

Griffith University Higher Degree Research Portfolio Strategy: 2022-2025

A critical mission for universities is training the next generation to undertake high-level research, analysis, and leadership roles across a wide variety of sectors. Ensuring that higher degree research candidates are provided with opportunities to flourish in their chosen fields of endeavour is a major responsibility for all areas at Griffith—from the Graduate Research School (GGRS), Academic Groups, central administrative services, to individual supervisors in Schools, Departments, Centres and Institutes.

In its 2020-2025 Strategic Plan¹ – *Creating a Future for All* – Griffith is committed to better recognising the contribution of doctoral candidates as part of Griffith’s research fabric, including providing Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates with opportunities to develop professional skills and enhance career outcomes. HDR candidates are key enablers of Griffith’s research success and many also perform critical learning and teaching roles across the University’s education programs. HDR candidates occupy a unique place in the Griffith ecosystem as enrolled students who make important contributions to research, education, and service.

The 2021 Review of the HDR Portfolio delivered a series of recommendations² that aligned with strategic aims in the Research & Innovation Plan. The HDR Portfolio Implementation Plan has reinforced portfolio-wide collaboration between the Academic Groups and central units—led by GGRS in collaboration with Transformation—informed by the overarching aspiration that Griffith becomes Australia’s leading university for research training and an outstanding HDR experience.

In addition to advancing the goals of Griffith’s 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, the Research & Innovation Plan, and the Commencement and Completion targets, the Higher Degree Research Portfolio Strategy outlined in this document strengthens the implementation of the HDR Portfolio Review recommendations and will ensure that the instrument of change in the HDR portfolio—the Board of Graduate Research—maintains an action-oriented and outcomes-focused approach in its work program.³ GGRS will formulate a biannual reporting framework that provides regular updates to the Board of Graduate Research on progress in executing the Higher Degree Research Strategy.

¹ https://www.griffith.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0037/932698/Strategic-Plan-2020-2025.pdf

² One of the key recommendations of the Review was the formulation of an HDR Portfolio Strategy. Under the Implementation Plan, this Strategy is submitted to University Executive Group for approval.

³ It is intended that this strategic plan will inform HDR-related operational planning across all Academic Groups and central units. Groups and central units will develop their operational plans accordingly.

Strategic Aims	Measurable outcomes	Key Actions	Account-abilities	Risks/ contingencies	Timeline for achieving measurable outcomes
1. Promote flexible entry and progression pathways to ensure a diversity of future HDR candidates and graduates.	i. Growth in non-traditional pathway candidates, including from industry.	i. Attract and retain HDR candidates from a range of backgrounds to fulfil Griffith's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and empower them to fulfil their research and career potential.	Dean GGRS; Deans (Research)	Resourcing envelope.	2023
		ii. Utilise equivalence and remote candidature guidance to create pathways for competitive applicants.			
		iii. Develop early professional development opportunities for non-traditional pathway HDR candidates to support progression.			
2. Achieve an integrated approach to HDR industry and end-user engagement.	i. Consistent growth in the number of HDR internships allied to strategic areas of industry engagement for Griffith.	i. Introduce an Industry PhD scholarship stream modelled on the Industry PhD streams in the National Industry PhD Program funded under the Commonwealth's Research Commercialisation Plan.	Dean GGRS; Deans (Research); Griffith Enterprise	Slippage in alignment between Central and Groups.	End of 2023
		ii. Embed industry internships in the candidate experience that are networked into the University's wider industry engagement.			
	ii. Greater prominence of HDR candidates in University-industry research collaborations.	i. Establish external co-supervision arrangements tailored to candidates' research and longer-term career aspirations.			

