Graduate School
Year in review 2018
4,688 candidates across all HDR programs.

91% of all HDR candidates are completing a PhD.

96 countries of origin for HDR candidates.

649 HDR completions in 2018.
In 2018, HDR program at UQ continued to grow with new opportunities for HDR students to develop as graduate researchers. Record numbers of students attended career development activities within the Career Development Framework which is probably the most expansive within Australia. The Three Minute Thesis competition provides one of those development activities and it goes from strength to strength with the Asia-Pacific 3MT final being a highlight. Its expansion into the USA and Canada is also gathering pace and I was thrilled to be the moderator at the first People’s Choice 3MT competition held by the US Council of Graduate Schools for regional competition winners.

We also saw the expansion of our global partnerships with a new collaborative supervision PhD model with the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and the first cohort of a collaborative PhD with the Southern University of Science and Technology (SUSTech) in China with 6 students. The partnership with the University of Exeter, QUEX, has also been strong with 20 new students enrolled.

We finish the year with the new UQ partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi and a cohort of 11 students have commenced their PhD in January.

Looking forward - 2019 and beyond

We look forward to expanding our placement scheme which provides great opportunities for our HDR students to apply the skills that they have developed during their research. We also look forward to the launch of the Australian Postgraduate Research Internship Program at UQ, which will provide additional opportunities. In 2019, we aim to provide increased opportunities for mentoring via the Industry Mentoring Network in STEM (IMNIS) scheme and also through further development of our own mentoring scheme for all disciplines that was successfully trialled in 2018.

On behalf of the Graduate School, I’d like to thank the students, supervisors, professional staff and our partners who make the HDR programs at UQ so special.

Professor Alastair McEwan
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research Training)
Dean, Graduate School
Key statistics

The Graduate School provides HDR candidates and their advisors the tools to develop professionally and create new opportunities.

Contact with the Graduate School

Phone
• 16,692 phone calls to the front desk 1 January - 18 December
• Monthly average of 1,391 calls
• Equates to more than 70 calls per week day

Email
• 16,871 emails to Graduate School accounts 1 January - 18 December
• Average of 1,406 per month, or 50 each & every day
• 91.2% are resolved in 24 hours

Web visits
• Average of 59,000 visits each month
• 46,000 of these were unique visitors - that’s 78%

Candidature change requests
• 10,156 requests completed - equates to 840+ per month
• Includes changes to advisory team, milestones, leave, etc
• 25% increase in number of requests submitted in 2017

Domestic and international HDR student numbers

Fast fact: EAIT and the combined institutes have more international than domestic HDRs.

Fast fact: HABS and HASS have the highest percentages of domestic HDRs.
UQ is committed to recognising excellence in the supervising, mentoring, and training of HDR candidates. In 2018, four Awards for Excellence in HDR Supervision and one Emerging Advisor Award were given.

Award winner Associate Professor Helen Huang from the School of IT and Electrical Engineering believes it’s her mission to transform her students into bold, enterprising graduates equipped to use cutting-edge technology in the digital age and actively shape the future.

“I aim to give my students the best supervision and training possible. I appreciate everyone is different which is why I design individual career development strategies for each of them.”

The Awards for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervision were created in 2000 following a proposal by the UQ Union. They are presented annually during Research Week.
Scholarships and partnerships

A range of scholarships is available to assist Higher Degree by Research students offset the cost of study. Funded by government, industry, philanthropy or not-for-profit, scholarships are awarded following a competitive process. The Graduate School has also entered into a number of agreements to further collaborate with key partners globally.

Research Training Program and Scholarship rounds

The UQ Graduate School awards scholarships to domestic and international students - either an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship or a UQ funded scholarship. These provide a living allowance and a tuition fee offset. For international applicants, an allowance for single overseas student health cover is also included.

In the most recently completed scholarship round (round 1, 2018), out of 259 domestic nominations, 234 were successful. There were 117 international nominations with 66 successful. In comparison with the domestic round 1, 2017, we saw an increase of 19.4%.

In 2018 there was also an increase in successful applicants for projects aligned with Australian Competitive Grants (Category 1). In this category, 105 scholarships were awarded, with 67 going to international applicants, and 38 to domestic applicants.

Strategic Scholarships and Partnerships

The Graduate School continues to work closely with external parties such as Westpac, Boeing and the Queensland Government on prestigious scholarship programs. Westpac future leaders have again recruited excellent UQ candidates with one PhD candidate and one coursework applicant being successful. We have continued to collaborate with CSIRO and 2018 saw the introduction of the CSIRO-UQ Responsible Innovation Program, with the first scholarships to be awarded in 2019.

2018 also saw our first cohort of students arrive under the University of Queensland and University of Exeter (QUEX) agreement. 10 students in total (five at UQ and five at Exeter) commenced their studies. We have also seen our first cohort of six students commence as part of the collaborative PhD with the Southern University of Science and Technology in China. In addition to these partnership, we have also developed a collaborative supervision PhD with Technical University of Munich and also finalised the new partnership with IIT-Delhi with a cohort of 11 students due to commence under this agreement in January 2019.

