A message from our Pro Vice-Chancellor, Higher Degree Research Training & Partnerships

Over recent months, I have reflected a great deal on the challenges that friends, colleagues, graduate students and the broader academic community have experienced as we navigate our way through such extraordinary times. COVID-19 has demonstrated, in a truly dramatic way, that life brings with it few guarantees other than a guarantee of uncertainty. Who would have imagined this time last year that travelling overseas (or out of state!) for a holiday or to visit family and friends would be impossible and Australia would be facing a recession for the first time in almost 30 years?

There is much talk about an uncertain future with reduced employment opportunities, falling incomes and asset prices and a burgeoning national debt. These impacts are being severely felt in Higher Education (HE) where the downturn in international students is placing unyielding pressure on university finances. This will have significant consequences for existing staff across the sector and in the short term will limit the number of new opportunities for early career academics and graduate students. Perhaps Higher Education in Australia will never be the same again, no longer the global player that delivered research and teaching of a quality that was the envy of many parts of the world?

All pretty depressing isn’t it……well, maybe not. The thing about the future is that it is very difficult to predict and whilst uncertainty might bring challenge, it always brings opportunities. The next couple of years may well see colleagues leaving HE
earlier than they might have planned, but it will also see the gradual return of international students and accompanying revenue. This will be accompanied by an increase in domestic enrolments as the demographic impact of the ‘baby bonus’ works its way through the system. The recent commitment of an additional $1B of federal funding to support University research will protect research positions and allow continued investment in research growth and competitiveness and the provision of ongoing support for R&D in non-academic and commercial organisation will bolster opportunities outside the academy. So, over the next few years the contraction in Higher Education, will at some point be followed by reinvestment, opening up new possibilities for Early Career academics to meet the growing teaching and research needs in the sector.

So, for those highly skilled, critically minded thinkers and leaders who will graduate from our higher degree programs in the coming years, there will be uncertainty, risk and challenge but there will also be opportunity. I hope we are all able to emerge from the current challenges more resilient, determined and prepared to embrace these opportunities as they arise.

Stay safe and stay well.

Professor Simon Handley, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Higher Degree Research Training and Partnerships

**COVID-19 FAQs for HDR** (Coronavirus (COVID-19) infection: latest information – Information for Students – Changes to Session 1 – HDR Students

**HDR Workshops**

All workshops can be found on the [MyRDC](https://myrdc.mq.edu.au/).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Register here</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thu 12 Nov</td>
<td>How to Embrace Imposter Syndrome</td>
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<td>Building your Professional Profile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 13 Nov</td>
<td>Science Writing for Publication Workshop Series. Workshop 5: Titles &amp; Abstracts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MQ Professional Staff with a PhD: Dr. Natalie Spence</td>
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<td>Tue 17 Nov</td>
<td>SPSS Introductory Workshop (Zoom)</td>
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<td>NVivo for PC - Level One (Zoom)</td>
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<td>Wed 18 Nov</td>
<td>Active Data Management on CloudStor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MQBS HDR academic writing workshops: Paragraphs, sentences, and words</td>
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**HDR Announcements**
Peer Writing Assistance sessions are back for 2020!

Are you a HDR student? Do you need help with your writing? Are you confused about the HDR journey? If you answered ‘yes’ to any of these questions, then the Peer Writing Assistance program is here to help. Peer Writing Assistants (PWAs) are current Macquarie PhD and post doctorate students who can assist in helping you gain new perspectives on your research ideas and writing.

Please visit the PWA website and register your interest for a 45-minute consultation. Due to the current social distancing practises, all PWA consultations will occur remotely via Zoom. Those of you who are unfamiliar with Zoom, please visit the link here.

Have your say! Higher Degree Research Students Annual Survey (MUSEQ-R)

Past research student feedback has resulted in greater transparency in research student funding allocations; more targeted support for research candidates and greater clarity in the roles and expectations of supervisors, among other things.

