Annual Progress Reviews

These are formal, independent reviews that are conducted according to University procedures.

Intent of reviews is to provide candidates with:

- an opportunity to have candidature and research reviewed by a panel - independent of supervision & conduct of the research
- affirmation of progress, where satisfactory progress has been achieved
- a safe environment in which to raise any issues they feel are impacting on research progress
- support in developing a plan of action and milestones for next review
How are they conducted?

• Flexibility on how APRs are conducted
  – Discipline, size of School, attendance mode etc

• Requirements vary across Schools/Faculties
  – Formal / informal seminars (great opportunity)
  – Extra written components
  – Panel review meetings
  – *Talk to your supervisor/PGC about how they are run in your School*
How are they conducted?

• Supervisor and candidate must fill out their sections and then “attend” (can be via video conference, phone, etc)

• Typically APRs are coordinated by the Postgraduate Coordinator

• Both candidate and supervisor should be given an opportunity to meet with the review panel alone
APR Panels

- Chair - should be PGC or senior academic

- The same Panel should review the progress throughout candidature (if possible)

- The supervisor, co-supervisor or joint supervisor must not be included as Panel members

- The candidate / supervisor can propose persons to exclude or include (not automatically granted)
Confirmation of Candidature

• All PhD candidatures must be confirmed prior to the end of their first full-time equivalent year of enrolment

• Masters candidates requesting a transfer to PhD must also have their candidature confirmed before consideration for transfer

• Confirmation should be scheduled 6 to 9 months (full-time equivalent) from the census date following commencement
Confirmation of Candidature

- Follow the APR process **plus** a report including:
  - a well written and critical review of the research area (typically a literature review)
  - an established and feasible detailed research proposal

*Talk to your supervisors and PGC about what is required to pass Confirmation in your School/Faculty*

**Confirmation** = Confirmation of satisfactory progress and an established research plan likely to lead timely PhD completion
Review Scheduling

• All candidates should be reviewed in each year of candidature (whether PT or FT)

• Reviews are scheduled by the School
  - auto-email sent to UNSW student email account with link to review
  - School will be in touch separately with time, date and location of review

Read the Online APR Student Guide:
http://research.unsw.edu.au/annual-progress-reviews
On-line Annual Progress Review

- Main sections
- Candidate
- Supervisor
- Panel

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###_def: Status | A. Enrolment | B. Research | C. Candidature | Attachments | Submit Form
Use this section to detail how your research has progressed against your research plan over the review period. Identify any issues which have impeded progress towards completion and formulate goals for the next 12 months.

**B1.** Aims of your higher degree research program:

**B2.** Progress over the last 12 months (or since last review):

**B3.** List written reports, publications, exhibitions/performances, conference presentations or other achievements in the last 12 months:

**B4.** Goals for the next 12 months.
Students who have completed 6 semesters (full-time equivalent) PhD or 3 semesters (full-time equivalent) Masters by Research candidature, must include a monthly timetable for completion & submission of these:

**B5.** Have any issues that you raised in your last progress review been addressed?

**B6.** Have any of the following problems affected progress over the past year?

- [ ] Academic background
- [ ] English language/comprehension and/or writing
- [ ] Settling in
- [ ] Access to resources
- [ ] Experimentation
- [ ] Understanding work expected

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UNSW Australia
On-line Annual Progress Review – common problems

- Make sure you answer all questions in the review
  - if you miss a question you will see an error message

- When you submit successfully the form will return to the status tab and note ‘Candidate Section Complete’
Annual Progress Review - outcomes

• At the conclusion of the review, the candidates should “sign” that they have sighted the completed sections
  – *This does not signify agreement with the outcomes* - just that you have seen all sections
  – *Can add comments*
Outcomes

**Confirmation**
- Satisfactory
- Marginal
  - re-review within 1-6* months
- Unsatisfactory
  - re-review within 3* months

**Annual Progress Review**
- Satisfactory
- Marginal
  - re-review within 1-6 months
- Unsatisfactory
  - re-review within 3 months

*All PhD candidates must be Confirmed within 15 months of commencement*
APR issues candidates raise

- Academic
- Technical
- Personal
- Other
APR issues candidates raise

- **Academic**
  - “I don’t want my supervisor to see my section”
  - “My supervisor asked me to change my section”
  - “I don’t know how to do the stats/data analysis/use the machine that goes bing”

- **Technical**

- **Personal**

- **Other**
APR issues candidates raise

- **Academic**
- **Technical**
  - “I haven't been able to get reagents/specialist equipment/studio space”
  - “I lost all my data in a fire”
  - “The machine that goes bing hasn’t been working for the past year – but I need to use it”
- **Personal**
- **Other**
APR issues candidates raise

- Academic
- Technical
- Personal
  - “I need to work long hours to meet financial commitments”
  - “I have been suffering from depression”
  - “My partner has significant health issues”
- Other
APR issues candidates raise

- Academic
- Technical
- Personal
- Other
  - “I turned up for my review, but I didn’t know my School required xxx”
APR tips

- Be open and completely honest - take responsibility
  - *Always* report all issues that have impeded your progress

- Scholarship extensions are not usually given on the basis of personal issues or “incorrect” enrolment
  - This is potentially the only official record you’ll have as proof of issues if you need to request an extension

- For protracted issues - consider taking leave or enrolling part-time
  - *Remember Census dates* - 31 March and 31 August

- *DO NOT wait for your APR to sort out significant problems!!!!*
Annual Progress Reviews

- The majority of candidates report that they find the process helpful and beneficial

- View the APR as a “fact finding safari” not a “fault finding task force”
  - Great opportunity to get all your ducks in a row…

- The end result should be research degree completed within time
You are not alone...

Supervisors

Faculty
- Associate Dean (Research)/Director PG Research
- Faculty Dean

Graduate Research School
- Candidature / Scholarships
- Development & Engagement
- PVCRT & Dean of Graduate Research

School / Centre
- Postgraduate Coordinator
- Head of School
Annual Progress Reviews

- Questions and discussion