Top 10 tips

1. Take responsibility for your own research. You will be more independent than honours or coursework students. Take the initiative to drive your research.

2. Make the most of opportunities to travel, attend conferences and speak about your research. Learn from experienced researchers and your peers. Listen to professionals in your field.


4. Publish along the way: 2-4 publications during a PhD and 1-2 publications for a masters.

5. Work abroad/collaborate. Get a world view of your field. Collaborations may lead to postdoctoral opportunities and can help to build your reputation abroad.

6. Write grant proposals for travel and additional funding. Present all requests for funding professionally, even the smallest grant.

7. Get involved in committees, seminar series, discussion groups and forums. Be active not passive. Talk to your supervisor often.

8. Take courses designed for research trainees. Our Research Education Support Activities (RESA) and ATN e-Grad School provide opportunities to develop key skills and knowledge. Start early and build skills over the course of your research.

9. Work hard if your research is your passion, this will be easy. Look at other researchers and fellow students who are successful – they all work hard.

10. Plan and organise. You will need good time management skills. Set your own deadlines and keep them. Keep a plan for the next 3, 6, 12 months. Keep a daily journal or laboratory book.
Welcome to the University of South Australia and to an exciting, problem-solving research environment that will make your research training both stimulating and rewarding.

The University is committed to providing you with excellent supervisors, leading researchers and strong research infrastructure. Research degree students are major contributors to the University’s research output, and we value that contribution. Thank you for choosing us, and enjoy what most graduates remember as one of the most exciting times of their lives.

Stay informed

Student email

Updates, opportunities and notifications will be sent to your University student email account, so make sure you monitor this regularly.

Research Edge

Research Edge is a monthly newsletter for research degree students, focusing on achievements, opportunities and news. Keep an eye on your student email for notification of new issues, and take a look at what is going on in the research student space at the University of South Australia.

The research degree students website

The research degree students website provides information and resources to help you on your way. From degree milestones and important dates to opportunities on offer and information about support services, this website is one of your chief information sources.

myUniSA student portal

One handy way to navigate the University’s web environment is to use your myUniSA student portal.

You can access myUniSA from the University’s homepage (click on the ‘Login’ link at the top of the page and select ‘Students’). Log in with your username and password, then select the ‘My research’ tab to go to relevant resources.
# Your degree milestones

## Masters by research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0 - 6 months</th>
<th>6 - 18 months</th>
<th>18 months - 2 years</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commencing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Continuing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Completing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>First month</strong></td>
<td><strong>6 - 18 months</strong></td>
<td><strong>18 months - 2 years</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>You will begin with provisional enrolment</td>
<td>Complete Review of Progress (April / October)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within the first 2 weeks, meet with supervisors and complete Research Induction Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend University orientation [event or web resources] and local induction [division, school or centre]</td>
<td>Consider applying for travel grants</td>
<td>Aim for publication 2</td>
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<td>If part-time, consider applying for Completion Scholarship</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1 - 6 months</strong></td>
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<td><strong>18 months - 2 years</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Statement of Agreement</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Research Proposal, which leads to your candidature being confirmed and end of provisional enrolment</td>
<td>Undertake RESA workshops</td>
<td>Undertake RESA workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit Research Proposal to Library</td>
<td>Consider applying for travel grants</td>
<td>Aim for publication 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete ethics approval process, if necessary</td>
<td>Begin writing your thesis</td>
<td>Be aware scholarships will end after 2 years (if applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete first Review of Progress (April / October)</td>
<td>Review chapters with principal supervisor</td>
<td>Begin discussions with your supervisor(s) about possible examiners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish key milestones with supervisor(s)</td>
<td>Your supervisor(s) will nominate examiners</td>
<td>Your thesis will then be examined</td>
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<td>Your thesis will then be examined</td>
<td>Following examination, it’s time to prepare your final thesis, with corrections if required</td>
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<td>Submit final thesis</td>
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<td>Your completion will be reported to Research Degrees Committee</td>
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<td>Your award will be conferred at University Council</td>
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<td>Attend graduation</td>
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**Note:** These timelines are indicative and based on full-time enrolment. The timelines will be doubled for part-time enrolment (excluding Reviews of Progress, which must be undertaken by all students every 6 months). Exegesis-based assessment follows the same timelines as thesis-based assessment.

