# Your rights as a research student

As a research student at the University of Sydney you have certain rights under the policies that govern your candidature.

## Supervision

For supervision, you have the right to:

* at least two supervisors – one of whom must be a research supervisor
* regular contact with your supervisors
* an appropriate replacement when they are absent

The standard supervision model consists of a research supervisor and an auxiliary supervisor. Your research supervisor assumes the main supervisory duties. When we refer to your ‘supervisor’ we mean your research supervisor. You may request a different supervisory model if you prefer. Approach your faculty Postgraduate Research Coordinator to discuss your options.

Your supervisor(s) should be in **regular contact**, and work with you to develop a [progress plan.](https://sydney.edu.au/students/research-progress.html)

When you submit written work to your supervisor, they are required to return it to you with relevant constructive feedback within **one month** for (the equivalent of) one thesis chapter.

Your supervisor is expected to provide you with assistance in developing important applications such as ethics applications, progress plans, and progress reports.

When your **supervisor is absent** for a period of one month or more, the head of school must put in place appropriate alternative supervisory arrangements.

If you’re not happy with your supervisor, you may change your supervisory arrangements. Consult your faculty Postgraduate Research Coordinator on the process. You can also [contact us](https://supra.net.au/contact/) for assistance.

## Intellectual Property

You own the copyright in your thesis and scholarly works in the absence of any agreement to the contrary. You should assess your particular circumstances by reading the University’s [Intellectual Property Policy 2016](https://sydney.edu.au/policies/showdoc.aspx?recnum=PDOC2016/418&RendNum=0). Also read our section on [Intellectual Property](https://supra.net.au/cpt_helps/intellectual-property/).

## Resources and facilities

**You have the right to be provided with an** **induction** so that you understand key dates and policies, and what administrative support is available to you – including who to contact.

**You are entitled to** **appropriate access to work space** as you require – although this might not include your own desk or office.

**You have the right to professional development opportunities**, such as attending conferences and taking on teaching roles, if appropriate.

**You have the right to technical support**, and research and communication tools, and to apply to conduct research off campus.

## Postgraduate Research Support Scheme (PRSS)

[Postgraduate Research Support Scheme (PRSS)](http://sydney.edu.au/students/postgraduate-research-support-scheme) is University funding for HDR students to attend conferences around the world; conduct fieldwork or overseas research; or to obtain special equipment. It can also be used for thesis production if you don’t have a scholarship.

## Length of candidature

PhD students who enrolled after 1January 2019 are expected to **submit** their thesis in 3.5 years (full-time equivalent). Your examination and graduation should be completed within 4 years.

Full-time Masters by Research students must **submit** their thesis for examination in 1.5 years, with examination and graduation completed (or transfer to PhD) within 2 years.

You may [request an **extension**](https://sydney.edu.au/students/extend-candidature.html) if you have extenuating circumstances for not submitting within time.

## Hours and leave

Full-time research students are expected to spend at least 35 hours per week on their studies. They are entitled to up to 4 weeks of recreation leave annually.

Part-time research students spend less than 35 hours per week on their studies. International students are not normally permitted to study part-time but international research students have the same right to recreation leave as domestic students.

## Suspension and leave of absence

Research students are entitled to [take a suspension or short leave](http://sydney.edu.au/students/request-leave-from-your-research). If the leave is more than a few days advise your supervisor and check with HDRAC on what you need to do. This is to prevent you unnecessarily losing the time in which you must complete your degree, or using up your scholarship funding.

## Maternity leave

Research students who are receiving a research training program (RTP) or similar scholarship and who have completed 12 full-time months of their degree may be entitled to [12 weeks paid maternity leave](https://sydney.edu.au/students/request-leave-from-research.html).

## Sick leave

If you are a research student receiving a research training program (RTP) or similar scholarship you are entitled to take up to **10 days sick leave** per year. You can apply for **additional paid sick leave** (up to 60 working days) if you have used your sick leave and you have medical documentation.

Note: additional sick leave does **not** extend your candidature period.

## Reviewing progress

Students have a responsibility to report to their research supervisor (or raise concerns during their progress review), if they are experiencing problems with their progress.

You have the right to read what your supervisor has written on their section of the progress report before your progress review interview, as well as the right to respond to your supervisor’s comments during the interview, and in writing afterwards on the progress report form (highly recommended).

If you receive an outcome of Unsatisfactory Progress and are asked to Show Good Cause as to why you should be permitted to continue in your candidature, [seek assistance from SUPRA](https://supra.net.au/contact/). More detailed information on the [Show Cause process](https://supra.net.au/cpt_helps/show-good-cause-research-students/) and some tips on preparing a response.

Your candidature cannot be terminated without **notice and reasons**, and you must first be asked to show good cause. If the faculty determines you have not shown cause and are therefore terminated, you have a right to appeal and to [seek assistance from us](https://supra.net.au/contact/).

## Policies:

* [Supervision of Higher Degree by Research Students Policy 2013](https://sydney.edu.au/policies/showdoc.aspx?recnum=PDOC2013/316&RendNum=0)

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