



HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH

Admission Selection and Scholarship Allocation Guidelines for 2011 Intake

Admission Selection

Admission into a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) at UniSA is based on meeting:

- 1) the admission criteria; and
- 2) the minimum English language entry requirements (International applicants only).

Due to the increasing demand for places, admission is a competitive process, based on academic merit and research area as determined by the quality assessment model (see below).

All applications submitted to UniSA for admission into a Higher Degree by Research will therefore undergo an eligibility assessment and quality assessment.

Note. The University reserves the right to decline an applicant based on appropriate supervision being unavailable.

Admission Criteria

Applications must meet the admission criteria as set out in Section 1 of the *Academic Regulations for Higher Degrees by Research*, which can be found at:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/policies/policies/resrchr/res10-regs.asp#1>.

The equivalence of international qualifications to UniSA admission criteria is determined primarily using NARIC (the National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom). NARIC provides information on international qualifications from over 180 countries worldwide. For further information see:

<http://www.naric.org.uk/>. NOOSR (National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition, see <http://aei.gov.au/AEI/QualificationsRecognition/Information/CEP.htm>) will also be used to determine equivalence for specific countries. Where NARIC and NOOSR provide differing positions, the one most advantageous to the student will be accepted. Appeals can be made to use NOOSR to examine equivalence for applicants from other countries on a case by case basis through the normal appeals process.

Honours equivalence is determined according to Appendix 1 of this document.

English Language Entry Requirements

For admission into a HDR at UniSA, international applicants from non-English speaking backgrounds are expected to be proficient in English. The University's preferred English Language test is the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). However, English proficiency can also be demonstrated in other ways. The current English Language entry requirements can be found at:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/resdegrees/howtoapply/engreq.asp>.

In 2011, the minimum English language entry requirements are changing for some HDR programs (see: <http://www.unisa.edu.au/resdegrees/howtoapply/engreq.asp>). The new requirements will apply to those who apply for admission after 1 January 2011.



Offers of admission may be made conditional upon meeting the minimum English language entry requirement.

The University may request the completion of an IELTS test (above other methods of meeting English language requirements) as part of an offer of admission.

Quality Assessment Model

To assess the quality of an applicant, each application is scored out of 100 points based on the following quality dimensions:

Undergraduate achievement

Referees' reports

Area of research

Most recent degree

Relevant work experience

Each application is scored according to two scoring formulae or 'streams', namely:

Stream 1 – Study Record

Stream 2 – Return to study

The scoring formula for each stream is provided below:

Quality dimension	Maximum points		Total
Undergraduate Degree	50 points		
Referees' Reports	10		
Research Strength	10	70	
PLUS either			
STREAM 1 (Study Record)			
Most recent degree	25		
Publications	5	30	100
OR			
STREAM 2 (Return to Study)			
Publications	20		
Relevant professional experience	10	30	100

Scoring is based on information provided within the application and the supporting documents submitted by the applicant. If the required supporting documents are not provided within the specified timeframe, the application will not progress to quality assessment.

Note. Evidence of *all* qualifications detailed in the application must be provided.



Undergraduate Degree

The score for *Undergraduate Degree* is based on the grades as provided on the certified undergraduate academic transcripts supplied.

The preferred scoring method is based on percentage grades. If percentage grades are provided on the transcript, they are converted to UniSA equivalent percentage grades (see below). Once converted, the number of High Distinctions, Distinctions, Credits, Passes and Fails are entered into a formula which calculates the weighted average and awards a score out of 50 points. The higher the grade, the higher the score.

UniSA percentage grades and grade point averages and weighted score:

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Weighted Score
High Distinction	85 – 100	7	50
Distinction	75 – 84	6	40
Credit	65 – 74	5	30
High Pass (P1)	55 – 64	4.5	20
Low Pass (P2)	50 – 54	4	20
Fail	Less than 50		0

If percentage grades are not provided on the academic transcript or cannot be converted to UniSA equivalence, the Grade Point Average (GPA) is used. In this case, the GPA is converted to UniSA equivalent GPA and entered into the formula to calculate a score out of 50 points.

When scoring *Undergraduate Degree*, the grades relating to subjects/courses/classes undertaken in the first 12-months (full-time equivalent) of an undergraduate degree are excluded if they can be identified. If an Honours year can be clearly identified, this too is excluded and scored as part of *Most Recent Degree* (see below).

Only undergraduate degrees that are completed or currently-in-progress (e.g., 'with honours' programs) are scored.

If more than one undergraduate degree has been completed, the most appropriate undergraduate degree for the proposed research will be scored. If more than one degree is relevant, the best score will be used.

Double degrees (i.e., undergraduate degrees completed at the same time) are scored as one degree.