Feedback on your research experiences this year is important to us. So, have your say! The survey should take no more than 15 minutes.

The survey has been sent to all HDR candidates. Please check your mailbox to participate in it.

HDR Mentors: Meet & Mingle

Are you a HDR student? Feeling lonely during this isolation? Sick of formal Zoom meetings? Want to meet other HDR students? If this is you then come join HDR Mentors for monthly informal Meet and Mingle sessions via Zoom! Feel free to relax and connect with fellow HDR students all in the comfort of your own home. You are also welcome to have lunch!

Details
Day: First Thursday of every month
Time: 12 noon - 1pm
Zoom link: click here

Deep Work Morning Sessions

Are you keen to carve out some (or more) focused time to work on your project? The computer scientist and bestselling author Cal Newport describes deep work as cultivating the ability to concentrate without distraction on a cognitively challenging task. Whether this is writing, reading, thinking, or planning, the ability to go deep matters for how well we work, and how connected we feel to the work.

There are now two lots of deep work sessions throughout the week to help you jump start your motivation or keep your momentum going. If you've been looking for ways to find focus in your work, these sessions are for you. All are
Welcome to our New Convenor, Supervision Enhancement Program, Dr. Karen Laughton

It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to our new convenor of the Supervision Enhancement Program, Dr Karen Laughton. Karen brings many years of experience in HDR, understanding the HDR lifecycle and systems, and the impact this has on Supervisors. I have no doubt that she will develop an outstanding program to support Supervisors, their relationship with their candidates and also with our team.

Details:
Mondays to Fridays, 9am-10am:
Zoom link: click here
Host/contact: florence.chiew@mq.edu.au

Mondays to Wednesdays, 10am-12pm:
Zoom link: click here
Password: 607014
Host/contact: huong-ly.tong@students.mq.edu.au
at OHDRTP. When Karen isn’t hard at work in our office she loves the beach, Sydney Harbour and it’s amazing history – check out her PhD thesis [here](#).

Welcome Karen!

*Professor Jennifer Cornish, Academic Director, Higher Degree Research, Office of Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research. Head, Behavioural Neuropharmacology Laboratory, Department of Psychology*

*(Image) Dr. Karen Laughton*

**HDR Learning Skills: Freewriting, creativity and the research process**

Don’t plan, don’t stop, capture first thoughts. Let yourself write junk. Trust that something will come.

These are the core principles of freewriting, a technique in which writers learn to let go of the constraints of normal writing in order to follow thoughts where they want to go, to allow mental space for creativity to arise, or to tackle feelings of being ‘stuck’.

Come December, I will be running a workshop that introduces a variety of freewriting exercises for use in the research process. We will borrow from the wisdom of [teaching reflections](#) and [empirical studies](#) on freewriting and look at ways to turn messy ideas into more coherent ones, and to cultivate a deeper awareness of the feelings and experiences we have around writing.

Why might freewriting be a worthy companion to the research process? A regular practice of freewriting literally frees us from the habitual tendency to censor our thoughts and ideas prematurely, or to force our writing to sound a particular way. By allowing ourselves to ‘give over’ to the pen’s intelligence, we actually make room for the discovery of new ideas.
More details about this workshop can be found [here](#).

**Florence Chiew, HDR Learning Advisor (Social Sciences)**

(Image) Photo credit: Florence Chiew at Ballycastle Ireland

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**Responsible Authorship and Peer Review**

**Authorship can be complicated** – we know! and conventions in authorship order can differ across disciplines. But clearly conveying the people who have contributed to research in publications is an essential element of research integrity.

Researchers are expected to **assign authorship based on significant intellectual or scholarly contribution**. The newly released [Macquarie University Authorship Standard](#) outlines these expectations and your responsibility to attribute authorship fairly and honestly. This is essential reading for students, supervisors and all other researchers.

Planning early and often is one way to help avoid issues or misunderstandings when it comes to authorship. The planning form accompanying the Authorship Standard can help guide you in this task.

