

Guidelines for Developing Cotutelle (Dual) and Joint Doctoral Degree Programs

Approving authority	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
Approval date	1 October 2021 (5/2017 meeting)
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Next scheduled review	2023 (Currently under review)
Document URL	http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Guidelines for Developing Cotutelle and Joint Doctoral Degree Programs.pdf
TRIM document	2023/0000456
Description	These guidelines establish procedures for developing Cotutelles and Joint Doctoral Degree Programs between Griffith University and international universities. Where Cotutelle is referred to throughout this policy, this may be interchanged with the terms - double degree program and/or dual award. Other procedural documents are also available to support these guidelines including a Cotutelle Proposal Template, Cotutelle Framework Agreement Template, and a Cotutelle Program Candidate Agreement Template.

Related documents

[Code of Practice for the Supervision of Higher Degree Research Candidates](#)

[Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#)

[Higher Degree by Research Policy](#)

[Higher Doctorates by Publication Policy](#)

Cotutelle Proposal Template

Cotutelle Program Framework Agreement Template

Cotutelle Program Candidate Agreement Template

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[Student Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Student Breaches of Academic Integrity Procedure](#)

[Higher Degree Research Graduate Attributes Policy](#)

[Academic Awards and Graduations Policy](#)

[Program and Course Policy](#)

[Higher Degrees Research Website](#)

[Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(TEQSA\) Guidance Note: Joint and Dual Awards](#)

[\[Scope\]](#) [\[Definitions\]](#) [\[Cotutelle\]](#) [\[Joint Doctoral Degree Program\]](#)

1. SCOPE

These guidelines specify the protocols for establishing Cotutelles and Joint Doctoral Degree Programs with international institutions for the awarding of Doctoral Degrees recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). These guidelines are consistent with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) [Guidance Note for Joint and Dual Awards](#).

Cotutelles allow candidates to undertake a jointly supervised Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program and are established for the benefit of an individual candidate's research project, and to strengthen research collaborations between the two institutions. The Cotutelle model is derived from the unique class of

joint research degree as defined under French law. Cotuelles are also referred to as dual awards as two separate testamurs are issued.

Joint Doctoral Degree Programs are collaborative award programs where the content and delivery of the PhD program is designed by both institutions, as well as the assessment of learning outcomes and the requirements for awarding the qualification. Joint Doctoral Degree Programs are established to attract high quality candidates to the program, and to strengthen research collaborations between the two institutions.

The requirements of Cotuelles and Joint Doctoral Degree Programs may vary depending on the arrangements negotiated by Griffith University and the partner institution.

The University supports the establishment of Cotuelles as part of the Griffith University *Internationalisation Strategy*. The University also supports the establishment of Joint Doctoral Degree Programs in strategic cases where there is clear reputational and research benefit.

These guidelines do not apply to Doctoral candidates who undertake part of their research at an international institution and/or candidates who are jointly supervised by a staff member at an international institution, but where no formal collaborative agreement is in place for the joint conferral of the award.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the *Higher Degree by Research Policy*.

2. DEFINITIONS

AQF qualification is a completed University accredited program of learning that leads to formal certification that a graduate has achieved the learning outcomes as described in the AQF.

Conferral occurs when a student has met the requirements of the qualification and the qualification is certified through the provision of a testamur.

Cotutelle Awards are jointly supervised doctoral degrees as defined under French law that lead to the award of a doctoral degree by both institutions.

Domestic students refers to students who are an Australian citizen; or an Australian permanent resident or holder of an Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa; or a New Zealand citizen.

Dual Awards (TEQSA Definition¹) involve one or more programs of study that lead to the award of two separate qualifications. Where the program involves an arrangement between two providers one of the qualifications is typically conferred by each provider. A dual award may involve one AQF level, or two sequential AQF levels. 'Collaborative double-degree programs' are a form of dual award as per Section 9.2 of Academic Awards and Graduations Policy.

Elements include Schools, Departments, Research Centres, Colleges, Institutes, other budget elements in which students are enrolled, as well as central administration and support units.

Full-time equivalent (FTE) refers to the duration of candidature expressed as full-time equivalent where a student undertakes part-time study.

Higher Degree by Research (HDR) refers to a Research Masters or Research Doctorate where a;

- Research Masters means a Level 9 qualification as described in the AQF and where a minimum of two-thirds of the program of learning is for research, research training and independent study;
- Research Doctorate means a Level 10 qualification as described in the AQF and where a minimum of two years of the program of learning, and typically two-thirds of the qualification, is research.

