SPACE ALLOCATION GUIDELINES FOR HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH CANDIDATES

In 2018, the VU Research Executive Infrastructure Working Group was established to review the centralisation of infrastructure allocated to VU Research, which was previously the responsibility of Colleges. A component of the Working Group's brief was to develop procedures pertaining to infrastructure entitlements for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates to ensure their needs are met.

These guidelines relate to the minimum resource standards for HDR candidates and are linked to the Space Allocation and Management Procedure

Administration and Management of Space Allocation

VU Research- Research Institutes are responsible for the allocation and management of space, once a candidate is officially enrolled at the University.

Procedure for Space Allocation:

1. Candidate presents and enrols at the Office for Training, Quality & Integrity;
2. The candidate's enrolment form is sent to Student Financials & Enrolment for processing on the university system to officially enrol;
3. Once officially enrolled, the candidate receives email notification from the Office of Research Training, Quality & Integrity confirming their enrolment and instructions to contact the relevant Institute via the Institute's generic email to request space. The relevant Institute will be included in this email. The candidate will be required to send an email to the relevant Institute to request space. The relevant Institute will send the candidate "A Space Request Form" to complete and return;
4. The relevant Institute will assign access to a shared HDR office space that will allow the candidate use of either a permanent desk or 'hot desk' (subject to the relevant Institute's discipline requirements and space allocation) and access to a lockable locker or filing cabinet (subject to the relevant Institutes discipline requirements and space allocation) for each candidate for the maximum duration[i] of their degree NB: Lockable lockers are provided as follows: full time candidates will have access to a lockable locker for the duration of their candidature and part time candidates on the days they are working at a 'hot desk' and
5. The relevant Institute will endeavour to allocate shared HDR office space at the campus the candidate's principal supervisor resides. If space is limited on that campus, the candidate will be allocated space at the nearest campus.

Full time candidates enrolled pre-2020 who have been allocated their own personal desk and computer may retain this at the discretion of the relevant Institute, subject to space availability.

HDR candidates MUST keep the 'hot desk' clean at all times for other candidates to use the desk. All computers are password protected and all work should be saved on the 'R Drive' or USB - nothing should be

saved on the computer's hard drive. This will ensure HDR candidates do not lose any work or data collected. HDR candidates will be allowed to use any 'hot desk' at any shared HDR office space, however will only have access to one lockable locker in one area.

Entitlements

An enrolled HDR candidate will have access to a safe, secure and conductive space to study to produce and disseminate quality research:

- 2-4m2 per candidate in open plan or time shared workspace- subject to the relevant Institutes discipline requirements and space allocation per campus;
- Ergonomically sound chair and desk;
- Lockable locker or filing cabinet (subject to the relevant Institutes discipline requirements and space allocation);
- Shared printer access;
- A shared telephone;
- A shared computer with access to current research and publishing tools including email and the internet;
- Sufficient laboratory space, equipment and facilities to complete the program of research and
- Stationary

Obligations of the Candidate

- **Personal and/or hot desks must be clean at all times**
- **Storage of personal items under the desk and/or in the shared space is not permitted**
- **Candidates are not permitted to cook or sleep in the shared space**
- **The Institute provides FOB access for the individual- this FOB is not be shared with other candidates**
- **Respectful and courteous behaviour to be exhibited to other candidates in the shared space**

Biosafety Training

Candidates working with genetically modified organisms, quarantine materials, animals, plants or material that contains biological risk group agents, must be appropriately trained before entry into a biological containment laboratory or commencement of any work.

There are three levels of training required as part of the biosafety training program at VU:

- Organisational
- lab-specific
- project specific

For a full description of the requirements, please refer to Biosafety training webpage.

Lab Specific Training

Victoria University has a wide range of different laboratories in which a range of functions are carried out including research, quality control, testing, teaching and/or analysis. These activities may require the usage of chemicals, including dangerous goods, hazardous substances, electrical or radiation hazards, pathogens, quarantine materials or work processes which could also be hazardous.

In all situations the functional needs of the HDR student must be considered. This can only be done by engaging the user group and undertaking a formal planning brief

The designated laboratory area should include, or have access to, all support spaces required, such as; instrument and preparation labs, laboratory stores, sample stores,, chemical stores, wash up, media prep, sterilization facilities, waste storage and waste treatment facilities. Administration and office accommodation should not be within the laboratory boundary but should ideally be in close physically proximity to the laboratories they serve.

Write up areas are permitted within the laboratory boundary however, these should be separated from areas where hazardous materials are stored or processes undertaken and should only be used on a temporary basis to support the scientific activities

Space and General Physical Layout

Space between benches should be as follows:

− Workers working on one side of aisle, no through traffic: 1000mm;
− Workers working on one side of aisle, plus through traffic: 1200mm;
− Workers working on both sides of aisles, no through traffic: 1350mm;
− Workers working on both sides of aisles, plus through traffic: 1800mm;
− Space between benches in teaching laboratories: 1500mm.

Disabilities

Access for people with disabilities is required within both teaching and research laboratories and recommendations for accessible laboratory design are set out below.

Generally, each laboratory should contain at least one workspace which is adaptable to enable use by a person with a disability, some guidelines for which are outlined here:

Working Heights and adequacy of space below the working surface Laboratory benches are generally intended for standing work unless specifically briefed for sitting. This restricts their use by those in wheelchairs.

Providing benches which are flexible and adjustable in height enables a variety of user's access to the working surface to suit their particular need.

Other equipment and items such as fume cupboards and sinks should be designed so that at least one of each per laboratory space is accessible to people with disabilities. This should include counters and worktops and unobstructed space requirements below them to enable wheelchair access.

Items of emergency equipment which are required by code, including emergency showers, shall be accessible for people with disabilities

Candidature Budget

HDR candidature support is provided by the relevant Institute for which the candidate enrolled. At the time of preparing the Confirmation of Candidature documentation, the candidate may refer to the [VU Research Candidature Budgets](#) to apply for funding from the VU Research Strategic HDR Fund.

Leave of Absence

Candidates who have been allocated their own personal desk and computer (subject to allocation by the relevant Institute) and have an approved leave of absence period between 6-12 months, may be required to vacate this space at the discretion of the relevant Institute. Upon resuming their studies, the candidate will be allocated a shared HDR office space with either a permanent desk or 'hot desk.' They will have access to a lockable locker or filing cabinet (subject to the relevant Institutes discipline requirements and space allocation).

Post Timely Duration

If a HDR candidate exceeds the timely duration of their degree and have an approved late submission date of more than one semester for their degree, they may retain the shared office space and lockable locker or filing cabinet for a maximum period of 6 months. Any further time approved beyond this period, the candidate will be required to vacate the shared HDR office space and complete the writing of the thesis via Library resources.

Classification of Thesis

Once the HDR candidate receives notification from the Office of Researcher Quality, Training and Integrity that their thesis has been 'classified' by the Dean, Graduate Research, they will be required to action the following:

- vacate any space occupied within 10 working days. If this space is not vacated within this period, the Institute will remove and dispose of any items on the desk and in the lockable filing cabinet
- Return FOB to relevant Institute
- Appropriate disposal of samples (if applicable)
- Data storage to be deleted or saved on USB, as appropriate

[i]Doctoral Degrees - 4 years
Master of Research Practice - 1 year
Master of Research Applied Research - 1.5 years
Master of Research - 2 years