A non-degree first qualification, such as a Diploma of Teaching or Diploma of Nursing, can be taken as the undergraduate degree.

Subjects/courses/classes that are not graded shall not be included in the calculations.

Referee Reports

Applicants are requested to nominate two academic referees. Each referee, at the invitation of the applicant, must provide a written report on the appropriate form directly to UniSA by the supporting documents closing date. If two referee reports are not supplied by the supporting documents closing date, the application will not progress to quality assessment. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their referees have supplied reports on the correct form by the closing date. To ensure authenticity, referee reports are not accepted from the applicant.



Each referee report comprises 50% of the total *Referee Reports* score. Two sections of the report are used for scoring: Section E (*Research Potential*) and Section F (*Ability to complete the Higher Degree by Research*). Other sections of the form are not scored, but are used by the University to check for consistency and for verification of the UniSA's academic's assessment of the applicant.

Research Strength

Research Strength is based on the applicant's nominated Principal Supervisor. Where an applicant has not nominated a Principal Supervisor in their application or has nominated an inappropriate supervisor, the most appropriate available supervisor for the nominated research topic will be assigned.

The scoring of *Research Strength* is based on the assigned principal supervisor being a supported (active) researcher and/or a member of a University recognised research concentration. Five points are allocated for Supported Researcher status in the previous calendar year and five points are allocated for current research concentration membership (either Full or Associate).

Information about UniSA's Supported Researcher scheme can be found at:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/res/data/supres.asp>

Information about UniSA's Research Concentrations can be found at:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/research/concentrations/default.asp>

Note. In the case of applications for entry into a Professional Doctorate by Research, it is expected that a potential supervisor be assigned according to the proposed research area. While it is acknowledged that supervision requirements may change during candidature, it is expected that supervision capacity/capability has been taken into consideration during the assessment of an applicant.

Most recent degree

Most Recent Degree involves scoring the honours or other post-graduate qualification. The score is based on information provided in the application and the certified academic transcripts. Points are allocated as follows:

<i>Most recent degree</i>	<i>Points</i>
Honours 1 or Masters by Research	25
Honours 2A or Masters by Coursework with a research component	20
Masters by Coursework - no research component	15
Graduate Diploma	10
Prior research degree candidacy	5

Normally, the degree most recently completed (or currently-in-progress) is scored. However, if this is likely to disadvantage the applicant, an earlier degree may be given precedence. A case can be made for a different degree to be scored as the most recent degree to the Manager: Research Education and Training (see the Appeals Process below).

All Masters by Coursework degrees with a research component (as evidenced by terms on the academic transcript such as 'project', 'thesis', 'dissertation', etc.) will be awarded 20 points. A case may be made to award 25 points based on evidence that the degree consisted of greater than 50% research and the thesis is of exceptional quality. Evidence must be provided from the originating University as to the quantity of



research and coursework and an independent assessment (the Dean, Research¹ or Research Degrees Coordinator²) of the full thesis to enable comparison with a Masters by Research degree.

A Masters degree with no evidence of having had a research component (e.g., the academic transcript lacks evidence of research) will be awarded 15 points. A case may be made to award 20 points based on evidence that the degree contained a research component. This must be based on a written statement from the awarding institution that the degree contained research. This statement must be submitted by the supporting documents closing date so as not to disadvantage the assessment of the application.

In the case of Honours degrees currently-in-progress, a provisional score of 25 (i.e., Honours 1) is automatically awarded. Scores will be adjusted downward in the event that Honours 1 is not achieved.

In the case of Masters degrees currently-in-progress, scores are awarded based on the research component (see above). Offers of admission will normally be conditional upon the successful completion of the Masters degree. If the Masters degree is not completed, the score will be adjusted.

Publications

Applicants are asked to provide evidence of publications they have authored or co-authored (e.g., abstract in English, details of publication and copy of the front page). If sufficient evidence of a publication is not provided, the publication may not be considered for scoring.

The types of publications that are considered and their corresponding weighted score can be found in Appendix 2.

A publication must be accepted by the journal for publication prior to the application closing date. Publications submitted but not yet accepted cannot be considered.

A publication is awarded full points, regardless of the number of authors.

For Stream 1, publications will total no more than 5 points. For Stream 2, publications will total no more than 20 points.

The University will conduct appropriate quality checks on the Publications listed by the applicant and determine the 'relevance' to the discipline area for which they have applied. If it is determined that they are of no relevance to the discipline area, they may be discounted.

Professional Experience

Professional Experience is scored according to the length of time spent in professional work that is relevant to the higher degree by research program for which the applicant is applying. It is based on information provided in the application and the applicant's Resume or CV. 'Relevance' is at the discretion of the University.

¹ Dean, Research also refers to their equivalents in Institutes and the Centre for Regional Engagement.

