

**Faculty of Engineering & Industrial Sciences**  
**Faculty Research Committee**  
**Guidelines regarding the management of postgraduate research student office space.**

Like many other areas of the University, the Faculty is experiencing tremendous growth in the number of postgraduate research students. This is not only due to the success in the University wide May and October scholarship rounds, but is also due to increasing success in new research programs and grants attracting scholarship funding.

These guidelines relate to the management of postgraduate research student office space with particular focus on student entitlement to a desk after four years equivalent full time candidature on campus. They are supported by the recently released draft of Swinburne's revised 2015 vision send to staff for comment on 7<sup>th</sup> October. The revised version states:

“Research Higher Degree students, and particularly PhD students, form a critical component of a research-intensive university and Swinburne will aim to continue to grow the number and quality of our PhD students. It is important both for students and the University that such students complete their studies in a timely manner.”

***Aim 3.5: Increase the number of students who timely complete their PhD within four years full time equivalent to above 70% by 2015.***

Postgraduate research student entitlements to facilities and services, including a desk, is addressed in the Research Higher Degrees Policy.

<http://policies.swinburne.edu.au/ppdonline/showdoc.aspx?recnum=POL/2008/294>

### **7.3 Student Status**

7.3.1 Student status commences on the date of enrolment and **ceases**:

- a) if the candidate is not re-enrolled by the census date; or
- b) once the examinable outcome is submitted for examination; or
- c) during periods of leave of absence; or
- d) when the maximum period of candidature is reached; or
- e) upon withdrawal; or
- f) upon termination.

7.3.2 In most cases, candidates whose student status is not current are not eligible to receive payments and services including:

- a) scholarship payments;
- b) supervision;
- c) access to facilities including email, library and internet access.**

7.3.3 A candidate's higher degree candidature may remain current while their student status is not current.

From the policy it is advice of Swinburne Research that unless a student status is current, they are not eligible to access University facilities, including a desk.

From the Faculty's point of view, there is little advantage is moving students out of their desks when on leave of absence. This only creates more work in reallocating them a desk upon return. It is important that students are at least aware that they may be asked to pack up their things so that another student can use their desk temporarily whilst they are on leave.

The Guidelines for Minimum Resources for Research Candidates state that each full time student will have access to a shared study area and individual desk or study carrel.

The guidelines also advise that it: “is recognised that research candidates may require specific equipment, e-research infrastructure, laboratory or studio space and funds **adequate for the completion of the research program.**” “Where a change in the research project proves necessary, resources may be renegotiated between the Associate Dean of Research, the candidate and the supervisory team.”

This provides the necessary flexibility for enrolled students and their supervisors to negotiate an extension on the use of facilities and services as required to complete their research.

The guidelines also address what resources and services are available to part time students and could also be applied to those whose higher degree candidature may remain current even if their student status is not (7.3.3).

### **Candidates Not Located Full-time on Campus**

Where candidates are not located full-time on campus, it is important to ensure that they have access to an appropriate research environment. The following provisions need to be put in place:

- Access to necessary resources required to conduct the research
- Regular and planned access to an appropriate supervision panel
- Specification of on campus visits/other face to face contact
- Details about how progress reviews will take place
- Email/internet access to the Swinburne University
- Access to the same financial support as provided to those candidates on campus
- An agreement about the above mentioned points (Associate Dean of Research, supervisory team, candidate).

[http://www.research.swinburne.edu.au/higher-degrees/documents/minimum\\_resources\\_research\\_candidates.pdf](http://www.research.swinburne.edu.au/higher-degrees/documents/minimum_resources_research_candidates.pdf)