'Admission to a Doctoral Programme' research proposal and approved during the admission to the doctoral programme process.

Ethics Applications

If required, students may begin their ethics applications at any time but should not begin consenting participants or collecting data until both the ethics application and the confirmation of candidature have been approved. However, it is recommended that both the confirmation of candidature and ethics application be developed at the same time.

It is incumbent on the student and supervisors to ensure that any requirements for ethical approval are met prior to the commencement of consenting participants or collecting data, if applicable. A copy of the ethics approval letter should be appended to the confirmation of candidature application if data gathering has already commenced.

Te Reo Māori

If the student is completing their thesis in te reo Māori then an English version of the summary section should also be supplied, see the 'Confirmation of Candidature submitted in Te Reo Māori' protocol.

Approval

Following initial approval from the supervisors, the student's confirmation of candidature will be subject to a Faculty review process based on the principles of academic review, presentation at a Faculty forum and the provision of associated feedback from a minimum of 2 reviewers (at least one expert). The presentation should be between 40-60 minutes. The student will have the opportunity to receive and comment on the feedback and, where appropriate, incorporate it into a revised confirmation of candidature proposal.

The Faculty review has a set of assessment criteria that are required to be met in order for the confirmation of candidature to be approved. These criteria can be assessed as being met, not met or more work required. Normally, a student will not be able to submit their confirmation of candidature for approval more than twice to the Faculty Postgraduate Committee. However, where the reviewer or the Faculty Postgraduate Committee deems the confirmation of candidature is unsatisfactory and deemed unable to meet the standard of a doctoral proposal, then the faculty may state that the confirmation of candidature will not be approved and the student will be withdrawn from the doctoral programme.

The confirmation of candidature proposal must be approved by the Faculty Postgraduate Committee (not a school programme committee) who are under delegated authority from the UPRB. The Faculty Postgraduate Committee sends recommendations to the UPRB which can:

- 1) Confirm candidature or;
- 2) Approve continued provisional admission for an agreed period of time or;
- 3) Discontinues candidature and is transferred to another programme if available or;
- 4) Terminates candidature.

Where a recommendation is made under the termination/discontinuation (clause 3/4) the recommendation to the UPRB will include any conditions that were not met. Candidature registration will be terminated if the conditions have not been fulfilled to the satisfaction of the UPRB.

The outcome is determined by the Faculty Postgraduate Committee. Where there is not a clear outcome the Faculty may refer the assessment of the confirmation of candidature to the UPRB.

Outcome

Approval of Confirmation of Candidature

Students who have their confirmation of candidature approved are notified of the outcome by the Graduate Research School (GRS).

Non-approval of Confirmation of Candidature

Students who have not met the acceptable standard of the confirmation of candidature will not be confirmed in the doctoral programme.

Confirmation of candidature is a condition of admission to the doctoral programme and students who do not have their confirmation of candidature approved will have their offer rescinded.

Review

Original Approval Date

July 2015

Version Approvals

V 1.0	July 2015
V 1.1	Sept 2016
V 1.2	Oct 2016
V 1.3	Nov 2017
V 1.5	May 2018
V 1.6	Aug 2018
V 1.7	Sept 2018
V1.8	Apr 2021
V1.9	Jun 2023
V1.10	February 2023
V1.11	May 2025

Review Date

June 2025

Effective Date

July 2015