



Admissions to Research Programs Policy

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OVERVIEW

This Policy sets out the University of Adelaide's approach to the selection of applicants for admission to research programs. It reflects the University's commitments to the highest academic standards, by only selecting applicants who are likely to succeed in the University's programs, and to social equity, by encouraging broad access by qualified students from diverse backgrounds.

The Policy aims to ensure the integrity of the selection and admission processes, and that admission decisions are transparent, consistent and fair, whilst complying with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all domestic and international applicants for admission to postgraduate research programs at the University of Adelaide (hereafter 'the University').

Nothing contained in this Policy is intended to alter or limit the full extent of the University's right to grant or refuse admission in its absolute discretion, subject always to the laws of Australia.

Implementation of this Policy will be carried out in accordance with the University's Code of Conduct and the Academic Board Statement on Undue Influence. Any attempts to improperly exert pressure or influence actions or decisions made pursuant to this policy must be reported in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

Admission Requirements

1. Admission Requirements are designed to enable the University to select Applicants who are likely to succeed in a program.
2. Admission Requirements for all postgraduate research programs are recommended by the Research Education and Development Committee (REDC) for endorsement by the University Research Committee, and subsequent approval by the Academic Board.

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3. Applicants who apply for admission to a postgraduate research program will normally be required to achieve one or more of the following:
 - i. Successful completion of an Honours or Master of Philosophy degree or equivalent and the awarding of an Honours or MPhil grade (or equivalent) at the required level approved for admission into the program;
 - ii. Successful completion of a coursework Master degree with a significant research component as per the Academic Program Rules for the program;
 - iii. For entry to a research Master degree only, outstanding academic performance in an undergraduate degree of the University in a closely related discipline, as per the Academic Program Rules for the program;
 - iv. Tertiary education qualifications deemed by the University to be equivalent to the above qualifications.
 4. Students are expected to be proficient in written and spoken English comprehension and expression. International Applicants must provide evidence of their English language proficiency in order to satisfy the University's [minimum English Language Proficiency Entry Criteria for Postgraduate Research Students](#).
 5. Some programs may have additional Admission Requirements, including but not limited to academic or other tests or requirements (which must be reached or evidenced to the level required by the University), such as an interview, oral assessment, specific knowledge test, aptitude test, work experience, an audition, portfolio, application statement, referee report or registration with a particular body or organisation.
 6. Admission to any postgraduate research program will only be approved if accredited supervisors with the relevant experience, and adequate facilities and resources to support the Applicant's proposed research project are available. Additional assessment of communication skills may be recommended before an Applicant is admitted to a program which is linguistically demanding.
 7. The University may determine exemptions to Admission Requirements for an individual Applicant in exceptional circumstances where sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the Applicant is likely to succeed in the program.
 8. The University reserves the right to refuse admission to an Applicant where the Applicant:
 - i. has previously been suspended or excluded from the University or any other tertiary education institution for academic reasons, including but not limited to academic dishonesty or unsatisfactory academic progress; or
 - ii. under any of the circumstances detailed in Procedure 3 of this Policy.

POLICY PROCEDURES

1. Applying for Admission to the University

- 1.1 To be eligible for admission into a program, Applicants must satisfy the Admission Requirements for that program.
- 1.2 Satisfying the Admission Requirements enables an Applicant to be considered for admission, but does not guarantee an offer of admission to the program.
- 1.3 International Applicants may also be required to demonstrate compliance with other legislative or Governmental requirements.
- 1.4 Current and former students of the University who want to apply for admission to a new or alternative postgraduate research program will be subject to the requirements of this Policy.

2. Reviewing Applications and Making Offers

- 2.1 The University has absolute discretion to determine whether a qualification offered for admission is equivalent to that specified in the Admission Requirements.

2.2 The University may attach conditions to an offer of admission to a program, including but not limited to meeting Admission Requirements, visa or other legal obligations, or making any required fee payments.

