

SUPERVISION OF INDUSTRY ENGAGED RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Category	Procedure		
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1. PURPOSE

This procedure serves as a guide for both candidates and the supervisors involved with industry-engaged research. It sets out the roles of those involved with the placement and the processes that must be adhered to.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 Objective

The objective of engaged research is to equip students with skills and experiences to work at the intersection of academia, industry and research, developing new knowledge, new forms of significant knowledge and the skills required to commercialise findings.

2.2 Supervision

- A Principal Supervisor from IMC will oversee the research program for each candidate, including industry engaged placements. In the case of doctoral candidates, an Associate Supervisor and / or Industry Supervisor from IMC will also be appointed.
- A register of supervisors will be kept by IMC
- Where the student research involves an extended industry placement, an Industry Supervisor with significant background of industry leadership in a related field, will be assigned to each candidate to assist with this aspect of their research.

- The Industry Supervisor will assume responsibility for facilitating the candidate's work

- within the industry setting. They will act as a bridge between the candidate, the placement organisation and the Principal and Associate Supervisors.
- The Industry Supervisor is expected to provide regular supervision throughout the period of the engaged research placement, which may be 'on-site'.

2.3. Management of the Fieldwork

Planning for a candidate's research is a joint endeavour. Led by the Principal Supervisor and supported by the Associate Supervisor, it will include the Industry Supervisor, representatives from the placement organisation and the candidate.

Prior to the commencement of the research placement, the Principal Supervisor must arrange:

- a) A meeting involving all members of the supervisory team to discuss topics, including:
 - the candidate's academic progress
 - the candidate's research proposal
 - the research timeline
 - dates for the candidate to produce interim written submissions
 - a date for the candidate's mid-fieldwork review
 - issues that might prevent the successful completion of the research
 - feedback from the Human Ethics Research Committee regarding the research proposal
 - protection of Intellectual Property rights arising from the research
 - data storage
- b) A meeting between the supervisory team and representatives from the candidate's placement organisation. Where possible, this meeting should occur 'on-site', in the location where the candidate will undertake their engaged research.
The agenda for the meeting must include:
 - the candidate's research proposal
 - the research timeline
 - issues that might prevent successful completion of the research
 - ethical considerations
 - intellectual property
 - data storage
 - health and safety
 - processes for managing disputes
- c) A meeting involving the candidate, the supervisory team, and representatives from the candidate's placement organisation.
The agenda for the meeting must include:
 - the responsibilities for those involved in the research project
 - specifics of the research to be undertaken (research question, data collection methods etc.)
 - a clear timeline for the research placement, highlighting specific dates and deadlines for task completion

- mid-placement review date
- processes for managing disputes

Upon commencement of the research, responsibilities of the supervisory team will be:

The Principal Supervisor will be responsible for:

- Meeting regularly with the student to discuss the progress being made
- Providing timely written feedback to the student
- Mentoring, as appropriate, the Associate Supervisor(s)/Industry Supervisor in their supervisory role
- Ensuring the standard of research is appropriate to the level of the degree being sought
- Maintaining close consultation with the Associate Supervisor(s) as well as the candidate to ensure that research is conducted in accordance with relevant IMC policies, including but not limited to policies regarding academic misconduct, WHS, appeal processes, and intellectual property
- Ensuring students are familiar with and adhere to requirements for responsible conduct of research at the commencement of a supervisory arrangement and throughout the period of research candidature. See IMC's Research Code of Conduct for details regarding requirements for research conduct
- Consulting with Associate Supervisor(s)/Industry Supervisor and advising the candidate on the quality of early drafts of the thesis, and ensuring that the thesis presented is substantially the independent work of the candidate
- Supporting students through the relevant stages of candidature as outlined in the Higher Degree Research Confirmation of Candidature and Progression Policy and Procedure
- Reporting to the RC on the candidate's six-monthly progress.

Associate Supervisors:

- Must be registered at either the Principal or Associate Supervisor levels
- Are usually the second point of contact for the HDR student academically and administratively
- Provide support to the Principal Supervisor and the student
- May provide specifically required expertise; and
- Provide 40% or less of the supervisory workload.

The Industry Supervisor:

- Must provide regular supervisions throughout the period of the engaged placement, many of which will be 'on-site'
- Must organise regular meetings with representatives from the placement organisation, where appropriate also involving the Principal Supervisor
- Will maintain a record of meetings, hosted on a shared drive accessible to the Principal Supervisor and Associate Supervisor (where one has been appointed)
- Must alert the Principal Supervisor should the candidate deviate from the agreed research proposal and/or timeline, or if any other areas of potential concern arise

2.4 Evaluation Procedure

During the industry engaged research placement, there will be continuous evaluation of a candidate's performance and the collaboration.