RESA: Research Education Support Activities – please visit unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/workshops for full listing of opportunities

RTS: Research Training Scheme (the Australian government funding scheme for domestic research degree student tuition fees)

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**RTS and scholarships end**

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Submit thesis

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Expected submission

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21 months - 2 years

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Commencing

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Continuing

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Completing

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Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)*

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<td><strong>3 - 4 years</strong></td>
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*Professional doctorate degrees contain 18 units of coursework – this is negotiated with your REPL (or equivalent), and will affect timelines.*
Getting started

As a new research degree student, there are several key things to complete in the first few weeks and months of your candidature.

**Local area induction**

[unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones](unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones)

Within two weeks of commencing you need to arrange to meet your supervisors for a welcome meeting.

This welcome meeting is to complete your Research Induction Plan, which sets out an initial schedule for your research degree, as well as to negotiate the activities you will undertake, and discuss your respective expectations. These expectations will be around the roles of you and your supervisors, and will involve agreement on the important matters of plagiarism, intellectual property (IP) and authorship on publications.

This is a good time for you to be clear about your supervisors’ responsibilities as principal, co- or associate supervisors of your candidature.

**Research Proposal and Statement of Agreement**

[unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones](unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones)

Within six months of commencing full-time study (or twelve months of part-time study), all research degree students must submit a comprehensive Research Proposal and Statement of Agreement as the formal requirement for confirmation of candidature.

Your Research Proposal will provide a more comprehensive guide to the literature, method, methodology, structure and timeframe of your research.

The Research Proposal is used to assess whether the research program is feasible, and also helps determine if progress has been satisfactory. It is an action plan for candidature and a major reference point in the planning and review process. The Research Proposal is aligned with the Statement of Agreement, and will explain how the Research Degree Graduate Qualities will be developed.

Your supervisors’ input into the development of the Research Proposal is crucial.

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**Acronyms and definitions**

The term Research Education: Portfolio Leader (REPL) also refers to their equivalents, including Research Degree Coordinator, Associate Head of School: Research, and Program Director: Professional Doctorate (Research).

The term Dean: Research also refers to their equivalents in divisions and institutes.
Getting started

Policies, regulations and codes of good practice

unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/responsibilities

It is important that you understand and comply with the policies, regulations and codes of good practice governing research degrees. This will help you know what to expect from the University, and what the University expects of you.

The University has adopted a framework of policies spanning research ethics and compliance matters. All research conducted by members of the University, including research degree students, must conform to these policies. Important policies are accessible via the research degree students website at unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/responsibilities.

The ‘Academic regulations for higher degrees by research’ cover policies relating to candidature.

The ‘Code of good practice: research degrees management and supervision’ outlines the University’s expectations of research degree supervisors, students, REPLs (or equivalent) and others involved in research education.

Ethics approval and responsible practice

unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones

It’s important to familiarise yourself with the ‘Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research’ and the ‘National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research’, which are two key documents that guide and influence the way research is conducted and managed. Both documents place great emphasis on institutional responsibilities and accountability in the conduct of ethical research, and specify the responsibilities of researchers.

Depending on your research topic you may need to submit an application for ethics approval – discuss this with your supervisors.

You should be aware of the University’s framework of policies spanning research ethics and compliance matters. If your research is covered under any of these policies you will need to apply for ethics approval from the appropriate committee.

Project support

unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/responsibilities

As a research degree student you are entitled to certain resources at the University.

The ‘Statement of minimum resources’ (accessible via the research degree students website at unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/responsibilities) outlines the minimum resources research degree students can expect to be provided with by the University throughout their candidature.

Examples of resources include access to computing and office facilities for on-campus students, photocopying and printing, and IT and technical support.

Make sure you find out what is available, and discuss any questions with your school, institute or centre.
Next steps

Once your candidature is underway, there are a few administrative aspects to keep in mind while you undertake your research.