2.3 If an Applicant wants to accept an offer of admission, they must do so in accordance with the process specified in their letter of offer. Failure to do so may result in the offer of admission being rescinded.

Responsibility: Dean of Graduate Studies

a) Determine equivalency of qualifications for admission.

Responsibility: Director, Adelaide Graduate Centre

b) Approve any conditions attached to offers of admission.

3. Refusing Admission for Non-Academic Reasons

3.1 The University reserves the right to refuse admission to an Applicant who would otherwise be eligible for admission where it believes that:

- i. the Applicant or the presence of the Applicant poses a risk to the students and/or staff of the University or the wider University community;
- ii. the Applicant may prejudice the reputation, management, good governance or discipline of the University;
- iii. the Applicant has engaged in dishonest and/or deceitful behaviour in the process of applying for admission to the University or any other tertiary educational institution;
- iv. the Applicant would not be able to lawfully enter University premises for all or part of the duration of a program by reason of a court order or any enactment or decision made under an enactment;
- v. the University would be subject to sanctions under the Autonomous Sanctions Act 2011, or its collective [Integrity and National Security Obligations](#);
- vi. the Applicant would be unable to meet the requirements of a program, including but not limited to attendance or group participation requirements; or
- vii. the Applicant has outstanding fees owing to the University.

3.2 An Applicant will be notified in writing within 10 business days of any decision to refuse admission pursuant to clause 3.1. The Applicant may appeal the decision by submitting a grievance notice, specifying the grounds of the grievance together with written submissions and documentary material upon which the Applicant seeks to rely, to the Vice-Chancellor and President within 10 business days of notification of the decision to refuse admission.

3.3 The Vice-Chancellor and President may refer the grievance notice to the Grievance Committee for consideration and seek the Committee's recommendation and advice.

3.4 The Grievance Committee will comprise three members to be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and President in accordance with the Terms of Reference approved by Council.

3.5 The Grievance Committee shall consider the material provided by the Applicant and any other material that it decides in its discretion to receive, and make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor and President in relation to the grievance. The recommendation shall be made within 20 business days of the date that the University received the grievance notice, (or such further time as may be required and formally approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President and notified to the Applicant in writing).

3.6 The Vice-Chancellor and President will determine the matter and may have regard to any recommendation by the Grievance Committee.

3.7 The Vice-Chancellor and President may affirm, reverse or vary the University's decision to refuse admission to the Applicant which was the subject of the grievance.

3.8 The determination of the Vice-Chancellor and President shall be final.

Responsibility: Dean of Graduate Studies

- a) Exercise discretion to refuse admission pursuant to Procedure 3 of this Policy.

Responsibility: Vice-Chancellor and President

- b) Affirm, reverse or vary the University's decision to refuse admission to the Applicant which was the subject of a grievance.

4. Deferring Commencement of Studies

4.1 Offers of admission into postgraduate research programs will specify the earliest and latest dates acceptable to the School of enrolment. Deferment beyond the latest start date is subject to approval by the School and the Adelaide Graduate Centre, and is contingent on the availability of appropriate supervision and resources.

Responsibility: Head of School and Director, Adelaide Graduate Centre

- a) Consider requests for deferment of commencement of studies.

5. Withdrawal of Offer

5.1 The University reserves the right to withdraw an offer of admission to a postgraduate research program at any time prior to candidature commencement if:

- i. the Applicant fails to meet any of the conditions attached to their letter of offer by the required date;
- ii. a supervisor with expertise required to supervise the Applicant's proposed project is no longer available;
- iii. the facilities required for successful completion of the program are no longer available;
- iv. the University no longer offers the program;
- v. the offer was made in error;
- vi. the Applicant does not enrol by the deadline specified in their letter of offer; or
- vii. the University believes that one or more of the conditions specified in clause 3.1 applies to the Applicant.

