

Adelaide University Candidature Agreement: Supplementary Information for Graduate Researchers

The Adelaide University Candidature Agreement, which is to be completed and signed within your first month of candidature, requires in part that you discuss and agree to mutually established expectations in supervision. This guide will help prepare you for your meeting with your Principal Supervisor in which you will complete and sign the Candidature Agreement.

Supervisory Panel and Roles

Every graduate researcher enrolled in a PhD or Master of Philosophy program must be supervised by a supervisory panel consisting of a Principal Supervisor and at least one Co-Supervisor. Master of Research graduate researchers may be supervised by a single Principal Supervisor, however, the ideal arrangement is two or more supervisors on a panel. Your Principal Supervisor is either a research-active academic staff member employed by Adelaide University or is an affiliate of the University (i.e. Titleholder). Your Principal Supervisor has primary responsibility for guiding you through your program and facilitating your progress and will be assisted by one or more other academics with specialised expertise. Additional information on your supervisory panel, including descriptions of the roles of other panel members, can be found in sections 5 and 3 of the [Graduate Research: Research Supervision Protocol](#), respectively.

Meetings

Principal supervisors are expected to meet with their graduate researchers individually or as a supervisory team at least fortnightly. Meeting formats and frequency must be detailed in the Candidature Agreement. Exceptions to this frequency may be appropriate for part-time candidates. In addition to your regular individual supervisory meetings, group meetings with other graduate researchers or larger research teams may be used to provide additional support.

A record of all supervisory panel meetings should be kept. These records should include attendance, agenda items, key discussion points, decisions and actions. As a graduate researcher, it is your responsibility to create this record, which must be stored in a location and format accessible to you, all supervisors, the Dean of School and the Graduate Research Coordinator. It is recommended that you use Adelaide University Box for these purposes. Box allows AU staff and students to securely share and collaborate on content from any device, anywhere.

Responsibilities

Detailed information on the responsibilities of supervisors, including the Principal Supervisor's particular responsibilities, can be found in section 4 of the [Graduate Research: Research Supervision Protocol](#). Below you will find information on *your* responsibilities as a graduate researcher.

Have regular meetings

Make regular supervising appointments in advance – you and your supervisors are busy people. You will need to establish with your supervisors:

- how often and when you meet
- whether you meet face-to-face or online
- how long you spend in supervision meetings
- an agenda and goals for the supervision meetings.

Never leave a supervisory meeting without setting a time for the next one.

Prepare for supervisory meetings

It is your responsibility to set the agenda for supervisory meetings. Give your supervisor some written material and advance notice of your agenda. Supervision is generally more productive and effective if you and your supervisor are adequately prepared.

- Provide your supervisor with any readings which may form the background to the meetings (e.g. raw or analysed data, references of published work, drafts of thesis chapters, manuscripts or other outputs).
- Let them know of any specific questions or issues you wish to discuss.

Keep a record for supervisory meetings

Contact with your supervisor is part of your research so keep notes to inform your study.

Keep a record of agreements reached in supervisory meetings. Before you conclude a meeting, you and your supervisor should spend about 10 minutes recording in writing any consensus decisions and actions that have a direct bearing on your research, including:

- the time and date of the next supervisory meeting
- the tasks you have agreed to complete before the next supervisory meeting
- the tasks your supervisor will undertake before the next supervisory meeting.

Written records should be shared with your supervisor following the meeting and stored in Box.

Keep in regular contact

Keep in touch with your supervisor, especially in the early stages of your candidature. You should meet in person or online, or email each other regularly.

Submit regular progress reports and drafts of your work

Try to submit draft material that is at an advanced and relatively 'polished' stage of development so your supervisor can focus on the content rather than correcting grammatical and typographic errors. Avoid resubmitting the same draft material several times.

Be sure to establish clear expectations concerning the frequency with which you should submit material to your supervisor. You should also discuss the expectations surrounding feedback, including how it will be provided and how frequently it will be provided.

Discuss your working relationship

Let your supervisor know how the supervisory relationship is working for you. Don't make your supervisor second-guess your needs.

If you feel your supervisor is being too 'laid back' and non-directive, say so. If you feel your supervisor is being too dominating and directive, say so. If you want more or less support than you are getting, ask for it. Ask your Graduate Research Coordinator for help if you are having difficulties.

Keep all supervisors informed of your progress

Your supervisors are there to support you in your research and need to be regularly informed of your progress. Should your Principal Supervisor be unable to continue supervising temporarily or permanently, it is expected that another member of your supervisory panel will assume that responsibility until an alternative supervisor is designated.

Be diligent, meet agreed deadlines and respect the multiple demands on your supervisors' time

If you fall behind on your deadlines or are unable to make it to a previously agreed upon meeting, provide your supervisor(s) with as much notice as possible. Take responsibility for your mistakes or shortcomings, and work with your supervisor to identify a productive path forward.

What Else Should I Ask?

If you have questions about any of the preceding information provided in this guide, be sure to raise them with your Principal Supervisor as you work through your Candidature Agreement. In addition to the above, here are a few other issues you might want to consider discussing with your Principal Supervisor.

Conflict of Interest

- Are there any potential conflicts of interest I should be aware of or on the lookout for?
- What should I do (what are my responsibilities) if a conflict should arise?

Ethics and Compliance

- Is my research subject to any legislative or compliance requirements?

- Are there any regulatory or advisory bodies related to my research or experimentation?
- Are there any ethics or compliance approvals which must be secured before I can begin my research?

Internship and Industry Opportunities

- Are there any internship or industry opportunities related to my research?
- When is the best time to undertake an internship?

Intellectual Property (IP)

- Who owns the IP created in the duration of my studies?
- Will my research build upon any pre-existing University owned IP that is maintained and will potentially be commercialised by the University?
- Will my research be carried out for, or in conjunction with, an external third party?

Health and Wellbeing

- Are there any personal health issues I feel comfortable sharing with my supervisor(s) or think they should be made aware of?
- Are there any child-care matters I feel comfortable sharing with my supervisor(s)?
- What should I do or where should I go if I need to access mental or physical health services?
- What if I need to take a break from my research due to a health or wellbeing matter?

Your supervisors are the most important resource provided by the University to support you during your research degree candidature. Every supervisory relationship is unique, and it's up to you and your supervisors to clearly define that relationship. You and your supervisors will have to work hard at establishing a comfortable relationship that strikes a balance between supervision as teaching and supervision as listening.

For additional information on what you can expect from your time as a graduate research student at Adelaide University, see the Graduate Research Handbook.