The below information is for HDR students enrolled under the **College of Business, Government and Law** and contains the college-specific requirements and processes for the HDR Milestones. This information can be used in conjunction with the Office of Graduate Research webpage and the HDR Policies and Procedures and alongside the CBGL Confirmation of Candidature Research Proposal Guidelines and CBGL Independent Assessor Form for Confirmation of Candidatures.

Milestones are a compulsory part of HDR candidature and are required to be completed by HDR students and their supervisors regularly (usually annually) based on the students individual HDR timeline. This process is to ensure that HDR students are progressing at an appropriate rate for their stage of candidature and effectively working towards a timely completion of their degree. Milestones provide constructive feedback throughout the HDR study design, analysis and write up from independent scholars. They also provide a means for HDR students to highlight and track HDR achievements and successes, showcase professional development completed, practice oral and written communication skills and plan the next 6 to 12 months of candidature.

Major Milestones refers to the Confirmation of Candidature, Mid Candidature Review and Final Thesis Review. **Interim Milestones** refers to the Interim Confirmation of Candidature, Interim Mid Candidature Review, Interim Final Thesis Review and Interim Post Final Thesis Review (these are only required for Part Time students and/or those enrolled beyond the Final Thesis Review).

Milestone Requirements
There are three parts to every major milestone: first a milestone review panel is established (see details below), second the submission of written work and third an oral presentation. [*Note: Interim Milestones do not require an oral presentation*]. In addition, milestones must be logged through Inspire, the online HDR progression system. Students can initiate their milestone in Inspire, including the uploading of written work, prior to their presentation, but the online form cannot be submitted until after the presentation has been completed. All components of the milestone review should be completed before the due date indicated in Inspire.

To complete the milestone, students will require the following mandatory materials (all should be uploaded to Inspire):

- **Written Work** - for example Research Proposal or Draft (Confirmation of Candidature or Interim Pre-CofC), Draft Chapters (Mid Candidature and Interim Reviews) or Draft Full Thesis (Final Thesis Review & Interim Post Final Thesis Review). For students undertaking their Confirmation of Candidature, please consult the **CBGL Confirmation of Candidature Research Proposal Guidelines**.
- **Turnitin Report** in accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy (Access HDR Turnitin box via the REST FLO site – self enrol at https://canvas.flinders.edu.au/enroll/FM8AWN)
- Copy of relevant **Ethics Approval** (if required)
- **Evidence of Oral Presentation** with **Written Feedback** – (further information in Oral Presentation section below). Presentation must be completed and written feedback needs to be uploaded into Inspire by the Student.
- **Completion Plan –** a plan must be uploaded into Inspire. The OGR has templates available Completion Plan (DOCX 12KB) or gantt chart (XLSX 787KB)
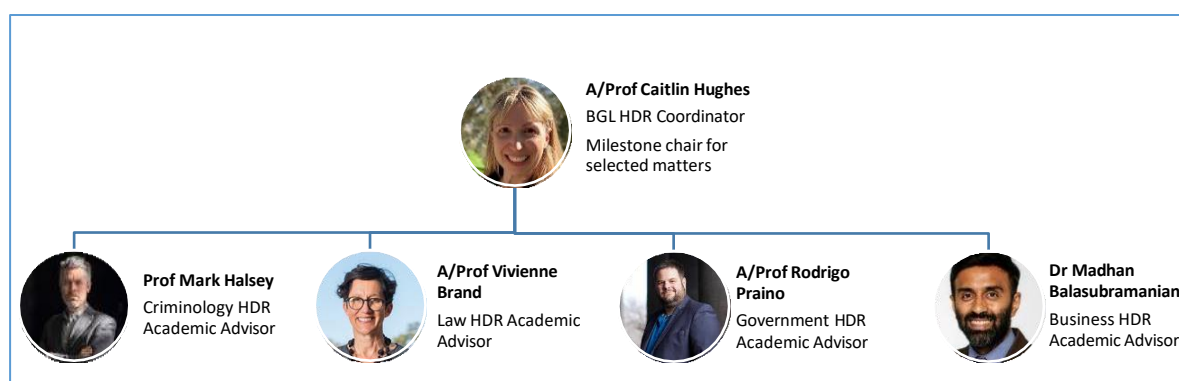
For each milestone, the student and supervisor must complete the necessary forms through Inspire. HDR students must complete and upload all requirements of the milestone **before signing off** on the milestone form in Inspire. Supervisors do not have the ability to upload documents into milestones.

It is your responsibility to create a digital Data Management Planner (DMP). For more information refer to the Library resources for researchers – Research Data.

