

2.1 Governance

In the context of these guidelines, 'governance' refers to procedures in place to oversee all aspects of the provision of research degree programmes. Such procedures:

- are clearly described by means that are publicly and easily accessible
- involve representatives of those most closely involved, including research supervisors and research students and other research active staff intrinsic to the research environment and community
- involve objective competent persons (at least 2) in important decisions on research project approval, on student admission progress and assessment, and on risk assessment and risk mitigation associated with the context of research studies
- involve formal approval processes for all initial research proposals by the Academic Council/Committee, Doctoral School or Faculty Research Committee or other formal body or process
- take cognisance of evolving requirements related to ethics, research integrity, scientific reproducibility, commercial and legal sensitivities and matters such as intellectual property that impact on research projects following their conclusion
- apply across the provider where such procedures will add to the consistency of quality of research degrees while respecting the integrity of disciplines
- take cognisance of any potential conflicting requirements between those of external stakeholders and funding bodies and internal provider procedures
- have regard to the sustainability of research programmes within fields of learning

This system of governance may involve a specified senior officer (such as a head/dean of graduate studies) and a range of administrative structures (e.g. graduate research school or a postgraduate studies office).

QA procedures for governance include provision for circumstances where providers choose to act in cooperation with one or more other competent providers of research, to ensure adequate governance, comprehensive up-to-date policies and procedures, objective and informed decision-making, and necessary services and supports for administrators, supervisors and research students. The guidelines on governance, set out in the Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, also apply to the governance of research degrees and related services.