² Research Degrees Coordinator also refers to their equivalents, including Research Education: Portfolio Leaders and Program Directors: Professional Doctorate (Research).



Points are allocated as follows:

<i>Length of experience (FTE)</i>	<i>Points</i>
6 to 12 months	2
1 to 2 years	4
2 to 3 years	6
3 to 4 years	8
4 to 5 years	9
5 years or more	10

Part time work will be based on the full time equivalent.

Quality Assessment Threshold

Due to the increasing demand for HDR places at UniSA, admission is a competitive process. In determining whether to offer admission to an applicant, the applicant's Quality Assessment Score (out of 100) will be taken into consideration.

For 2011 admission, the Scholarships Panel (or equivalent) of the Research Degrees Committee has determined a minimum quality assessment threshold.

Minimum Quality Assessment Threshold for 2011 commencement (and beyond)

<i>Division</i>	<i>Minimum Quality Threshold</i>
Division of Business	55
Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences	55
Division of Health Sciences	55
Division of Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment	55
Institute for Telecommunications Research	70
Ian Wark Research Institute	55
Centre for Regional Engagement (Whyalla)	55

Where applicants meet the admission criteria and the minimum English language entry requirements but fail to meet the quality threshold, an appeal may be lodged (refer Appeals Process below).



Scholarship Allocation

Scholarship allocation is a competitive process, based on academic merit and area of research as determined by the quality assessment model (see above).

The University offers a range of scholarships for HDR students. Information about the scholarships offered at UniSA can be found at: <http://www.unisa.edu.au/resdegrees/scholarships/default.asp>.

Currently, UniSA undertakes three major scholarship rounds each year:

- 1) Domestic Scholarship Round – Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) and UniSA Postgraduate Awards (closing date: 31 October);
- 2) International Scholarship Round 1 – International Postgraduate Research Scholarships and University President’s Scholarships (closing date: 31 August);
- 3) International Scholarship Round 2 – University President’s Scholarships (closing date: 28 February).

Scholarships allocated as part of a major scholarship round are awarded based on eligibility and ranked order of merit. For each scholarship round, an Order of Merit list is produced based on the quality assessment score of applicants, ranked in order of score from highest to lowest (See Order of Merit List, below).

Applicants who are unsuccessful for a scholarship in a given round may apply to be considered for a future round. However, a new application must be submitted.

Students who receive an Admission Only offer because they apply before a scholarship round opens, may be offered a ‘holding’ scholarship by an Institute or Division in order to retain them. This ‘holding’ scholarship, when offered to international students needs to include tuition fees, Overseas Health Cover and a Living Allowance.

All students must submit a new application within the published timeframe if they wish to be considered for an APA, USAPA, UPS or IPRS. It must be understood that the Division/Institute will be obliged to continue funding the student for the standard scholarship duration if the applicant is unable to obtain a centrally funded scholarship.

Current students who are not receiving a scholarship may apply and be considered for a scholarship, but must submit a new application by the appropriate closing date. Current students who are receiving a University-funded scholarship at APA (or equivalent) base rate (or greater) are not eligible to apply in future UniSA scholarship rounds.

Offers of scholarship must be accepted and the student enrolled in the year for which the offer was made. A deferment may be awarded on a case-by-case basis.

Current international scholarship holders who gain permanent residency are automatically transferred to a domestic scholarship without needing to reapply.



Open and close dates for scholarship application

Round	Scholarships	Open Date	Close Date
Domestic Scholarship Round (for commencement in the following year)	Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) UniSA postgraduate Awards (USAPA) Rural and Isolated Scholarship UniSA Indigenous Scholarship	1 August	31 October
International Scholarship Round 1 (for commencement in Study Period 1)	International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS) University President's Scholarships (UPS)	1 June	31 August
International Scholarship Round 2 (for commencement in Study Period 2)	University President's Scholarships (UPS)	1 December	28 February
AusAID and Endeavour Round (for commencement in the following year)	Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) Endeavour International Awards	1 February	30 April

For other university-awarded scholarships, application open and close dates (where applicable) are advertised on the scholarship web page (see: <http://www.unisa.edu.au/resdegrees/scholarships/default.asp>).

Applications submitted outside of the open and close dates will be processed as admission only applications.

Applicants who are fully funded by an external agency (e.g., a Government sponsored international applicant) may apply at any time.

Order of Merit list

Following the closing date of each major scholarship round, all applications are assessed against the admission and English language entry criteria and scored according to the quality assessment model.

An Order of Merit list comprising all eligible applicants is produced. Applicants are ranked in order of quality assessment score from highest to lowest.

The Order of Merit list is ratified by the Scholarships Panel (or equivalent) of the Research Degrees Committee. Once an order of merit list has been ratified, changes will only be made based on errors in scoring as confirmed via the Appeals process (see below) or when finalising provisional scores (e.g., honours).