Home Institution is the institution that will provide a greater share of resources throughout candidature, and where the majority of the period of candidature will be spent. Normally this will be where the candidate enrolls or applies to enrol first.

Host Institution is the partner institution that is not the **Home** institution.

¹ Extract of the definition provided in the TEQSA Guidance Note: Joint and Dual Awards, which specify that 'TEQSA uses the terms 'joint award' and 'dual award' to distinguish between two types of collaborative arrangements for programs of study'. The term 'program' has been substituted for 'course' in the TEQSA definition to clarify the meaning in the Griffith University context.

International student refers to students who are **not** an Australian citizen; or an Australian permanent resident or holder of an Australian Permanent Humanitarian visa; or a New Zealand citizen.

Joint Awards (TEQSA Definition²) involve a single program of study arranged and delivered jointly by two or more providers that leads to the award of a single qualification that is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and is typically conferred jointly by the providers involved see *Academic Awards and Graduations Policy*.

Learning outcomes are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

New Program Proposal is the curriculum design document, including program outcomes, program structure, program requirements, course descriptions, learning and teaching approach, assessment regime, prerequisites, entry levels and pathways; for approval of a new program by Programs Committee.

Research comprises systematic experimental and theoretical work, application and/or development that results in an increase in the dimensions of knowledge, culminating in a thesis, dissertation, exegesis or equivalent that is formally examined. The term **research** includes original, exploratory, experimental, applied, clinically or work-based and other forms of creative work undertaken systematically to increase knowledge and understanding, deploying a range of research principles and methodologies. Research is specified in the AQF learning outcomes for the Masters Degree (Research) and Doctoral Degree. The inclusion of research in a program is also referred to as the *Research Component* or *Research Outcome*.

Testamur is the official certification document conferred by the University that confirms a qualification has been awarded to an individual.

3. COTUTELLE

3.1 Objectives

The objectives for establishing a Cotutelle are to:

- facilitate international research experiences for doctoral candidates;
- benefit the candidate's research project, for example by providing candidates with access to research equipment and technologies that may not be available at the Home institution; and
- provide a mechanism to enhance international cooperation and collaboration between the researchers and institutions.

3.2 Requirements

A Cotutelle may be established where it can be demonstrated that all of the following requirements are met:

- there is an existing relationship with the partner institution (as evidenced by a Memorandum of Understanding that is already in place) and the Cotutelle would form part of an ongoing research collaboration. A collaboration involving an individual researcher at Griffith University is not sufficient for the purposes of establishing a Cotutelle;
- the establishment of the program is of strategic value to the University (e.g. reputational benefit or a specialised collaboration);
- the establishment of the program will benefit the candidate's research project;
- it is anticipated that there will be an ongoing request for candidates to undertake their program as a Cotutelle between the two institutions; and

² Extract of the definition provided in the TEQSA Guidance Note: Joint and Dual Awards, which specify that '*TEQSA uses the terms 'joint award' and 'dual award' to distinguish between two types of collaborative arrangements for programs of study*'. The term 'program' has been substituted for 'course' in the TEQSA definition to clarify the meaning in the Griffith University context.

- the prospective partner institution has research training standards equivalent to those of Griffith University.

3.3 Approval

3.3.1 Proposal

A proposal to establish a Cotutelle may be developed by a Griffith University staff member by completing the 'Cotutelle Proposal Template'. The proposal will be approved by the Provost, on the recommendation of the Head of Element, Dean (Research), Dean Griffith Graduate Research School, and the Vice President (Global). The proposal should be prepared in consultation with the partner institution. The proposal will detail how the program will benefit the University and the doctoral candidate(s) and how the program meets the requirements for establishing a Cotutelle as specified in section 3.2 above. The Provost will require assurance that there is an appropriate level of support and capacity for continuity of supervision in the applicable Element/Group before approving a proposal.

Upon approval of the proposal, the Cotutelle Program Framework Agreement will be prepared as set out in section 3.3.2 below.

3.3.2 Cotutelle Program Framework Agreement

The Cotutelle Program Framework Agreement (or an equivalent agreement at the partner institution) will be prepared upon approval of the Cotutelle Proposal, with details of the agreement to be negotiated and agreed with the partner institution. The agreement will be signed by the relevant authorities at each institution.