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Version 1.5 March 2024

Updated Milestone Processes from May 2023

Prior to March 2020 CBGL used an HDR Coordinator and HDR Academic Advisors (Discipline Advisors) to oversee the milestone process. In March 2020 the process was centralised to one HDR Coordinator and no HDR Academic Advisors. This was partly due to COVID and partly due to a fall in HDR numbers. The college has since seen a significant increase in enrolments. As such from May 2023 CBGL is reinstating the role of HDR Academic Advisors for milestones whose roles will be taken on by Research Leads. Henceforth HDR Milestones will ordinarily be chaired by a Discipline HDR Academic Advisor (Research Lead). The main exception is when the HDR student is being supervised by the HDR Academic Advisor or there are complex matters. In this instance the HDR Coordinator will conduct the review. (The HDR Coordinator will continue to assume responsibility for all other HDR activities within and outside the college.) Reinstating HDR Academic Advisors into milestone processes will ensure stronger ties with discipline leads, build consistency with other colleges and foster sustainable growth and on-time completion of HDR students.

Figure 1: The CBGL HDR Milestone Team

A/Prof Caitlin Hughes
BGL HDR Coordinator
Milestone chair for selected matters

Prof Mark Halsey
Criminology HDR Academic Advisor

A/Prof Vivienne Brand
Law HDR Academic Advisor

A/Prof Rodrigo Praino
Government HDR Academic Advisor

Dr Madhan Balasubramanian
Business HDR Academic Advisor

Oral Presentation (Major Milestones)
For each milestone review, the HDR Academic Advisor or HDR Coordinator, in consultation with the supervisors, will establish a **milestone review panel** composed of the following two members:

- the discipline HDR Academic Advisor (or HDR Coordinator where the HDR Academic Advisor is also the supervisor or where there are complex matters); and
- an independent assessor. The independent assessor is defined as someone who is qualified to comment on the student's progress and research area, but who is not part of the student's supervisory team. They must hold a qualification equivalent to or higher than the degree being undertaken. Ordinarily they will be a Flinders academic staff member and on the supervisor register, so they are familiar with the expectations of a Flinders HDR degree. But they may be external to Flinders e.g. have adjunct status another tertiary institution. In such cases the independent cannot later serve as an examiner. Ordinarily the same independent assessor will be used throughout the HDR candidature to build continuity.

A review meeting will be scheduled involving the panel, the student, and the supervisory team. Panel members will receive all documentation at least one week in advance (including the research proposal for confirmation of candidature and thesis chapters or full thesis draft for later milestones and a timeline for completion). If a formal presentation is to be given by the student, other College staff and students will be invited to attend (the presentation component only).

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The review meeting will proceed as follows:

1. The student provides a 15-20 minute presentation outlining their HDR progress over the last 12 months. In the case of a Confirmation of Candidature milestone, the student must present their research proposal. In the case of a Mid Candidature review the student provides preliminary or final results or analysis chapter. In the case of a Final Thesis Review the student outlines their overarching findings and original contribution to knowledge.
2. Questions and feedback for the student (from the audience first and then from the independent assessor and HDR Academic Advisors/HDR Coordinator)
3. The panel meet with the student (without supervisors present)
4. The panel meet with the supervisory team (without the student present)
5. The panel meet to discuss progress and to make a decision. If a decision cannot be reached, the HDR Coordinator should be consulted.
6. The panel's decision is communicated to the student and supervisory team verbally then confirmed in writing in the inspire system.
7. Written comments and feedback from the independent assessor will also be forwarded to the student and to the supervisory team as soon as possible (to be uploaded by the student under the 'independent assessor's comments' section of the milestone). The CBGL Independent Assessor form must be completed for all Confirmation of Candidatures.

The panel must decide whether the student should be allowed to proceed with their studies as intended, or if modifications to their research program may be necessary. In general, the panel will choose from one of the following recommendations:

1. **Continuation of Candidature -** The student's progress is satisfactory, and they should continue with their studies, or, in the case of a Confirmation of Candidature, they should begin their research program as proposed (subject to minor revisions if necessary).
2. **Upgrade to PhD** (if currently a Masters by Research) – This option is only used at the Interim Pre-Confirmation or Confirmation of Candidature Milestone. The student has demonstrated that the project has the scope and scale required of a PhD and the student is capable of completing a PhD in the expected duration of candidature. Student and supervisor will also be required to complete the 'Degree Transfer or Significant Change to Project' form in Inspire.
3. **3 Month probationary period to resubmit the milestone**: The student's progress is At Risk or significant modifications to the research program are necessary. The student may be asked to submit a revised draft, revised chapters, or a revised research proposal, as the case may be, and/or deliver another presentation within 3 months (exclusive of any leave).
4. **Downgrade to Masters** (if currently a PhD student) – The student's progress is not considered to be at the standard of a PhD, but is at the standard of a Masters by Research. The student and supervisor will be required to complete the 'Degree Transfer or Significant Change to Project' form in Inspire.
5. **Recommend Ongoing or Escalating Difficulty Progressing** - The student's progress is unsatisfactory. The student's progress will be evaluated and may be subject to an Interim Milestone or a formal review.

Once the review and review meeting have been concluded, the CBGL HDR Academic Advisor or College HDR Coordinator will lodge the decision through Inspire. The student will get a notification from Inspire with details of the college recommendation and a link to view their completed milestone.