

# Subject Outline

Subject Title	Planning the Research
Subject Code	RD7001
Study Period	Research Training Periods 1-4

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This subject outline has been prepared by A/Prof Liz Tynan for the Graduate Research School, Research Division, James Cook University. Updated December 2021.

The information provided in this subject outline is correct as at the time of completion and may change in response to changing University resources. Any changes will be approved by the College Dean or representative and will be communicated to students via the LearnJCU subject site.

# 1 Subject Details

Q1. This subject is offered across more than one campus and/or mode and/or study period within the one calendar year.	Yes	No
Q2. If yes (Q1), the design of all offerings of this subject ensure the same learning outcomes and assessment types and weightings.	Yes	No
Q3. If no (Q2), [Type here] has authorised any variations, in terms of equivalence.		

Name	Dr Laretta Grasso
Position	Manager, Graduate Research Operations
Date reviewed	20 February 2020

## 1.3 Staff contact details

Key Staff	Staff member	Room	Phone	Email	Consultation times*
Subject Coordinator	Dean, Graduate Research	017-028	+61 7 4781 5575	deangrs@jcu.edu.au	By appointment
Primary Advisor					

The overall intention of the Confirmation of Candidature degree milestone is to allow the candidate to demonstrate that:

1. The candidate's project is of a suitable scope and standard for the degree;
2. The candidate has the capacity to:
  - a. complete the project in a timely manner with the resources available and the potential to obtain any required permits; and
  - b. undertake a degree at the required level by demonstrating:
    - mastery of a substantial body of knowledge at the frontier of the field of research including substantial knowledge of the principles and methods;
    - the cognitive skills to demonstrate expert understanding of the associated theoretical knowledge, and to reflect critically on the theory and practice of the field of research; and
    - the communication skills to explain and critique theoretical propositions, methodologies and conclusions and present cogently a complex investigation to peers and the wider academic community.
3. The candidate's HDR Professional Development Audit and Plan in [COC-Assessment Form and COC-Proposal Template](#) is appropriate for the candidate's degree requirements and career aspirations.

RD7001 addresses Items 1 and 2a above. The Advisory Panel will assist the candidate to complete two Assessment Items, (1) a research proposal; and (2) a seminar to the satisfaction of the Candidature Committee,

## 1.7 Subject resources and special requirements

Important policy information is available for all JCU HDR candidates on the Graduate Research School website: <http://www.jcu.edu.au/grs/>

See also the Higher Degree by Research Requirements policy: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/research-education/higher-degree-by-research-requirements>

See also the Confirmation of Candidature webpage: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/policy/procedures/research-education-procedures/hdr-progress-reporting-procedure>

An online module on plagiarism is a Compulsory Component of the GRS Professional Development Program for HDR candidates.

All HDR candidates have access and are encouraged to use iThenticate to check their papers and thesis chapters as they write them.

Candidates are strongly advised to check their RD7001 project proposal through iThenticate and to discuss the details of the report with their Advisory Panel or an appropriate member of the JCU Teaching and Learning Development Unit.

Referencing and attribution practices can differ between and even within disciplines and understanding and interpreting these differences in the context of the iThenticate matching report requires knowledge that should be obtained through the completion of the Plagiarism module offered by the GRS Professional Development Program.

## 2 Assessment details

### 2.1 Key dates

The following summary provides a quick reference to the most important aspects of this subject. Please make sure that you read all the details of the entire subject outline.

As per Section 5.2 of the [Higher Degree by Research \(HDR\) Requirements policy](#), doctoral candidates will be eligible to seek to have their candidature confirmed after the equivalent of 0.5 EFTSL of provisional candidature and must have had their candidature confirmed within 1 EFTSL of provisional enrolment. Candidates who fail to meet this timeline may be placed Under Review.

Because the completion of subjects RD7001 Planning the Research and RD7002 Situating the Research requires a meeting of the Candidature Committee to reach a final decision regarding the candidate's confirmation, it is efficient though not essential for the requirements for the two subjects to be completed simultaneously.

A suggested timetable for a full-time PhD candidate to complete the requirements for both subjects is provided in the [HDR Confirmation of Candidature Procedure](#). This timetable should be modified for part-time candidates through discussions between the candidate and their Advisory Panel. A suggested timeframe for the Confirmation of Candidature process is also available in the HDR Confirmation of Candidature Procedure.