Forms and guidelines

▷ unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/forms

Changes will occur throughout your candidature, and to get these changes implemented or actioned you will need to complete a form.

These changes may include updating your personal details, taking a leave of absence, changing your load and/or mode, or changing supervisors.

Forms and guidelines are generally linked to the relevant milestone of your research degree. All forms are available from the research degree students website.

Planning and reviewing your progress

▷ unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones

The University has a twice-yearly planning and review cycle for research degrees to monitor the progress of each student’s research project. This regular cycle assists students, supervisors and REPLs (or equivalent) to:

• document review and planning meetings (each meeting should review and build on the previous discussions)
• identify and discuss any issues or problems that arise
• enable students to plan their progress for the next six months, working towards submitting their thesis or exegesis
• ensure that the Research Degree Graduate Qualities are being achieved.

All students, whether full-time or part-time (including students on leave of absence), must complete a Review of Progress twice per year. The completed Review of Progress report is added to your student record to help keep track of how you are going.

You must make satisfactory progress during candidature to obtain approval for continued enrolment in the program (see the ‘Academic regulations for higher degrees by research’, accessible via the research degree students website at unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/responsibilities).
While it might seem like the distant future, it’s worth familiarising yourself with the later stages of your research degree, so you know what to expect.

**Writing your thesis or exegesis**

unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones

A thesis is an argument or proposition declaring a discovery or insight, based on research, which is relevant to others. It is intended to contribute new knowledge to scholarly debate.

In certain disciplines, an exegesis is submitted in conjunction with an artefact, in place of a thesis.

The research degree students website points you to comprehensive workshops and resources on how to approach writing your thesis or exegesis.

**Submission and examination**

unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones

To allow time for assessment, you are expected to submit your thesis or exegesis well before the official end of your candidature.

PhD and professional doctorate students should submit by three-and-a-half years, while masters by research students should submit by 21 months.

These timelines may be especially important for scholarship holders. PhD and professional doctorate students should keep in mind that most scholarships will end after three years. All masters by research scholarships will end after two years.

If you are an international student, make sure you understand your visa conditions and complete on time.

The research degree students website guides you through the timeline of procedures for presenting and submitting your thesis or exegesis for examination, the examination process, and graduation. Thesis/exegesis presentation and examination requirements are set out in the ‘Academic regulations for higher degrees by research’ (accessible via the research degree students website at unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/responsibilities).

As a completing research degree student you are required to submit a digital copy of your thesis or exegesis for inclusion into the UniSA Research Archive, which is online at ura.unisa.edu.au.

**Graduation**

unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones

The University Council approves conferral of all research degrees. Once your degree has been conferred you are eligible to attend graduation.

The University usually holds three rounds of graduation ceremonies each year – two rounds for all students, plus a December round for international students only.
Useful hints

**Keeping tabs on your funding and candidature**

Depending on your circumstances, you may be receiving scholarship payments or benefiting from the Research Training Scheme (RTS). It’s important to know the timelines and conditions that are attached to each.

For PhD and professional doctorate students, most scholarships end at three years, and the RTS ends at four years. For masters by research students, scholarships and the RTS will end at two years.

To make sure you don’t run out of candidature, think of your research degree like a job – take sick leave when you are sick, and recreation leave when you go on holiday. If other situations arise that may disrupt your research, chat to your supervisor or Graduate Research: SAS to find out your options. This will prevent any loss of candidature time through undocumented absence – you may appreciate this when you are writing up your thesis!

Remember that to allow time for examination, PhD and professional doctorate students are expected to submit by three-and-a-half years, while masters by research students should submit by 21 months.

**Becoming an expert**

Completing a research degree means becoming an expert in your field. It’s your opportunity to take the topic that interests you and explore it in depth. The research project is yours and it’s up to you to take charge and steer it in the directions you want to explore.

One of the best ways to develop your expertise as a research student is to demonstrate it through publications. Write about any significant findings along the way and look for ways to publish. A solid history of publications will stand you in good stead for your career beyond your research degree, as a qualified expert.