Also recently released is the [Peer Review Standard](#), providing direction for how to **participate in peer review in a way that is fair, rigorous and timely** whilst maintaining the confidentiality of the content. Peer Review is a lynchpin of research publishing so upholding these principles helps to increase confidence in research by increasing its veracity and reproducibility.

**As a Higher Degree Research Student, you are expected to become familiar with the Macquarie Research Code and its supporting procedures and**
standards, be aware of your responsibilities and apply the principles to your research.

Contact research.integrity@mq.edu.au or a Research Integrity Advisor with questions or concerns about research conduct.

Dr. Shannon Smith, Research Integrity Officer

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Linguistics Inaugural Research Showcase - Students and Staff

On Friday 25th of September Linguistics hosted its first combined student and staff Research Showcase. Events were available both in person (with social distancing) and online. The Showcase had a variety of presentation modes. The morning session involved four of our HDR graduates presenting ‘graduate plenaries’: these were 3 PhD graduates (Rebecca Holt, Wing Chan and Colum Ruane), and one MRES graduate (Nu Anh Vo). A further 3 graduates presented in the afternoon sessions (one MRES, two PhDs) along with 8 virtual poster sessions, 4 Strategic Research Sessions, 6 Lightening Talks, and 9 Research in Progress talks. We had 39 presenters overall.

Both Associate Dean, HDR A/Prof Mark Connor and, our former AD and now Academic Director, HDR Professor Jen Cornish addressed attendees. Mark noted that 30% of the university’s research output was connected to our HDR candidates. Jen gave an overview of the OHDRTP’s survey of the impact of COVID on HDR candidates, and the many things that central HDR have done in response.

We had over 100 participants at our Showcase. It was a particularly gratifying event after the months of COVID adjustments that have been necessary for us all to continue to make progress with our research.

Annabelle Lukin, Associate Professor, Linguistics, HDR Director, Linguistics
Three PhD graduates in Linguistics, front to back: Dr Chan, Dr Holt, and Dr Ruane.

10 Year Anniversary! Macquarie Undergraduate Research Internship (MURI)

The Macquarie Undergraduate Research Internship (MURI) has implemented innovative practice for 10 years. Our sustained participation of equity students over the decade garnered MURI a NSW Youth Work Awards 2020 nomination for Outstanding Work with Diverse Young People, for validating the capacity of equity students to make substantive contributions – and outperform traditional students – in spaces they are traditionally excluded from.

This was evident in the tenth annual One-Minute Thesis (1MT) Competition, MURI’s flagship high engagement milestone event, judged by Professor Simon Handley, PVC HDRTP, seeing record attendance. Alora Cantwell, winner for Best Thesis, attested to MURI’s capacity stating “[MURI is] a vital program for undergraduate equity and bridging gaps.”

In bridging units and faculties across campus and feeding forward good HDR practice, MURI hopes to continue its legacy of care and cooperative excellence with our cheerleaders at Macquarie University.

To connect with the program, tweet (@MQMURI) or email (mqmuri@mq.edu.au) us!

Ali Asgher Ali, Program Research Coordinator-Macquarie Undergraduate Research Internship (MURI)

(Image) MURI 2020 (L-R: MURI Program Research Coordinator Ali Asgher Ali, MURI Interns Kelsey Scholes, Joanna Cai, Sara Ak-Beek, Sepeh Torfeh-Nejad (Peoples Award winner), PVC HDRTP Prof Simon Handley, MURI Interns Alora Cantwell (Best Thesis winner), Michael Alam, Amber Zhang, Jessica Wilson, Rhys Smith; and MURI Facilitators Angel Kalaimani and Angelica Ojinnaka)
Mindful MQ – New digital guided meditation series

Mindful MQ is a Student Wellbeing initiative that brings the benefits of meditation and mindfulness to the broader university community here at Macquarie. On the MQ Wellbeing app and YouTube channel, you can find a range of practices guided by Gemma Perry (PhD candidate, Psychology) and myself that will introduce you to meditation and different types of practice. We’ve recorded a variety of traditional meditations including breath awareness, walking practice and sound meditation, as well as a special series of short practices tailored to challenging moments during study, work and life, like preparing for an exam or interview.