The agreement will detail the terms and conditions of the Cotutelle arrangement, including candidature and examination requirements, the arrangements for fees and scholarship, and the standards for research conduct including but not limited to intellectual property, publication and ethics protocols. The agreement must comply with the requirements as specified in sections [3.4-3.11](#) below. When, in the opinion of the Provost, special circumstances exist, the agreement requirements may vary from those as specified in sections [3.4-3.11](#) below. Approval of any special circumstances must be in writing.

3.3.3 Cotutelle Program Candidate Agreement

The Cotutelle Program Candidate Agreement will be prepared once the candidate has formally applied and been accepted for admission to the PhD program at each institution and will normally be prepared by the Home institution. The agreement must be in place no later than the end of the first year of full-time equivalent (FTE) study. The agreement will be signed by the relevant authorities at each institution.

The agreement will detail the arrangements pertaining to the individual's candidature including the Home and Host institution (refer section [2.0 Definitions](#)); list the supervisors who will undertake the joint supervision; specify the topic of research; specify the language of the thesis, and the abstract; indicate the periods to be spent at each institution; and other relevant matters. The agreement will also detail the terms and conditions of the Cotutelle as set out in the Cotutelle Program Framework Agreement.

3.4 Administration

The Dean, Griffith Graduate Research School at Griffith University and the counterpart holding this position at the partner institution will act as Joint Administrators of the Cotutelle. Each institution will make its own decisions regarding the requirements for admission, progress review and approval, and examination of each candidate, with no removal of authority from either party. The Joint Administrators will consult if a candidate's progress falls below a satisfactory level.

For each candidature, one institution will be designated the Home institution and the other the Host institution (refer section [2.0 Definitions](#)). The Home institution will be responsible for the management of the candidature and will ensure systems are in place to consult and/or inform the Host institution regarding any changes to candidature as required. Each institution will exchange with each other all relevant information, including reports on progress, examination reports etc.

Both the Home and the Host institution will be responsible for ensuring that the conditions of the *Cotutelle Program Candidate Agreement* are adhered to.

3.5 Admission

Applicants must satisfy the admission requirements at each institution including any language proficiency requirements. Applicants will be considered for admission to doctoral candidature at Griffith University in accordance with the *Higher Degree Research Policy*. Admission to a Cotutelle PhD program will depend on the availability of a suitably resourced project and the availability of suitable supervisors from each institution.

3.6 Supervision

The candidate will have the doctoral candidature supervised jointly by academics from Griffith University and the partner institution. Selection of supervisors at each institution will depend upon the research project and current research collaborations of supervisors between the two institutions. Approval of the selection rests with the Joint Administrators.

3.7 Enrolment

The candidate will be concurrently enrolled as a doctoral candidate at Griffith University and at the partner institution for the duration of the Cotutelle. Where Griffith University is the Home institution, periods spent at the Host institution will be recorded as study away. Where Griffith University is the Host institution, periods spent at the Home institution will be recorded as remote candidature.

Over the duration of the candidature, the candidate will spend a total of at least one year full-time equivalent at each institution. Within this restriction, the supervisors may direct the candidate to pursue the project at whichever institution is appropriate from time to time.

The candidate will be responsible for maintaining their enrolment at both institutions and for notifying each institution regarding any changes to candidature. These changes include, but are not restricted to, leave, change of supervisor, extension to candidature and withdrawal from candidature.

3.8 Research Training Standards

The partner institution should have its own policies in relation to appropriate research training standards that are equivalent to *The Responsible Conduct of Research*, particularly in regard to ethical practices and ethics approvals, and research misconduct. It is expected that the partner institution will also have standards at least equivalent to those of Griffith University in relation to Health and Safety requirements. Insofar as it is possible, intellectual property as well as publication, use and protection of research data common to both institutions will comply with each institution's policies, provided that these do not breach Griffith University's policies. From time to time it may be necessary to negotiate intellectual property ownership.

Admission, candidature, progression, and the examination requirements will comply with each institution's policies. At Griffith University, the PhD program requirements will comply with the *Higher Degree Research Policy*.

Complaints, review and appeal, termination and research or academic misconduct procedures of the Home institution are to be followed if required. In the event of student (non-academic) misconduct at the Host institution, the procedures of that institution would apply.

3.9 Withdrawal

A candidate may withdraw from the Cotutelle at any time prior to thesis submission. A candidate may, subject to the agreement of the relevant institution, retain candidature at that institution and must relinquish their candidature at the other institution.