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		ii. Submit competitive CSIRO Industry PhD Program and National Industry PhD Program projects to be funded under the Commonwealth's Research Commercialisation Plan. iii. Streamline IP agreements to reassure industry partners.			
3. Ensure flexibility and alignment with research strategy through the University's scholarship award.	i. Closer alignment between the University's research strategy and the allocation of HDR scholarships.	i. A targeted approach of aligning candidates to areas of established and emerging research priority while retaining the open merit scholarship process.	Dean GGRS; Deans (Research).	Fluctuations in RTP and other income to underwrite an increase in HDR scholarships.	Mid 2023
	ii. Accelerate co-investment between Griffith and industry partners in underwriting scholarships, stipends, and top-ups.	i. Invest in stipends, top-ups, and fee waivers for HDR candidates based in industry.			
		ii. Enable remote candidature options for scholarship holders.			
		iii. Leverage industry partnerships and Commonwealth initiatives to attract additional scholarship resources to the University.			
4. Extend Griffith's commitment to advancing Indigenous knowledge, culture, and talent through higher degree research.	i. Achieve 5% of commencing HDR enrolments load being First Peoples candidates.	i. Greater emphasis on external recruitment of First Peoples candidates and strengthening pathways from undergraduate study to postgraduate research at Griffith.	Dean GGRS; Director Indigenous Research	Resourcing envelope.	2025

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		ii. Deeper collaboration between GGRS and the Indigenous Research Unit in co-creating graduate career development programs. iii. Tailored support for First Peoples students to successfully transition from pathway to HDR programs and through to completion. iv. Develop and fund a pathway for Indigenous students from undergraduate study to postdoctoral options. v. Increase career development support for First Peoples academic staff who are HDR supervisors.	Unit; Deans (Research).		
5. Establish a Higher Degree Research College of Excellence in Supervision to create a dynamic community of practice for academic staff.	i. Greater staff engagement with the craft of HDR supervision.	i. Build on existing initiatives in relation to the HDR Supervision Framework and the Graduate Research Development Program. ii. Establish professional development requirements for continuing supervisor accreditation.	Dean GGRS; Deans (Research).	Resourcing envelope.	2024
	ii. Enhanced profile of supervision best practice across the University.	i. Engage and consult with interested colleagues on the shape and purpose of the College of Excellence.			

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6. Ensure that HDR development programs have an explicit focus on equipping candidates with transferrable career-ready skills and experience linked to graduate research outcomes.	i. Higher levels of satisfaction in the annual HDR Candidate Experience Survey in relation to skills development and professional connections.	i. Review every 6 months HDR career and professional development programs to ensure that non-academic career pathway information is fully embedded.	Dean GGRS; Deans (Research).	Resourcing envelope	2023
		ii. Incentivise HDR candidate engagement in transferrable skills training.			
	ii. Survey data and testimonials from Griffith graduate research outcomes project embedded in HDR marketing and recruitment activities.	i. Undertake a Griffith graduate research outcomes project (leveraging the Griffith-based Australia- first 'HDR Reconnect' project completed in 2018).			
	iii. Graduate attributes updated and technical solution delivered.	i. Review and update Griffith HDR graduate attributes to better reflect the University's graduate career pathway aspirations for candidates.			
		ii. Create an integrated technical solution to manage delivery of HDR professional development for research and career goals.			

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7. Identify international partnerships that enhance the HDR candidate experience	i. Higher number of collaborative program and funding arrangements with international partners.	i. Leverage more strategically collaborative sponsorship, research, and program delivery arrangements (i.e. dual and double degrees).	Dean GGRS; VP Global; Research Centre and Institute Directors.	Deterioration in global security (including public health) environment.	2023
	ii. Higher number of outbound international experiences for HDR candidates.	ii. Promote high quality outbound mobility opportunities for HDR candidates, including short-term outbound experiences.			
8. Ensure that HDR candidates have access to world-class research infrastructure.	i. Promote a high-quality training experience and the capacity to generate robust, reproducible results.	i. Continue to work with other Queensland universities and among Academic Groups at Griffith to expand support for physical and digital research infrastructure and core research facilities.	Dean GGRS; Dean (Research Infrastructure) ; Deans (Research)	Resourcing envelope	2023
9. Ensure that the HDR portfolio institutional support structures (academic and professional staff, policies, systems and business practices) are fit for purpose to deliver on this strategy.	i. Implementation of this strategy by end of 2025.	i. Implement in full the HDR Portfolio Review recommendations by Q3 2023.	Dean GGRS; Deans (Research)	Resourcing envelope, particularly the enabling HDR digital systems.	2025
		ii. HDR Portfolio Strategy to be embedded in Group and Central operational plans.			