The Order of Merit list is confidential and its distribution limited to members of Scholarships Panel (or equivalent).

Scholarships are allocated to applicants who met eligibility in ranked order.

Note. USAPA and UPS scholarships require the approval of Divisional/School financial support. In such cases, scholarships are allocated to supported applicants in ranked order of merit.



Appeals Process

An applicant through the nominated supervisor or RDC/RE:PL may appeal against the outcome of an application assessment.

The appeal must be made in writing to the Manager: Research Education and Training for consideration by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The appeal must provide evidence and be supported by the relevant Research Degrees Coordinator (RDC/RE:PL) and the Dean, Research.

Where an applicant submits an appeal directly to the Manager: Research Education and Training, support will be sought from the Dean, Research and RDC/RE:PL by the Manager (RET) prior to presenting the case to the Dean of Graduate Studies for consideration. If Dean, Research and/or RDC/RE:PL support is not gained, the appeal will be considered unsuccessful and the applicant informed accordingly.

An appeal based on the underscoring of an application due to supporting documents not being provided by the document closing date will not be considered.

Appeals must be received by the Appeals Closing Date. The Closing Date for appeals relating to the outcome of an application is 20 days after receiving notification of the application outcome.

The Dean of Graduate Studies will respond to the supported appeal within 20 working days.

The Dean of Graduate Studies may determine that:

- The application be re-assessed and re-considered for admission and/or scholarship; or
- The application was correctly assessed.

The decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies will be final.



Appendix 1 – Guide for Honours Equivalence

<i>Highest actual qualification</i>	<i>PLUS</i>	<i>Publications (based on score /20) or Prof Experience, or combination of both</i>	<i>EQUALS</i>	<i>Resulting Honours Equivalence</i>	<i>Degree eligibility</i>
H1 actual	+	N/A	=	H1	PhD
Masters by Research	+	N/A	=	H1	PhD
H2A or Masters by Coursework with research component	+	≥ 5	=	H1	PhD
H2A or Masters by Coursework with research component	+	< 5	=	H2A	PhD
Masters by Coursework with no research component	+	≥ 10	=	H1	PhD
Masters by Coursework with no research component	+	< 10	=	H2A	PhD
Graduate Diploma or H2B	+	≥ 15	=	H1	PhD
Graduate Diploma or H2B	+	≥ 5	=	H2A	PhD
Graduate Diploma or H2B	+	< 5	=	H2B	Masters by Research
Graduate Certificate, or Bachelor Degree, Double Bachelor Degree, or H3	+	≥ 25	=	H1	PhD
Graduate Certificate, or Bachelor Degree, Double Bachelor Degree, or H3	+	≥ 15	=	H2A	PhD
Graduate Certificate, or Bachelor Degree, Double Bachelor Degree, or H3	+	≥ 10	=	H2B	Masters by Research
Graduate Certificate, or Bachelor Degree, Double Bachelor Degree, or H3	+	< 10	=	None	Not eligible



Appendix 2 – Publications

On the application form, applicants are asked to provide information in English and proof of publications (abstract in English, details of the publication and copy of the front page). If this detail is not provided, the publication will not be considered as part of the scholarship ranking.

Publication Classification	Weighting
A – Books	
A1- Authored Research Book	25.0
A2 – Authored Other Scholarly Book	10.0
A3A – Scholarly Book Edited	5.0
A3B - Other Book Edited	2.5
B - Book Chapter	5.0
C – Journal Articles	
C1 – Refereed article in a scholarly journal	5.0
C2 – Non-refereed articles in a scholarly or professional journal	1.5
E – Conference Publication	
E1 – Full written paper – refereed	5.0
E2 – Full written paper – non refereed	1.5
E3 – Extract/abstract of paper	0.5
E4A – Edited volume of Refereed conference proceedings	5.0
E4B - Edited volume of Non-Refereed conference proceedings	2.5
J. Other Creative Works	
J1 – Commissioned and peer reviewed creative works J2 – Refereed exhibition of creative artefacts	5.0
J3 – Group exhibition or awarded competition entries J4 – Purchase of work J5 – Professional awards and commendations	1.5
J6 – Invited/Commissioned curation of an exhibition J7 – Invited catalogue essay J8 – Major review of creative work	1.0
J9 – Non-refereed exhibition	1.5
PATENTS	5.0

The total score for relevant refereed publications is initially calculated, based on a maximum score of 10.

The resulting score is then adjusted as follows:

Stream 1: ÷ 2 resulting in a score based on maximum of 5

Stream 2: x 2 resulting in a score based on maximum of 20

Scores are to be rounded to two decimal points.