

Transfer from Masters to PhD

A transfer from a Masters by Research to a PhD *may* be considered on a case-by-case basis and only in exceptional circumstances. Before the request can be considered, the candidate must firstly meet all the eligibility requirements of a PhD, including any additional Faculty specific requirements, and be able to provide all necessary supporting documentation.

? Are you eligible?

- **Do you hold a Bachelor with Honours Class 2 Division 1 (or equivalent) qualification or a prior research degree?** If you were not assessed as being Honours 2/1 or equivalent at admission, then you will need to demonstrate that you have subsequently gained eligibility since commencing your research program. Usually this would be through a 1st author peer reviewed publication/s or similar research output. The Postgraduate Coordinator and/or supervisor should state this case in their submissions. For further information on assessing Honours 2/1 and equivalence, consult the [HDR Admissions and Pathways Guideline](#)
- **Can the scope of the Masters project be changed to suit the PhD level and contribute to original knowledge?** The project must meet the expectation of a PhD as being an 'original contribution to knowledge.'
- **Met UNSW confirmation requirements.** Before applying for a transfer to PhD, the candidate must demonstrate that they have met the requirements for confirmation of PhD candidature as detailed in the [Progress Review and Confirmation of Research Candidature Procedure](#) and have been recommended for transfer by an independent review panel via the Research Progress Review process. In addition to the Research Progress Review form the candidate must submit a literature review; an established, feasible and detailed research plan; evidence of completion of UNSW Research integrity module and evidence that Faculty specific confirmation requirements have been met.
- **Do you have a feasible and detailed plan to thesis submission that can be completed in a timely manner?** If approved for transfer to PhD, the time spent enrolled in the Masters is counted and the candidate is still required to submit their thesis by 4 years full-time equivalent (maximum time for PhD). Ideally a candidate would be applying for transfer between 1 – 1.5 years of their Masters.

? What documentation do I need?

Once all eligibility requirements listed above have been met, the candidate may formally submit a request for transfer to PhD via GRIS, which will be considered by the Dean of Graduate Research, via the Faculty Higher Degree Committee (HDC). Candidates must provide the following case material to their Faculty Candidature Management Officer (CMO) at the Graduate Research School (GRS):

- Written request from the candidate detailing how the scope of the project will be changed to suit the PhD level, how the research will contribute to original knowledge, demonstration of Hons 2.1 or equivalent
- Detailed plan and timeline for submission of the PhD thesis. Timeline should indicate the portions of research/thesis that have been completed; which remain to be completed, and the projected submission date.
- A detailed plan and timeline for thesis submission of the Masters should the transfer not be approved. This is especially pertinent if the candidate is close to 2.0 FTE and therefore required to submit.
- A copy of the Confirmation Review including the literature review, research plan.
- A detailed letter of recommendation from the primary supervisor that includes a detailed justification for the transfer, confirmation of how the candidate has met all of the eligibility requirements of a PhD and in cases where the candidate was not originally assessed as H 2/1, a clear statement must be included as to how they now meet the requirement.
- A detailed letter of recommendation from the School Postgraduate Coordinator that includes justification for the transfer and confirming that the candidate is eligible for admission to the PhD.



Then what?

The CMO will inform the candidate of the outcome of their request.

- **Scholarship holder?** If you are in receipt of a main award scholarship and approved for transfer to PhD, the duration of your scholarship will be automatically extended by the CMO to the standard length of a PhD scholarship.
- **International?** Your CMO will provide you with an amended eCOE that will cover the duration of the PhD.
- **In receipt of Faculty Top-Up scholarship?** Your CMO will need to be provided with written confirmation from the School that they agree to fund the scholarship for the standard length of a PhD scholarship.
- **Sponsored student?** If you are an international candidate being externally sponsored, the GRS will need to receive written confirmation from the sponsor that they agree to fund the candidate for the duration of the PhD.