

School of Communication and Arts

Changing your HDR program

Transfer Process

A research higher degree candidate may transfer between the MPhil and PhD programs under certain conditions. See [Changing your HDR program](#)

The Dean of the UQ Graduate School must approve the new research program, advisory team, commencement date and thesis topic before activation of enrolment.

Transfer from PhD to MPhil program

A provisional PhD candidate may transfer to provisional MPhil candidature prior to completion of the confirmation milestone. A confirmed PhD candidate may transfer to confirmed MPhil candidature at any stage.

Transfer from MPhil to PhD program

In order to transfer from the MPhil to the PhD program, MPhil candidature must first be confirmed. Confirmed MPhil candidates are permitted to transfer to the PhD program as a provisional candidate only. All transfer requests must be submitted to the [Graduate School](#) prior to completion of the MPhil mid-candidature review, as long as this is supported by the advisory team and school. Work with your Principal Advisor to collate all supporting documentation detailed below and ensure it is completed and ready to be uploaded in your change of program request through my.uq.

In support of your application to be a provisional PhD candidate you will need to provide

- evidence that your advisory team and the HDR Director have discussed the program change and support it,
- evidence that your research project is of sufficient scope to meet the requirements for the new program, and
- an adjusted timeline to ensure completion is within the new program duration.

Once you submit the request your advisor will be asked to provide

- confirmation that the proposed program can be completed in the recommended duration of candidature,
- confirmation that the school has sufficient facilities and resources to fund and support you and the proposed research project to completion, and
- **PhD upgrades only:** If you're currently on an Academic Organisational Unit (AOU)/industry-funded stipend and/or top-up scholarship, confirmation that the scholarship can be extended to a 3-year duration (with 2 possible 6-month extensions).

As a provisional PhD candidate you then need to work towards confirmation at the twelve-month point of your candidature. Four weeks in advance of your confirmation due date you must submit the following documents to the HDR Director:

- A revised thesis prospectus that develops the project outline given in the MPhil prospectus to reflect the scale, scope, and depth required of a PhD project.
- A sample thesis chapter.

The documents will be reviewed by two expert readers who are asked to provide written reports within two weeks. When the readers' reports are received, the HDR Director makes one of two possible recommendations:

The school recommends that the candidate remain enrolled in the MPhil program, following the research plan in the original MPhil prospectus.

The written feedback to the candidate and advisory team must explain why transfer to the PhD program is inappropriate or unfeasible at this time. Possible reasons include: the candidate does not yet have the academic skills needed to undertake this PhD project; the candidate's MPhil project cannot be extended to meet the scope and depth required for a PhD project; the school cannot provide the necessary resources (such as advisors, funding, or facilities) to support the proposed PhD project.

The school recommends admission to the PhD program as a provisional PhD candidate.

You will then organise your prospectus presentation and confirmation meeting. If these are successful the School will recommend the transfer to the PhD.

Change of HDR program while holding a scholarship

Unless otherwise prescribed in the scholarship rules, the recipient of a scholarship may transfer between the MPhil and PhD programs while holding the scholarship. The recipient's previous period holding the scholarship counts against the maximum duration.

If an application to transfer between programs is approved, the maximum duration of the recipient's scholarship is reset to that of the new program. This means that if a full-time MPhil candidate transfers to the PhD at 1.5 years into their candidature, they may receive an additional 1.5 years of PhD scholarship funding with the possibility of applying for a further two* 6-month extensions. However, if the full term of an MPhil scholarship has already expired (e.g., two-years) by the time the application to transfer to the PhD program is approved, then additional scholarship funding for the PhD will not be available. If a PhD candidate who has used two years of their scholarship transfers to the MPhil, then their scholarship will end.

*Applications for the career development (second) extension must demonstrate that the recipient has engaged significantly, in a sustained manner throughout candidature, in the Career Development Framework, including undertaking a placement as approved by the Dean. Recipients must have met the requirements outlined in the Second Scholarship Extension Guidelines (Career Development), agree to undertake an oral examination, and to submit their thesis by 3.75 years FTE. The candidate's progress must also be otherwise satisfactory.