Assessment will take the following forms:

- Formative, actionable, advice given during supervisions between the Industry Supervisor and candidate
- A written report following each supervision (to be shared with the candidate and supervisory team which outlines:
 - Overview of the topics discussed
 - Current research status in comparison with proposed timeline
 - Next steps in the research process
 - Concerns / challenges raised by the student
 - Details of the next supervision date
- Interim reports submitted by the candidate to the supervisory team
- Mid-fieldwork review, attended by the candidate, supervisory team and representatives from the placement organisation which will involve:
 - A presentation (c. 10 minutes) by the candidate reviewing their research to date and their plan for the completion of their data collection.
 - An open discussion, chaired by the Principal Supervisor, during which all parties can highlight strengths, celebrate achievements, and voice concerns over elements of the research or collaboration.)
- End of research placement review, written by the Industry Supervisor, which provides general and specific details of the strengths and weaknesses of the placement experience, including recommendations for how the organisation of future engaged research experiences might be improved.

2.5. Confidentiality and Privacy

All parties involved in the Industry Engaged PhD course must handle confidential information and personal data in accordance with applicable privacy laws and internal IMC Policy.

The supervisory team must:

- Maintain strict confidentiality of all sensitive information related to the industry partner's business, research, and operations.
- Not disclose any confidential information to third parties without explicit written consent from the industry partner.
- Use confidential information solely for the purposes of supervising the PhD candidate and facilitating the research project.
- Take appropriate measures to safeguard confidential information from unauthorised access, use, or disclosure.

The PhD candidate must:

- Adhere to the confidentiality policies of both IMC and the industry partner.
- Seek guidance from the Industry Supervisor or Principal Supervisor if unsure about the confidentiality status of any information.

The Institute will:

- Provide training to the PhD candidate and supervisory team on handling confidential information and data protection.
- Ensure that research publications or presentations do not disclose confidential information without prior approval from the industry partner.

All parties must comply with relevant data protection laws, including the Australian Privacy Principles (2014), in the collection, use, storage, and disclosure of personal information related to the research project.

2.6. Dispute Resolution

In the event of disputes between the Institute , industry partner, and PhD candidate, the following steps should be taken:

- i. **Initial Discussions:** The parties involved should first attempt to resolve the dispute through open and honest discussion. Parties involved might include the Industry Supervisor, representatives from the placement organisation, and the candidate. The Principal Supervisor should be made aware of the dispute but might not be required to attend any initial discussions.
- ii. **Formal Resolution Meeting(s):** Led by the Principal Supervisor, working closely with the Industry Supervisor, a meeting or meetings should be arranged with the various parties to identify the primary reasons for the dispute and create a plan addressing the challenges to facilitate the continuation of the candidate's research. A record of these meetings must be made and securely stored.
- iii. **Escalation:** If initial discussions are unsuccessful, or if the same or a similar dispute re-emerges, the dispute should be escalated to senior management at IMC and the industry partner for resolution. The Deputy President (Education) must be informed. The Deputy President (Education), or their representative, should lead further discussions on IMC's behalf.
- iv. **External Arbitration:** In cases where internal resolution attempts fail, the parties may agree to seek external arbitration, with the costs to be shared equally unless otherwise agreed.
- v. **Termination:** As a last resort, if a resolution cannot be reached and the dispute significantly impedes the progress of the research project, provisions for early termination of the industry research placement should be considered, and alternatives found, to ensure that the PhD candidate's academic progress is protected.

Written Agreements: From stage ii onwards, resolution reached should be documented in writing and signed by all parties involved.

Program Continuation: Every effort should be made to ensure that the PhD candidate's research progress is not unduly impacted by the dispute resolution process.

Confidentiality: All parties must maintain confidentiality throughout the dispute resolution process, unless disclosure is required by law.

3. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- i. *Code of Conduct for Research*
- ii. *Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy*
- iii. *Human Research Ethics Policy*
- iv. *Academic Intellectual Property Policy*

4. VERSION CONTROL

Historical Version	Approved by	Approval Date
2024.11	Deputy President (Education)	20 November 2024

The Deputy President (Education) oversees the implementation and compliance of this procedure. Please contact the Deputy President's office via policy@imc.edu.au for any enquiries or clarifications.