Important dates in this subject that will require planning by the candidate and their Advisory Panel include:

Timing	Task/Action
Start of Subject enrolment	Setting the seminar date and appointment of Expert Reviewer

6 weeks prior to seminar	Research proposal submitted to Expert Reviewer
4 weeks prior to seminar	Candidate makes amendments to research proposal in accordance with Expert Reviewer's report
2 weeks prior to seminar	Advisors complete RD/RM7001 Advisory Panel Report
1 week prior to seminar	All required documentation to be submitted to Candidature Committee

## 2.2 Requirements for successful completion of this subject

In order to pass RD7001, students must successfully complete the following two assessment items:

1. A written research proposal; and
2. A seminar, which is usually public unless Commercial In Confidence restrictions apply.

### 2.2.1 Research Proposal and Seminar Assessment Process

Timing	Task/Action
Start of Subject enrolment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Candidate and Advisory Panel set date for confirmation seminar</li> <li>2. Primary Advisor will contact an expert reviewer who is external to the University. Confirmation of the Expert Reviewer's availability and willingness to provide a report should be ascertained several months before the anticipated confirmation seminar in order to ensure that they will be available and can complete the report in the required timeframe.</li> </ol>
6 weeks prior to seminar	The candidate submits the completed <a href="#">COC-Assessment Form and COC-Proposal Template</a> to their Primary Advisor for submission to the Expert Reviewer.
4 weeks prior to seminar	The Expert Reviewer returns their report and the candidate amends their research proposal in accordance with the Expert Reviewer's report and completes the Candidate's Response to Expert Reviewer section of the Proforma.
2 weeks prior to seminar	The candidate submits the amended research proposal to their Advisory Panel who undertake the assessment using RD7001/RM7001 Advisory Panel Report on Proposal Proforma.
1 week prior to seminar	<a href="#">COC-Assessment Form and COC-</a>

- Are the aims of the study and associated research questions and/or hypotheses clear?
- Is the methodology appropriate to address the research questions?
- Is the proposed analysis appropriate to address the research questions?
- Is the background to the study comprehensively discussed?
- Is the significance of the proposal clearly justified?
- Is the risk analysis sufficiently thorough? Are there any risks inherent to the project not considered by the candidate?
- Is the proposed budget adequate for the planned research?
- Is the proposed timeline for implementation feasible?
- Is the scope of the study suitable for the degree?

The Advisory Panel will assess the research proposal using RD7001/RM7001 Advisory Panel Report on Proposal Proforma, which includes the following criteria:

- Has the candidate responded appropriately to the comments of the Expert Reviewer?
- Is the risk analysis sufficiently thorough? Are there any risks inherent to the project not considered by the candidate?
- Does the candidate have access to the funds and facilities required to complete their thesis in the planned timeframe of the degree?
- Is the proposed timeline feasible?
- In preparing this proposal has the candidate demonstrated the independent research capacity necessary to continue in the proposed degree?
- Has the candidate obtained the permits, approvals and training required for research to commence?
- Have the permits, approvals and training required for the entire research project been identified?

The RD7001/RM 7001 Expert Reviewer's Report on Proposal Proforma and RD7001/RM7001 Advisory Panel Report, both in [COC-Assessment Form](#) and [COC-Proposal Template](#) can be downloaded from the GRS website: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/graduate-research-school/formstemplates>

ASSESSMENT ITEM 2: [SEMINAR]

- Project work plan
- Thesis outline
- Publication plan
- Risk management plan

#### Seminar Assessment Guidelines

The following will be considered by the Candidature Committee in assessing the seminar:

- Was the background and significance of the study explained comprehensively and defended strongly?
- Were the methodology and methods identified clearly and explained appropriately?
- Does the candidate exhibit the presentation skills appropriate to this stage of their candidature?

### 3 Grade for RD7001 Planning the Research

The grade in this subject will be based on both Assessment Items: the research proposal and seminar. The Expert Reviewer's and Advisory Panel's reports will be also considered in determining a grade for the research proposal.

The members of the Candidature Committee who are not on the Advisory Panel will discuss the Research Proposal, the Expert Reviewer's and Advisory Panel's reports and the seminar following the seminar presentation.

The candidate's grade for RD7001 must be recommended to the Dean, Graduate Research by the members of the Candidature Committee who are external to the candidate's Advisory Panel through [COC-Assessment Form and COC-Proposal Template](#). Members of the Advisory Panel as well as the candidate must not be involved when the other members of the Candidature Committee finalise the grade recommendation.

In exceptional circumstances, non-Advisory Panel members of the Candidature Committee may seek one additional expert review of a revised research proposal and/or allow the candidate to repeat the seminar on one occasion only before finalising a grade recommendation for the subject. In this instance the Chair of the Candidature Committee must notify the Graduate Research School in writing and the candidate will be placed



standard of the work is also below that required for candidature within any other cognate postgraduate research or coursework degree offered by the University.