We’re also running a series of master classes to give you an opportunity to try the practices in a group and ask questions. We hope you enjoy this resource.

Dr Michelle Jamieson, HDR Learning Advisor, Humanities

(Image) Screenshot of Michelle Jamieson and Gemma Perry – MQ Wellbeing app

ResourcefulHDR podcast: Kim Eberhard, Head of
Historical Services for Westpac Group

My guest on the ResourcefulHDR podcast this month is Kim Eberhard.

Kim is a professional archivist and historian and is the Head of Historical Services for Westpac Group. She contributed to the book produced for the Bank’s 200th Anniversary, and also arranged for the listing of the Bank’s earliest records – dating from 1816 – on UNESCO’s Memory of the World Register. Kim’s 25-year career has been spent principally in the private sector, with community-based organisations, businesses, religious orders and independent schools.

Kim holds a Bachelor degree in Communications from UTS, and a Master of Information Management from UNSW. She is currently working towards her doctorate at ACU, focussing recordkeeping in the private sector, particularly in relation to the Royal Commission into child sexual abuse. A former President of the Australian Society of Archivists (2006 -2008) and member of the Executive Board of the International Council on Archives (2009 – 2012), Kim was one of the authors of the Universal Declaration on Archives, which was adopted by UNESCO in 2011. A passionate advocate of records, archives and the stories they hold, Kim has also written a number of award-winning publications, including the centenary history of North Sydney Boys’ High School, and In Good Faith: Waverley College and the Great War. She also writes for the profession, with a number of journal articles and industry-standard text books to her credit.

Kim is also proud mother of a 17 year old, and the only daughter of accidental migrants from Germany.

Sally Purcell, HDR Professional Skills Program

(Image) Kim Eberhard
Interning with the Higher Degree Research Office

As a Master by Coursework student, I had not explored the world of academia and the opportunity held a lot of promise. Over the last two months, I have worked across different projects reporting to different managers, all at once.

In the process, I discovered the various efforts made by the university to ensure that HDR students’ experiences are rewarding and fulfilling! I was so eager to try everything that many a time, I took up tasks long before I knew how to accomplish them.

Interestingly, I found that academics are just as busy, as corporate employees. The Higher Degree Research Office was my first exposure to Australian work culture and my supervisor and managers all encouraged me to have a voice, unapologetically. With several meetings and even more acronyms, I enjoyed my time as an intern at the Higher Degree Research Office and learnt a lot.

Shreya Jaitly, MQBS student intern

(Webinar) Shreya Jaitly

Webinars: Professional Staff with a PhD at MQ - Natalie Spence

In this webinar series we are focussing on Professional staff members of Macquarie with a PhD. We want to provide real examples of PhD graduates working in Professional roles at Macquarie and showcase the range of Professional roles being done by people with a PhD, as well as the people who do them.

We are hoping these webinars will engage PhD candidates and raise their awareness of the possible career opportunities within the higher education sector,
following the completion of their PhD.

In our next webinar we are delighted to have Dr. Natalie Spence, Senior Learning Designer, Faculty of Science & Engineering - Tuesday 17th October 2020 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Register for the webinar with this link

Natalie has been employed at Macquarie University since 2011 in several roles in learning and teaching, at first with the Learning and Teaching Centre and then with the Faculty of Science and Engineering as Senior Learning Designer. Her job entails supporting and advising academic staff in designing for learning and use of technology in teaching. One of her recent projects has involved embedding employability in undergraduate curriculum. Another is creating professional development resources for teaching online.

