

PhD Integrated Program at VU: Overview

The PhD (Integrated) is designed to enable PhD graduate researchers without recent and sufficient research experience (who would otherwise not be eligible for direct PhD entry) to undertake a Year 1 Program which will prepare them to complete a PhD within the required 4 years. The Year 1 Program of the PhD Integrated involves (EFT) two Research Periods of coursework together with a Year 1 thesis (a total of 96 credit points). PhD (Integrated) students must fulfil the hurdle requirement (**70% minimum average across the coursework units and 70% minimum in the Year 1 thesis**) in order to proceed to years 2-4 of the Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated).

While intensive, the Year 1 Program is a structured and supported learning experience in which students work closely with cross-disciplinary networks of staff and peers, building skills and confidence through iterative and scaffolded tasks which directly address their emerging Year 1 Thesis (and thus the larger doctoral project).

Importantly, this PhD program is not a lesser doctoral program because PhD (Integrated) graduate researchers gain their PhD via an alternative entry pathway. While students retain their enrolment as PhD Integrated throughout candidature, this program results in the same doctoral degree (PhD) at AQF10 Level.

The Year 1 Program:

In the Year 1 Program, the bridging program into doctoral study, students undertake:

- Induction and Orientation: Students are required to attend a specific Program Induction before coursework commences; + attendance at the Graduate Researcher Orientation Day.
- Coursework: 3 core units + 2 specialisation (5 total) x 12 credit point units determined by the Academic Coordinator in consultation with their supervisors *and*
- The Year 1 Thesis: a 12000-15000 minor thesis *which is a sub-project of the larger doctoral research*
- Supervision: From enrolment, with both approved supervisors to scope and manage the Year 1 Thesis

First Semester (EFT):

1. UGR7001 Introduction to Research Methodology
2. UGR7002 Research Design and Proposal Development
3. UGR7003 Research Integrity and Ethics
4. *One of:*
 - a. UGR7004 Intro to Qualitative Methods *or*
 - b. UGR7005 Intro to Quantitative Methods *or*
 - c. UGR7006 Enhancing Research Knowledge and Skills (a shell unit focused on the development of the Literature Review to support the development of the Year 1 Thesis)
 - d. UGR7007 Enhancing Researcher Development (a shell unit devised by the supervisor and customised to meet the disciplinary needs of their student's Year 1 Thesis)

Second Semester (EFT):

1. One of:
 - a. UGR7004 Intro to Qualitative Methods *or*
 - b. UGR7005 Intro to Quantitative Methods *or*
 - c. UGR7006 Enhancing Research Knowledge and Skills (a shell unit focused on the development of the literature review *or* supervisor-customised curriculum to support the development of the Year 1 Thesis)
 - d. UGR7007 Enhancing Researcher Development (a shell unit devised by the supervisor and customised to meet the disciplinary needs of their student's Year 1 Thesis)
2. UGR7903 Year 1 Thesis (36 credit points)

Supervision in the Year 1 Program

Supervision with both supervisors commences with student enrolment and operates in tandem with the coursework program; supervision provides the disciplinary specific material while coursework provides generic structure, scaffolded tasks and a cohort experience. The main task within Year 1 supervision is to work with the student to scope a feasible Year 1 Thesis topic that will result in a 12000-15000 word thesis to be submitted in May/October of the second semester (EFT). As per any doctoral supervision, you should meet regularly (ie once a fortnight) with your student. If your student is taking a shell unit (UGR7006), the literature review element of the Year 1 Thesis will be formally assessed by both supervisor and GRS.

Examination of the Year 1 Thesis

At the commencement of the student's Year 1 Program, the Academic Coordinator HDR Coursework will contact the Principal Supervisor to nominate an appropriate person, who is not involved in the supervisory team, who will examine the Year 1 Thesis. The nominated person will be outside the student's nominated supervision, preferably from within Victoria University. A minimum grade of 70% is required to indicate sufficient potential to undertake

Progression to Years 2-4

PhD (Integrated) students must fulfil the hurdle requirement (70% minimum average across the coursework units and 70% minimum in the Year 1 thesis) in order to proceed to years 2-4 of the Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated). With grades of 50% in each of the above areas, students may be eligible for the exit qualification (UMRP Master of Research Practice) at the completion of the Year 1 Program.

Successful completion of Year 1 means that students continue to the first University Milestone, Confirmation of (doctoral) Candidature, where the minor Year 1 Thesis is re-integrated into the larger doctoral proposal. Students will also be required to present for a second milestone panel, Towards Submission, 3 years (EFT). The Towards Submission milestone must have an 'achieved' outcome before the thesis can be submitted for examination.

The PhD Integrated degree is 4 years in length (EFT), including the Year 1 program.

Research Period 1, 2026 Timetable PhD (Integrated): Year 1 Program

- commencing students will be enrolled according to your **Year 1 Structure** (Int)
- continuing students enrol via MyVU Portal where enrolment can be checked
- **all classes will be held in person in P134 Footscray Park Campus** (unless otherwise notified) and you will be contacted one week prior to classes commencing; you will *not need* to allocate on MyTimetable
- you will need to complete HDR Researcher Integrity modules 1 and 3 on VU Collaborate *before* coursework commences (Researcher.development@vu.edu.au)
- Census Date RP1: **March 13, 2026**. Census date is the last day for you to finalise your course enrolment for this research study period. If you wish to change your enrolment, please discuss with the Academic Coordinator- Dr Rose Lucas- prior to lodging the appropriate application to gradresearch@vu.edu.au

Unit/Event	Date	Time
Preparing for Confirmation Workshops (for Integrated students successfully completed Year 1 in S1 2025). Attend <i>one</i> workshop	1. February 10, 2026 (f/t and p/t) 2. May 19, 2026 (p/t) Registrations through Researcher Development Calendar	10am - 1pm By zoom
PhD (Integrated) Program Induction (compulsory for <i>commencing</i> students only)	Monday February 16	1-2pm
Graduate Researcher Orientation (compulsory for all commencing research students)	Friday February 27	10am-1pm
UGR7001 Introduction to Research Methodology	16/2, 18/2, 23/2, 25/2, 2/3, 4/3, 9/3, 11/3	Mondays and Wednesdays 3-5.30 pm
UGR7002 Research Design and Proposal Development	16/3, 18/3, 23/3, 25/3, 30/3, 1/4, 13/4, 15/4	Mondays and Wednesdays 3-5.30 pm
UGR7003 Research Integrity and Ethics	20/4, 22/4, 27/4, 29/4, 4/5, 6/5, 11/5, 13/5	Mondays and Wednesdays 3-5.30 pm
UGR7005 Introduction to Quantitative Methods	24/2, 3/3, 10/3, 17/3, 24/3, 31/3, 14/4, 21/4	Tuesday 2-5pm
UGR7006 Lit Review for Year 1 Thesis/UGR7007 'shell units'	Please note these units are not timetabled but will involve sessions in your supervision.	
Preparing for Confirmation Workshop (for Integrated students who successfully complete Year 1 in S1 2026 presenting for Confirmation in mid S2 2026)	3. f/t, July 21, 10-3 4. p/t October 27, 10-3 Registrations through Researcher Development Calendar	10am - 3pm

Please contact the Academic Coordinator, HDR Coursework, if you have any further queries: Rose.Lucas@vu.edu.au