

## School of Communication and Arts

### Milestone 2: Mid-Candidature Review

Mid-candidature review will take place within 12 months (for a full time PhD student) or 6 months (for a full time MPhil student) after the official confirmation milestone due date. The mid-candidature review represents a mid-point between confirmation of candidature and thesis review milestones when half of the project should be complete. The purpose of the mid-candidature review milestone is to determine that:

- The project is on track for completion within the candidature duration;
- The candidate's research, writing, professional development and other skills are developing appropriately; and
- The weighting and composition of the advisory team is appropriate and the supervision relationship is satisfactory.

The candidate must:

- Submit an updated Academic CV and HDR Portfolio;
- Submit evidence of having received external feedback on written work produced since Confirmation;
- Have delivered an oral presentation of their research;
- Attend a meeting with the milestone committee.

The advisory team must:

- Submit a brief written progress report verifying that they have read and provided feedback on approximately 50% of the thesis, specifying the titles and length of thesis chapter drafts that they have reviewed, or providing other evidence that the project is mid-way to completion (e.g., the completion of fieldwork, cited transcripts of interviews, conceptual design work such as sketches, storyboards and wireframes, production design work such as computer codes, prototypes or records of other raw data).

Creative writing students should have (at the minimum) half of the draft creative work and one chapter in draft of critical work.

- Verify that the quality of writing, research, and analysis is of the standard expected for this stage of candidature or specify what needs to be improved.

Attainment of Milestone 2 is based on a decision made by the milestone committee, which is chaired by the HDR Director or Deputy HDR Director and includes the candidate's principal and associate advisors. At Milestone 2 a candidate will receive feedback on:

- The progress, direction, and planning of their research project;
- The acquisition or further development of appropriate skills.

*The advisory team's progress reports, the student's Academic CV and HDR Portfolio, and evidence of meeting the written and oral requirements is to be submitted to the meeting chair for circulation to the milestone committee at least **two weeks** prior to the mid-candidature review meeting.*

### Written Requirements

To demonstrate that they are mid-way to finishing their thesis, all candidates must submit an updated Academic CV and HDR Portfolio containing a progress report and a timetable for completion. The committee considers the candidate's Academic CV and HDR Portfolio in relation to goals set, obstacles encountered, and disciplinary standards.

Candidates must also submit evidence that they have received feedback on at least one piece of their written work (minimum 2,500 words) from a wider audience than the advisory team. The writing sample submitted for review must be new work produced since confirmation and it must be material from or directly relevant to the thesis. For example, this might take the form of referees' reports on a journal article based on a thesis chapter, editorial feedback on a book chapter or a sample of creative writing from the thesis, or an email containing feedback on a draft thesis chapter from an academic mentor or a member of a disciplinary research network. This demonstrates that the candidate has been developing their ability to communicate their research to a wider audience and has received feedback on their research project and writing from outside the advisory team. The writing sample itself does not need to be submitted to the committee for review.

For MPhil candidates wishing to apply for transfer to the PhD program the committee requires the candidate to submit a thesis chapter for review by two expert readers. For further information see the Transfer between PhD and MPhil guidelines.

### Oral Presentation

Between confirmation and mid-candidature review, the candidate must make at least one oral presentation of their research to a wider audience than the advisory team. For example, this might include presenting at a school seminar, the Work in Progress postgraduate conference or another conference or symposium, delivering a lecture or talk related to their research, or reading work at a writers' festival or other meeting of scholarly or professional associates.

The oral presentation demonstrates that the candidate is developing their ability to communicate their research to a wider audience. It provides the opportunity to receive constructive feedback on their research project and presentation skills from outside the advisory team. The milestone committee does not necessarily have to attend the oral presentation, but the candidate must submit evidence of the presentation (e.g., conference program) and must report on the feedback they received and how it informed the development of their project.

### Mid-Candidature Review Meeting

The expected duration of the mid-candidature review meeting with the milestone committee is one hour. The candidate is interviewed separately and together with advisory team. During the meeting the advisors exit and the candidate has the opportunity to discuss the supervisory relationship, review their student support plan (if applicable), or raise other concerns. Subsequently the candidate exits while the committee discusses supervision and the student's progress in confidence.

The committee must:

- Assess the candidate's progress in their field of research, ascertaining that the thesis is mid-way to completion;
- Assess the candidate's ability to respond to questions and feedback;
- Review the composition, weighting, and roles of the advisory team including the frequency and effectiveness of contact between the candidate and advisors;
- Assess whether the candidate is attending appropriate research seminars;
- Assess the resources needed for timely completion of the project;
- Ensure that the timetable is realistic and set goals for the next milestone;
- Check whether the candidate is considering undertaking an oral examination or if the oral examination is a requirement;
- In the case of the PhD in Art History by Thesis and Exhibition Catalogue, check proper plans are in place for the exhibition and for examiners to see the exhibition.

### **Assessment Process**

The committee can make the following decisions:

- Recommend attainment of Milestone 2 to the Graduate School; OR
- Recommend that the Graduate School extends the milestone due date by three months (full time equivalent) and ask the candidate to do further work by a set date. If the candidate has not attained Milestone 2, the committee must provide written instructions regarding remedial actions to be undertaken by the candidate. After the additional work is received, the committee reconvenes and interviews the candidate again. If satisfied with the quality and quantity of work, the committee can recommend attainment of Milestone 2; OR
- Request that the Graduate School conducts a review of candidature because candidate has not attained the milestone after more than one attempt.

The chair of the milestone committee produces a written report that outlines the committee's decision and sets out any conditions the candidate must meet.

The chair sends this report to the HLO [hdr.commarts@enquire.uq.edu.au](mailto:hdr.commarts@enquire.uq.edu.au) who will relay it to the candidate with instructions on how to complete the milestone attainment request.