Usually for this role you would need a Masters degree in Education or similar, as Natalie did when she started at Macquarie; a PhD is not a requirement. Anecdotally, there has been a trend to recruit recent PhDs in a non-education field into L&T roles – though knowledge and demonstrated success in teaching would still be necessary. Natalie’s part-time PhD stretched from 2012 until early this year. Her research was a socio-material study of university student collaboration on projects, in a deliberate alignment with her work. Insights from studying the groups informed how she advised academics and her practical experience helped direct the thesis.

You can see all our previous webinar recordings our HDR Professional Development iLearn page. You will also find some videos and the ResourcefulHDR podcast as well as useful links relating to career and employment information.

If you are a Professional staff member with a PhD working at Macquarie University and would be interested in becoming involved, please visit this link.

*Catherine Ennis and Sally Purcell, HDR Professional Development*

*(Image) Dr. Natalie Spence, Senior Learning Designer, Faculty of Science and Engineering*
Online HDR Summer Writing Retreat: Start your summer strong!

After the success of the online writing retreat we held in July, we will be running a Summer HDR Writing Retreat via Zoom again on 1-3 December. So, whether you’re in Marsfield, Moss Vale, Melbourne, or Mumbai: you can join us!

This 3-day online writing retreat provides a structured program to help you progress your thesis and your writing skills. Each day timetables large chunks of writing time so you can get on with your own thesis writing, but we’ll also provide facilitated writing-focused activities, daily workshops, and access to 1:1 consultations with HDR Learning Advisors.

This is the perfect opportunity to break from usual activities to focus solely on writing, so you’ll need to make arrangements so you can participate from 8:45am until 4:30pm on all three days. We suggest you take leave from any paid work and plan childcare on these three days.

Places are strictly limited, and registrations close on 22 November! Note that you need to submit an Expression of Interest document to apply (details on the registration page).

*Juliet Lum, Head, HDR Learning Skills*

(Image) Photo credit: Lauren Mancke on Unsplash
HDR Mentors: Dealing with Uncertainty in Research: An experience sharing peer panel forum for HDR candidates

Dealing with uncertainty in research is not a rare phenomenon as often HDR candidates need to switch to plan B or C if plan A did not work! Moreover, interruptions caused by COVID-19 are making many of us concerned about completion and quality of our work.

To address this issue, HDR Mentors organised a panel discussion forum on dealing with uncertainty in research for HDR candidates on 16 October 2020. HDR Mentors shared their personal experience in dealing with uncertainty and their coping mechanism for personal and academic recovery when planning B/C if plan A did not work. The panellists emphasised the importance of a flexible mindset and effective communication the supervisor while designing their research plan. They also highlighted the importance of effective breaks and peer supports while dealing with emotional stress and keeping oneself motivated along the HDR journey.

The discussion ended up with the recent update regarding the PVC HDRTP response to COVID-19 for HDR candidates followed by an interactive Q&A session. Dr. Mo Haque chaired the panel discussion, and the panel members were: Dr Ehsan Kachooei, Dr. Samiya Tabassum and Shubham Chhajed (PhD candidate)

Mo Haque (PhD), Project Assistant, HDR Mentors Program
How do I know if expectations are unreasonable?

I recently ran a workshop with HDRs at Macquarie about ‘Embracing Impostor Syndrome’. The discussion led to an interesting question.

How do I know if expectations I’m dealing with are reasonable or unreasonable? Unfortunately, there are no clear guidelines as yet. There is much variability between different research projects and disciplines.

However, a key way that emerged through the discussion is talking to fellow candidates, ones that you can trust to listen to you well and guide you. Insecurities can make us feel vulnerable and want to withdraw, however if we want to truly embrace or address our insecurities, speaking to supportive peers is a good step forward.

How to Embrace Impostor Syndrome workshop will run again via Zoom on Thursday, November 12 from 11am-12pm.

