



Australian Catholic University

Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

Name of Policy	The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the PhD Thesis
Description	The Policy describes the eligibility, criteria and selection process for the awarding of the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the PhD Thesis
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Description of Revision	

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Policy Contact	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)

The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the PhD Thesis Policy

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The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the PhD Thesis Policy

1. Background

The University's recognition of student achievement in research through the presentation of The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the PhD Thesis raises the profile of research being successfully undertaken through higher degrees by research. The award acknowledges an excellent contribution to knowledge. Recipients of the award are likely to benefit in terms of their competitiveness in the employment sector, especially in higher education. Recognition of high achieving PhD graduates is important in raising the aspirations of all students, improving the range of employment destinations and acknowledging the importance of quality PhD completions to the University's research outcomes.

2. Policy Statement

The purpose of The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the PhD Thesis is to recognise, reward and celebrate excellent achievement in research by a PhD student.

3. Policy Purpose

This policy describes the eligibility, criteria and selection process for the awarding of The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the PhD Thesis.

4. Application of Policy

The recipient of the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in the PhD Thesis will receive a certificate and an honorarium of \$1,000.

One award may be granted annually. No award will be made if the Award Committee deems that it is unable to make a recommendation of demonstrated excellence based on the selection criteria from the eligible nominations.

5. Eligibility for Nomination

To be eligible for nomination for the award:

- the effective completion date of the PhD must lie in the period of January 1 to December 31 inclusive for the award year; and
- both thesis examiners must have recommended a grade of 'pass without amendment' or better.

6. Criteria for Selection

PhD students who have met the requirements for completion of the award within the previous calendar year and who have obtained a 'pass without amendment' recommendation from both examiners will be eligible for consideration.

Each of the Faculties may nominate one eligible student for the award.

The criteria for selection of a PhD Thesis that demonstrates excellence are:

- significance of the work in the field; and
- quality of the thesis, as a thesis.

The evidence to be used will include:

- examiners' reports;
- thesis; and
- supporting statement from the principal supervisor of no more than one page with endorsement by the relevant Head of School.

7. Award Committee

The Award Committee will comprise;

- Chair of Research Training Standing Committee (Chair);
- Emeritus Professor of the University;
- Professor of the University.

8. Selection Process

- A report of potentially eligible theses will be provided by Research Services to the Associate Dean (Research) for each Faculty by **January 4** each year.
- Each Faculty will convene a Committee to identify and rank eligible students. The Chair of each Faculty Committee will write to the Chair of the Award Committee by **February 4** to nominate the Faculty's top ranked eligible graduand.
- The Award Committee will meet in February to consider examiners' reports, copies of theses for eligible graduates and supporting statements of the principal supervisors
- The Award Committee will make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor's Award by **March 4**.

9. Communication

Announcement of the award will be made by the Vice-Chancellor by **March 11**.

The award will be announced individually, normally at the graduation of the awardee or next available graduation ceremony, and will be listed in the Graduation booklet.

University Relations will be responsible for the publicity for the award.

10. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed within five years of its approval. The review of this Policy will be initiated by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research). Any staff member wishing to suggest improvements to the policy is invited to forward their suggestions to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).