Curtin’s research masters and doctoral students are valued researchers-in-training. The Facilitating Excellence in Research Training Framework incorporates seven principles designed to achieve the aims of the University’s Research Management Plan. The Framework promotes a positive research culture, supports research students and staff, and provides a supportive environment for research training.

Promoting a Research Culture

Principle 1: Research Culture
Curtin develops and maintains a University-wide research culture in which staff and Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students are valued partners in a community that actively fosters quality research and scholarship, where:

- Communication and networking are effective;
- Student contributions in research are recognised; and
- Students have input to policies and practices.

Principle 2: Equity
All research students and staff have equitable access to, and participate in, a quality postgraduate research experience at Curtin, where:

- Students’ diverse needs and backgrounds are supported;
- Clear, consistent, and comprehensive information is readily accessible; and
- Quality programs are assured and available to all research students.

Supporting Research Students and Staff

Principle 3: Student/Supervisor Relationships
All research students and staff involved in research training know, understand and can manage the roles, responsibilities and functions of supervision for successful postgraduate research, where:

- Students/supervisors fulfill their roles and responsibilities;
- Appropriate support facilities are available;
- Students consistently express satisfaction; and
- Conflict resolution measures are in place.

Principle 4: Supervisor Development
Curtin recognises the critical importance of the supervisory role and ensures that adequate time and resources are allocated to support staff, where:

- Monitoring and professional development are available to develop supervisory skills;
- Support for supervisory staff is available;
- Supervisors’ workloads are equitable; and
- Staff have opportunities to share experiences and reflect on practice.

Principle 5: Student Progress and Support
Curtin HDR students progress successfully through all stages of their research degree and complete in good time. Research students exit with the necessary generic skills to participate effectively in their chosen professions. Outcomes include:

- Training in research, communication and presentation skills is provided;
- Supervisors have knowledge, skills and time to provide expert supervision;
- Students maintain good progress and regular contact with their supervisors; and
- Students have opportunities for experiences relevant to their professions.

Providing a Supportive Environment

Principle 6: Higher Degree Rules
Higher Degree by Research rules, policies and guidelines are clear, readily accessible by staff and students, regularly updated and applied consistently. This ensures:

- Rules, policies and guidelines are clear and current;
- Rules are adhered to at every stage of candidature; and
- Clear advice for rules, guidelines and policies is available.

Principle 7: Resources and Essential Facilities
All postgraduate student research is appropriately resourced and supported with essential facilities, ensuring:

- Resources for on- and off-campus students are adequate;
- Industry partnerships are sought to support students where appropriate; and
- Advice on scholarships and fee assistance is available.

The University uses many different measures and indicators to monitor its performance in research training. Some of these measures include:

- Research student publications;
- Presentations by research students at seminars and conferences – local, national and international;
- Participation, retention and completion statistics;
- Completion rates, including timely completions – benchmarked against other universities;
- Examiners’ reports on theses;
- Student participation in committees, decision making processes;
- Participation rates in orientation/induction and professional development activities for students and supervisors;
- Development of communication/support networks for research students;
- Student feedback on Annual Progress Reports and action taken by Review Boards;
- Proportion of supervisors on the Register of Supervisors;
- Supervisory load audit results;
- Resolution of equity issues;
- Provision of support for students with special needs;
- Resolution of grievances and complaints;
- Results from Curtin Annual Satisfaction Student Survey (CASSS) and Postgraduate Research Evaluation Questionnaire (PRES).

Curtin’s Quality Framework emphasises the importance of closing the loop to ensure continuous improvement. The Office of Research and Development has responsibility for implementing this framework to facilitate excellence in research training. Those who Do, Review, and Improve are those responsible for the outcomes: the Office of Research and Development, Faculties, Enrolling Areas, supervisors, students and relevant Committees.

The seven principles of the framework define excellence in research education which will enable achievement of the objectives in the Research Management Plan through a quality management cycle identifying four key stages:

To download the full version of the FERT, go to research.curtin.edu.au/graduate/publications