

Policy number	P27	Version	2
Approved by ABG	1 February 2024	Scheduled review date	February 2029

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is the approval procedures of the National Institute of Organisation Dynamics Australia (NIODA) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) candidate research proposal approval, evaluation of candidate progress through annual reports, and the approval for submission of final theses.

2. Scope

The policy is relevant to PhD candidates, supervisors, and teaching staff.

3. Policy Statement

Clear articulation of the procedures for approval of PhD candidate research proposals, evaluation of candidate progress through annual reports, and approval for submission of final theses is critical in ensuring maintenance of the academic quality of NIODA's PhD course, for ensuring consistency of application of evaluations for candidate's progress and to ensure final thesis submissions have met NIODA's highest academic standards. An organisation without transparent procedures for approval and evaluation tasks is vulnerable to lowering of academic standards and inconsistent treatment of candidate progress.

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Dean to ensure that all approvals of PhD candidate research proposals, evaluation of candidate progress through annual reports, and approval for submission of final theses are in accord with the procedures outlined below.

The Dean delegates the approval of PhD candidate proposals, evaluation of candidate progress through annual reports, and approval for submission of final theses to the PhD Course Committee.

5. Approval of PhD candidate research proposals

To proceed to year two of the PhD degree, candidates are required to submit a research proposal to the PhD Course Committee.

Process

The principal supervisor approves the research proposal prior to submission to the PhD Course Committee. The PhD Course Committee arranges a Research Proposal Confirmation Panel within two weeks of the receipt of the proposal. The Research Proposal Confirmation Panel comprises the two PhD Course Lead/s and one external member who is usually a supervisor registered on NIODA's Register of Supervisors.

The Research Proposal Confirmation Panel deliberates on the proposal and responds in writing to each candidate within one week of the subcommittee sitting date.

See **Appendix 1** for the template for approving candidate research proposals

6. Monitoring candidate progress

6.1 Annual reports

Candidates are required to complete a progress report at the end of years one to five of their candidature. This report is the basis for approval by the PhD Course Committee for ongoing candidature. The intention of the report is to provide the candidate and supervisors with the opportunity to deeply consider the progress of the candidate.

In addition to approval of the report being a requirement for ongoing candidature, the report is a basis for discussion between the candidate and supervisors in supporting the candidate's development.

The Annual Progress Report details candidate progress against their research plan and any obstruction/challenges they are experiencing or foresee. The candidate also articulates expected milestone dates to ensure successful completion of the degree. The principal supervisor comments on the candidate's progress and endorses or otherwise the candidate's continuation in the degree. The link to these reports is:
<https://form.jotform.com/233298413515861>

Candidates are also required to submit an annual/final report to the NIODA HREC detailing ongoing ethical considerations. These may include a 30 minute conversation with HREC representatives, an online module on ethics, and/or a written report, dependent upon the progression of the research of the candidate.

The PhD Course Committee monitors and assesses progress based on progress reports and advice from supervisors. The continuing candidature is dependent on approved progress.

6.2 Supervisory team meetings

Supervisory teams, including the candidate, meet formally once each year with a PhD Course lead. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the candidate's progress in the research, the experience of supervision from both the candidate and supervisor/s perspective, and to refine agreements and the schedule of supervision for the following year.

7. Approval for submission of final thesis

Process

As identified in the *PhD Examination Process Policy* the PhD Course Committee meets within two weeks of a candidate submission of their final thesis for approval for examination.

The Principal supervisor is to sign approval on the Submission of Thesis for Examination form and forward to the PhD Course Committee, upon receipt of the thesis, sends it for examination.

It may occur where the principal supervisor does not approve the submission of the thesis for examination. In this case the candidate has the right to submit anyway and the supervisor will sign a waiver indicating their non approval.

7. Grievances

Grievances relating to research proposal approvals, candidate progress and final thesis submission should be taken up as per the NIODA Grievance Policy. The Grievance Policy is published on the NIODA website (www.nioda.org.au/policies).

8. Related Documents

PhD Examination Process Policy

Appendix 1: Confirmation Panel approval of candidate research proposals template

<p>Candidate name:</p>	
<p>Research Proposal</p>	<p>Has each element been addressed? Comment</p>
<p>1: Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overview of the research project • explanation of the background of the project, focusing briefly on the major issues of its knowledge domain and clarifying why these issues are worthy of attention. • concise presentation of the research statement, taking the form of either a hypothesis, a research question, a project statement, or a goal statement, and capturing both the essence of the project and its delimiting boundaries • clarification of the extent to which outcomes are expected to represent an advance in the knowledge domain described. • written in a style that can be understood easily. • citation of all relevant references • closing with a brief description of each one of the chapters that follow. 	
<p>2: Field of Inquiry (State of the Art (Literature review))</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building of a solid knowledge of the field where the research is taking place • familiarity with the main issues at stake • the key literature has been critically identified and evaluated • innovative and coherent view that integrates and synthesises the main aspects of the field, putting into perspective the new direction that the research explores. • credit given to all authors whose work is used 	

<p>3: Research Objectives and Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• clarification of the research objectives of the project• apt choice and description of methodological approaches• the chapter explains what is planned to be done to tackle the research problem, why it is planned to be done it that way, and how it going to be done• the Methodology and Research Methods components are detailed enough for the reader to decide whether the methodology and methods intending to be used are adequate for the research at hand and that the methods flow from, are consistent with the chosen methodology. Including a discussion of possible alternatives and credible explanations of why the approach is the most valid.	
<p>4: Current Work and Preliminary Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provision of a concise outline of the work carried out so far and of the progress made toward the aims of the project.• concentration on the parts that contribute specifically to the goals of the proposal, avoiding detailed descriptions of digressions attempted in the earlier, more exploratory, phases of the work.• inclusion of any preliminary results, in a structured manner that helps support the rest of the proposal.	
<p>5: Work Plan and Implications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a detailed description of what the researcher plans to do - literature to explore in depth, principles or conceptual frames to formulate, activities to carry out.• establishment of specific milestones and timelines and a Gantt diagram.• the plan should anticipate the problems likely to be found along the way and describe the approaches to be followed in solving them. It	

<p>should also anticipate the conferences and journals to which the work in progress is expected to be submitted along the way, and schedule it in a Goals for Publication section of the work plan.</p>	
<p>6: Goals for Publication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of which parts of the thesis would ideally be disseminated and to where: conferences, colloquia, published journal articles. Specification of where presentation may take place and the possible journals for publication. 	
<p>7: Conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a brief restatement of the objectives of the research project, a recapping of the research approach, and the anticipated unique contribution of the research. 	
<p>Clarity of Communication, grammar and referencing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly and concisely written with correct grammar • correct use of referencing 	