5.2 The University may withdraw an offer of admission to a program at any time if the offer was made contrary to Australian law or as a result of incorrect, inaccurate, fraudulent or misleading information or documentation supplied by the Applicant or a third party on behalf of the Applicant. The University reserves the right to cancel the student's current or future enrolment.

5.3 If an Applicant's offer of admission is withdrawn and they want to reapply for entry into the same program or entry into any other program, they will be required to apply in accordance with the University policies and processes in place at the time the new application is made.

5.4 The University reserves the right to cancel a program that is not viable, and to cancel any offers of admission that have been made to that program.

6. Appeals

6.1 Applicants may appeal the following decisions on the sole ground that there has been non-compliance with this Policy:

- i. assessment on whether an Applicant satisfies the Admission Requirements of a program;
- ii. withdrawal of an offer of admission pursuant to clauses 5.1 and 5.2 of this Policy.

6.2 Any appeal must be submitted by the Applicant to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) within 10 business days of the date of the correspondence notifying the Applicant of the decision.

6.3 The appeal must be submitted in writing and must specify the grounds of the appeal and contain such written submissions and documentary material upon which the Applicant seeks to rely.

6.4 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) will consider the material provided by the Applicant and any other material that it is in their discretion to receive.

6.5 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) may affirm, reverse or vary the decision which is the subject of the appeal, and will inform the Applicant of the outcome of the appeal within 20 business days of receiving it.

6.6 The determination of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research) shall be final.

Responsibility: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

- a) Consider appeals based on non-compliance with this Policy relating to application of Admission Requirements and withdrawal of an admission offer, and inform the Applicant of the outcome.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the terms below have the following meanings:

Academic Program Rules

The formally approved Program requirements that students must follow in order to progress successfully through and graduate from a Program.

Applicant means a person who applies for admission to a postgraduate research program at the University.

Admission Requirements are the specific academic qualifications, skills knowledge and other requirements that must be satisfied in order for an Applicant to be eligible for admission into a particular program.

Grievance Committee means the Grievance Committee for the Refusal of Admissions and Enrolment on Non-Academic Grounds.

Postgraduate Research Program

A program at Doctoral or Master level which comprises two-thirds or more of its assessable content by research.

AUTHORITIES

Key	Authority Category	Authority	Delegation Holder	Limits
Academic	Admissions	Recommend Postgraduate Research Admission Requirements	Dean of Graduate Studies	Approval by Academic Board
Academic	Admissions	Approve exemptions to admission requirements for individuals	Dean of Graduate Studies	
Academic	Admissions	Assess individual applications for admission to determine whether they satisfy the Admission Requirements	Manager, Admissions and Scholarships	
Academic	Admissions	Determine equivalency of qualifications	Dean of Graduate Studies	
Academic	Admissions	Approve any conditions attached to offers of admission	Director, Adelaide Graduate Centre	
Academic	Admissions	Exercise discretion to refuse admission pursuant to Procedure 3 of this Policy	Dean of Graduate Studies	
Academic	Admissions	Exercise discretion to withdraw a deferred offer	Director, Adelaide Graduate Centre	

Academic	Admissions	Appoint a Grievance Committee, and affirm, reverse or vary the University's decision to refuse admission to the Applicant which was the subject of the grievance	Vice-Chancellor and President	
Academic	Admissions	Exercise direction to withdraw offer pursuant to Procedure 5 of this Policy	Director, Adelaide Graduate Centre	
Academic	Admissions	Determine appeals relating to non-compliance with this Policy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research)	

RMO File No.	F. 2021/3991
Policy Custodian	Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research)
Responsible Policy officer	Dean of Graduate Studies
Endorsed by	Academic Board on 3 November 2021
Approved by	Vice-Chancellor and President on 3 November 2021
Related Documents and Policies	n/a
Related Legislation	n/a
Superseded Policies	Admissions to Research Programs Policy 2016
Effective from	3 November 2021
Review Date	2 November 2024
Contact for queries about the Policy	Director, Adelaide Graduate Centre