

POLICY STATEMENT: RHD TIMELY COMPLETION

7 May 2016

GSA position

GSA recognises the importance of timely completion for Research Higher Degree (RHD) students at the University of Melbourne. However, measures to increase the percentage of timely completion should focus wholly or mainly on initiatives that support RHD students toward completion.

Rationale

The problem of timely completion does not belong to the student alone, but also to the student-supervisor relationship, faculties and graduate schools, and wider University and national models for research training. Therefore, improving and enhancing existing research training models at the University will provide a systematic approach that tackles the source of untimely completions.

In the absence of improved resources to support students toward timely completion, other measures could simply result in more students leaving their degrees without completion. This in turn would result in a loss of potential research block funding and reputational damage for the University, as well as being a poor outcome for students.

Resource improvements to consider:

- more training for supervisors to improve efficacy of the relationship
- dedicated office space for all research students so they have a reliable place for study through the duration of their candidature
- development of peer support networks and other similar programs to reduce isolation and help research students feel part of their research community
- significant increase in provision of mental health resources for research students

POLICY	CATEGORY	REF	AMENDED/ CREATED	NEXT REVIEW
RHD timely completion	Teaching and learning	1.1	July 2016	July 2017

Relevant research and information

[McGagh, J, Marsh, H, Western, M, Thomas, P, Hastings, A, Mihailova, M, Wenham, M \(2016\) Review of Australia's Research Training System. Report for the Australian Council of Learned Academies.](#)

GSA submission to the Review of Australia's Research Training System (2015) *available upon request*

[Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations \(CAPA\) Submission to the House of Representatives Industry, Science and Innovation Committee Inquiry into Research Training and Research Workforce Issues in Australian Universities \(submission 90\)](#)

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