3.10 Fees, Scholarships, and Other Costs

The candidate will normally pay the tuition fee of the Home institution for the duration of the program and be exempt from fees at the Host institution. In some cases candidates will be required to pay fees for periods of study and research undertaken at the Host institution.

Candidates may be competitively considered for a stipend and/or tuition scholarship at Griffith University. Where Griffith University is the Host institution, candidates shall not be eligible for stipend scholarships from Griffith University unless stated in Cotutelle Program Framework

Agreement. It is assumed that candidates will have access to appropriate scholarships from their Home institution. The *Cotutelle Program Framework Agreement* and the *Cotutelle Program Candidate Agreement* will set out the arrangements with regard to fees and scholarships.

Resources permitting, the supervisor in each institution will be expected to visit the other institution for at least one week during each year of the candidature, for the purpose of coordinating the research project and advising the candidate. The Host university should ensure that the visiting supervisor has appropriate office accommodation and access to physical resources. The Host university would normally assist in locating suitable living accommodation for such visits.

Resources required to support the candidate and their research project must be given due consideration before an agreement is finalised.

Whilst at the Host institution, a candidate will have access to resources and facilities commensurate to other doctoral candidates enrolled at the Host institution.

Other incidental fees and charges, health cover, travel and associated costs, accommodation and personal expenses are the responsibility of the candidate.

3.11 Examination and Award of Degree

A single thesis will be prepared that will be submitted to each institution, in the institution's language of instruction.

Each university will examine the thesis according to their policies and processes. The examination outcome, including examination reports, from the partner institution must be provided to Griffith University and vice versa. The examination reports are to be provided in English.

A candidate who meets all examination criteria of both participating institutions will be eligible for the jointly conferred award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The certification will be in the form of two separate testamurs, each recognising that the qualification is conferred under a Cotutelle arrangement. The wording on the testamur will read, "The research project leading to this degree was conducted under a Cotutelle agreement in association with [partner university]".

A decision by one institution not to award the degree will not preclude the other institution from awarding the degree, however in such cases the testamur shall not recognise that the qualification was conferred under a Cotutelle Program agreement.

4. JOINT DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM

4.1 Objectives

The objectives for establishing a Joint Doctoral Degree Program are to:

- create an opportunity to recruit high quality international doctoral candidates;
- benefit candidates research training experience;
- award a joint doctoral degree recognised by both institutions and both countries; and
- provide a mechanism to enhance international cooperation and collaboration between the researchers and institutions.

4.2 Requirements

The establishment of a Joint Doctoral Degree Program will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will only be approved where there is strategic value to the University (e.g. reputational benefit or a specialised collaboration). General guidelines pertaining to Joint Doctoral Degree Programs are provided below.

4.3 Approval

A New Program Strategic Brief and a New Program Proposal will be developed that provides the program structure, requirements, content and supporting argument. The program will be

developed collaboratively where the content and delivery of the program is designed by both institutions, as well as the assessment of learning outcomes and the requirements for awarding the qualification. Refer to the *Program and Course Policy* for further information on the program development process and approval requirements.

Upon approval of the New Program Proposal, a framework agreement will be required that details the terms and conditions of the program. The agreement will be prepared and negotiated between the two institutions and will be submitted for approval via the University's normal approval process for signing by the relevant authorities at each institution.

4.4 Program Requirements

The Joint Doctoral Degree Program will comply with the administration, admission, supervision and enrolment requirements, research training standards, and provision of fees and scholarships as detailed in sections [3.4 to 3.10](#) above, except as follows:

- There will be joint decisions between the two institutions regarding admission to the program, research progress assessment, and thesis examination.
- The candidate must remain enrolled at both institutions for the duration of the program. A candidate who withdraws from one institution will not be permitted to complete the Joint Doctoral Degree Program at the other institution.
- Fees are payable to both institutions; normally candidates will be required to pay fees for the period of study undertaken at each institution.

4.5 Examination and Award of Degree

A single thesis will be prepared that will be submitted to the Home institution only. A single examination process will be conducted according to the policies of the Home institution with both institutions agreeing to respect the outcome. The certification will normally be in the form of one testamur bearing the crests of both institutions. The candidate will graduate and attend a graduation ceremony at the Home institution, unless it has been agreed that the Host institution will exercise their degree awarding powers. Refer the *Academic Awards and Graduations Policy*.