A research degree requires passion and tenacity. You’ll need a high level of independence and initiative but you don’t have to work completely alone. Seek out other students and make use of workshop opportunities and other support services.

If you’re coming to the University of South Australia from another country, you may have to adjust to the Australian research culture. Help for this is available through the Learning and Teaching Unit, Counselling Services and other support services.

**Collecting and analysing your data with NVivo**

NVivo is a software package which helps you access, manage, shape and analyse detailed textual and/or multimedia data by removing manual tasks like classifying, sorting and arranging information. NVivo software can examine virtually any qualitative or textual information, from in-depth interview and focus group transcripts to documents, field or case notes.

The licence fees for NVivo are subsidised by the University, so make sure you apply to have the software installed.

More information is available at [unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones](http://unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/milestones), under ‘Data collection & analysis’.
Enrich your research

Scholarships and overseas research opportunities

▷ unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/scholarships

There are a number of scholarships you can apply for during your candidature.

A travel grant would assist you to present your research at an international conference, gather data in another country, or visit an overseas research institution. University-wide opportunities include International Travel Grants and the Maurice de Rohan International Scholarship.

Other scholarships offer opportunities to study in certain countries or at specified institutions.

Ability grants are available to students who have a disability or long-term medical condition.

Completion Scholarships provide funding of up to six months’ living allowance for domestic research degree students nearing the end of their degree – part-time students are the usual recipients.

Seminars and presentations

The University’s schools, divisions, institutes and centres run face-to-face events specifically for research degree students. Make sure you attend any relevant research presentations or seminars as these will provide an induction into the research culture of your local area.

Your local research support staff can provide information on workshops, colloquia, seminars and special lectures, and advise on the administration and management of your research degree.

Does your research have commercial potential?

▷ itek.com.au

ITEK Ventures is the University’s technology commercialisation company, and can help your research benefit society. Their mission is to facilitate the translation of outcomes from research into products and services that create a commercial return and have a positive impact on society.

ITEK’s commercial managers work with the University’s researchers as part of a team, and help with assessing, managing and marketing research outcomes. They are always keen to hear about your ideas.

Get in touch for key services such as commercial development, IP management, legal advice and industry engagement.
Workshops and resources

Research Education Support Activities (RESA)

You are not alone! The University offers the RESA program to help you develop key research skills and knowledge. You can access RESA directly via unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/workshops, as well as via the myUniSA student portal or via the 'Workshops & resources' link on the left menu of the research degree students website.

Getting off to a good start with your candidature and your research project means you are more likely to complete your degree successfully and on time, so make sure you take advantage of these offerings.

How to get maximum benefit from RESA

As a commencing student, you are strongly encouraged to participate in RESA on campus or online. Workshops and writers’ circles will provide invaluable assistance.

As a continuing or completing student, you are advised to determine your specific needs with your supervisor(s) during your Reviews of Progress and other meetings.

Throughout your research degree, visit the RESA website regularly to explore what’s on offer. Resources and workshops are grouped into relevant categories, and both online and University-wide opportunities are also listed.

On-campus workshops

On-campus workshops are held throughout the year on all campuses and cover important aspects of the research degree process and how to be successful. Some RESA offerings are appropriate for all research students, while others are more specific and designed for broad disciplinary groupings.

Workshops in disciplinary groupings tend to be offered in series rather than as one-off workshops. It is important to attend as many workshops in a series as possible to gain maximum benefit. Workshops delivered by Librarians take you beyond Google to a wide range of quality information resources provided by the Library to support you in undertaking a literature or systematic review, keeping up to date with the latest research, publishing, or applying for grants.

English language support is offered to students for whom English is an additional language.

Online materials

Online materials include dedicated online workshops and research guides, resources provided to students attending on-campus workshops, and offerings beyond RESA such as e-Grad School. Dip in and out of these materials at your convenience.