Register here

Ashwin Singh, Allied Health Advisor, Student Wellbeing

(Image) Photo by Rupert Britton on Unsplash

Scholarships
HDR Scholarship Banking Details Update

The Office of Higher Degree Research Training and Partnership is constantly looking for ways to improve our service delivery to our valued students. As part of efforts to align our scholarship management with the university wide student management system, we are enabling candidates to update their banking details via eStudent. This move will not only align all student access through the same platform, but afford increased security including the removal of physical forms.

Due to this, all currently enrolled candidates and scholarship recipients are requested to update their banking details in eStudent.

By doing so you will be able to:

- ensure the continuity of your scholarship stipend payments; and
- ensure your personal and private banking details are provided into the central student system in a safe and secure manner.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch with us at hdrschol@mq.edu.au.

Scholarships for the German Exchange Service

Deadlines as follows

16 November:

Research Grants – Short-Term Grants

30 November:

Study Scholarships - Postgraduate Studies in the Fields of Fine Art, Design, Visual Communication and Film
HDR Dynamic Duos

Meenaatchi Saverimuttu, PhD Candidate
*Media, Music, Communication & Cultural Studies*

How did you come to know each other?

I had taken a few undergraduate classes coordinated by Jane. She struck me as the kind of researcher I wanted to be – articulate but very kind and approachable. Jane’s research interests also overlapped with mine so I decided to ask her if we could meet and talk about her career. When I decided to do the MRes I knew that Jane was going to be my first choice for supervisor, and I was so excited when she agreed to be my supervisor. I can’t imagine undertaking my research with anyone else!

What are your shared interests?

Both of us are interested in screen culture and questions around

Dr Jane Simon, Supervisor
*Media, Music, Communication & Cultural Studies*

How did you come to know each other?

I first met Meena about six or seven years ago. She approached me after I gave a guest lecture on feminist theory for an undergraduate unit she was studying. My first impression of Meena was that she was incredibly articulate and intellectually curious. I remember being impressed by the smart questions she asked me when she spoke to me after class. I was thrilled when Meena approached me to be her supervisor for her MRes thesis in 2017 and have been privileged to be her PhD supervisor since then and also to work alongside Meena as a teaching colleague.

What are your shared interests?

Meena and I both love cinema and screen culture. We are both interested in questions of gender in relation to film.
representation and gender on screen. We also both like cats.

**What do you appreciate most about Jane?**

Jane is a very kind and patient supervisor, who dedicates a lot of time to me and my research. I distinctly remember Jane spending over an hour on the phone with me as I panicked about the submission of my MRes thesis, despite the fact she was on maternity leave. I always come away from our meetings feeling more confident not only about my research but also about my own ability to undertake it. I also really appreciate that Jane understands my research process and gives me plenty of feedback throughout.

Meena’s project is specifically engaging with Tamil cinema, which I knew very little about prior to supervising Meena. I’ve loved the opportunity to learn about Tamil film.

We also share a similar sense of humour, and we both share an interest in addressing some of the inequities of academia.

**What do you appreciate most about Meena?**

Meena is a talented researcher who is very dedicated and passionate about her research on Tamil cinema. She has the ability to puzzle away at a problem until it becomes clear. Meena has incredible perseverance, tackles feedback head-on and is always trying to hone her skills. I really appreciate Meena’s openness to new ways of approaching writing and thinking and the way she seeks out different connections between ideas or films. I always look forward to our meetings because I know I will learn new things and feel energised by our discussions.

I have learnt a lot about Tamil cinema from Meena, and I am so impressed by, and appreciative of her contributions to film studies.

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*(Image) Meena Saverimuttu and Dr Jane Simon*

*We are always keen to receive contributions to the HDR Dynamic Duos section of this newsletter. The people featured might be… HDR candidate & supervisor, HDR Mentor & HDR Mentee, HDR Candidate and Industry placement supervisor. If this is of interest to you, please head to our [website](https://page.mq.edu.au/index.php/email/emailWebview) for further information on how to contribute.*
Remember to listen to the ResourcefulHDR podcast and if you are interested in being a guest please email sally.purcell@mq.edu.au