Research Education Team

The Research Education Team in the Learning and Teaching Unit (LTU) provides on-campus workshops, online resources and individual advice and assistance to PhD, professional doctorate and masters by research candidates and supervisors. Before seeking one-to-one assistance, it’s always a good idea to talk with your supervisor.
Workshops and resources

Library resources and services help you to research faster and smarter

▷ library.unisa.edu.au/researchers

The Library is your partner in research, offering a wide range of services and resources to help you through every phase of your research project. Access to these resources and further information about services is available from library.unisa.edu.au/researchers.

Contact your Academic Library Services team via library.unisa.edu.au/researchers/your-library-team to arrange an appointment, to discuss your research needs, or if you have any questions about Library services or resources.

Specific help includes:

- Searching the literature
- Collaborating with other researchers
- Publishing your research
- Managing your references
- Keeping up to date
- UniSA Research Archive (URA)

e-Grad School (eGSA)

▷ unisa.edu.au/researchstudents/workshops (go to ‘Developing your career’ section)

e-Grad School online programs target areas of importance to researchers. A number of these programs are moderated – participants from different universities work together online with a moderator who facilitates interactivity and communication within the group. Some programs can be undertaken independently.

Topics include employability skills, research methodology, and maximising your career.

Places for these programs are limited to 15 per module per university, so once the workshop is advertised, get in quickly to secure a place.
Getting help

**Supervisors**

Your supervisors should be your first contact for any issues that arise – they will be able to provide advice and point you in the right direction.

**At your school**

Your school research staff will be able to help with many enquiries about your candidature, and are a good place to start with questions. Also at your school, your Research Education: Portfolio Leader (REPL)* is responsible for all matters related to your supervision. You and your supervisors will work with your local area coordinator on Reviews of Progress and any issues that need resolving.

**In your division**

Your division office has staff dedicated to research, who can provide further information and advice on candidature matters. Each division also has a Research Management Committee, the chair of which is the Dean: Research*. The Dean: Research is responsible for monitoring and ensuring the effective conduct of research education management within their area. The Dean can provide advice and make academic decisions about research degree admissions, scholarships, supervision, research proposals, performance reviews, variations to candidature and examinations. Deans can also address grievances or appeals involving REPLs, supervisors and research degree students.

*or equivalent

**Graduate Research: Student and Academic Services**

[unisa.edu.au/researchstudents](http://unisa.edu.au/researchstudents)

The Graduate Research: Student and Academic Services team is located at 101 Currie Street and provides services, information and resources to students and staff to support a high-quality research degree experience. The team support students from the application process, admission, orientation and induction, through to graduation.

Graduate Research: SAS is a place for students and staff to drop in or call between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday to resolve queries and gather information. Graduate Research staff are experienced in all research degree matters and can provide timely advice on processes and policy – including scholarships.

Level 2, 101 Currie Street, Adelaide 5000 (reception is at level 1)
+61 8 8302 5880
research.students@unisa.edu.au

**Student services**


The University offers a range of dedicated support services to help students succeed. These include career services, disability support, counselling, international student services, language and learning services, childcare and more.
Research Degree Graduate Qualities

The seven Research Degree Graduate Qualities (RDCQs) define what a research degree student achieves from the research education experience. They also identify competencies that are transferable to the workplace, whether academic or professional.

A research degree graduate of the University of South Australia:

1. has an understanding of current research-based knowledge in the field, its methodologies for creating new knowledge, and can create, critique and appraise new and significant knowledge.

2. is prepared for lifelong learning in pursuit of ongoing personal development and excellence in research within and beyond a discipline or professional area.

3. is an effective problem solver, capable of applying logical, critical and creative thinking to a range of research problems.

4. can work both autonomously and collaboratively as a researcher within a particular discipline or professional area and within wider but related areas.

5. is committed to ethical action and social responsibility as a researcher in a discipline or professional area and as a leading citizen.

6. communicates effectively as a researcher in a discipline or professional area and as a leading member of the community.

7. demonstrates international perspectives in research in a discipline or professional area and as a leading citizen.
For further information contact

Research student enquiries
Email: research.students@unisa.edu.au
Website: unisa.edu.au/researchstudents

Information correct at time of printing (April 2015)
CRICOS provider number 00121B