Philanthropic scholarships

Each year, philanthropic scholarships provide support for UQ’s HDR students. In 2018, 27 philanthropic scholarships were awarded to assist students with travel, research costs, tuition and living expenses to name a few.
The Global Change Scholars Program is an initiative designed to cultivate future research leaders that have the capacity to tackle the global challenges and drive change necessary to build a sustainable and desirable future. Each year the program selects 25-30 talented PhD students from across UQ’s faculties and institutes and exposes them to latest sustainability thinking on key issues driving global change.

The aim of the program is to foster change agents and future leaders in research and society who can make a difference towards positive social, cultural, economic and environmental transformations, and who see the the world as malleable and capable of being changed for the better.

The program focuses on three key areas:
- Leadership and engagement
- Understanding of Global Change and Global Trends
- Communication skills for research and beyond

Participants emerge with an appreciation for collaboration and an introduction to transdisciplinary research.

Current program participants

The 2018 Global Change Scholars cohort is made up of 29 PhD candidates drawn from twenty different schools and institutes across the university.

Program overview

The Global Change Scholars Program provides a dynamic forum for thought leadership and networking between brightest PhD candidates and leading luminaries in academia, government and industry. Learning side-by-side with students from other disciplines, the Scholars have the opportunity to explore the broader relevance of their own research in the context of global change. The eighteen month program consists of five modules:
- Module 1 - Interactive Seminar Series
- Module 2 - Retreat to Lady Elliot Island
- Module 3 - Independent project: Ideas for Change
- Module 4 - Sustainable Business Idea, or
- Module 5 - Internship placement

Visit the Global Change Scholars website to learn more
Career Development Framework

The Career Development Framework not only addresses candidates’ researcher skills requirements, but the transferable and professional skills which will equip them to transition across a broad range of work environments and make a positive contribution to Australia’s future.

As the landscape of researcher education in Australia continues to change, it is critical to evolve the Career Development Framework to meet new demands. Not only are there changes to government and institutional agendas, but with a shift in future employment opportunities for HDRs, it is essential to equip them to recognise and develop their skills and leverage them into new opportunities.

As a result, this year has seen a focus on providing candidates with an understanding of the diverse range of careers available to them, access to networks outside academia and skills development to ensure they have a competitive edge when entering the workplace. These skills include the ability to identify and articulate their value as a researcher and not their research alone.

A range of new workshops have been developed this year which focus particularly on these skills; workshops which will contribute to the overall development of graduate researchers who are confident, creative knowledge leaders, able to make a significant impact in their discipline, chosen profession and wider community.

New sessions in 2018

For early stage candidature
• Getting research into policy and practice
• Working in the third space

For mid-stage candidature
• Mine, yours, ours: Meeting everyone’s needs
• Networking in the digital space
• The resilient researcher [online version]

For late stage candidature
• Improving your writing through Corpora
• 5 rules of grant club

Mentoring program

This year saw the launch of the HDR Career Development Mentoring Pilot Program, as part of our ongoing focus on building students’ professional and transferable skills.

The program aims to engage HDR candidates with professionals working in diverse industries (including academia) so that they can investigate various pathways and engage with different perspectives when considering their career development.

The pilot has been a successful collaboration with students, enrolling units and industry contacts. It will conclude in early 2019.

92% average satisfaction rating for 2018 sessions.
4,500 attendances at Career Development Framework sessions in 2018.
61 different Career Development Framework sessions available.
90+ Career Development Framework sessions held in 2018.
Placements

Placements allow HDR candidates to experience current practice and develop a variety of skills.

The ACOLA review of research training in Australia emphasised the importance of producing graduate researchers equipped with broad skills and abilities for a variety of careers and recognised the value of industry placements for higher degree by research students.

The Graduate School facilitates industry experiences to enable HDR students to gain experience of current practice and develop networks while demonstrating and strengthening their skills and capabilities. The Graduate School has organised over 70 placements so far in 2018. Placements were offered through partnerships with government, industry and the not-for-profit sector.

**Career Development Scholarship Extension**

Since late 2017, placements have been supported by the Career Development Scholarship Extension. The Career Development Framework (CDF) provides development opportunities for students and extended experience opportunities that include industry placements consistent with the Commonwealth’s industry engagement agenda.

To facilitate PhD candidate career development and engagement with the CDF, the Graduate School now offers the Career Development Scholarship Extension (CDSE) – an optional, additional stipend extension of up to 6 months, to enable the completion of activities that build the transferable and professional skills of PhD candidates.

It follows that this stipend (living allowance) extension should be dependent on the fulfilment of broader career development activities, and that undertaking a UQ Graduate School administered placement be an essential component of the activities undertaken. To date, 37 candidates have benefitted from this initiative.

**Information sessions**

Monthly information sessions were held to inform students about placements and the Career Development Scholarship Extension. These sessions will continue in 2019 as candidates become increasingly aware of the availability and benefits of placements.

Visit the Career Development Framework website to learn more
This year saw the 3MT competition continue to grow. African nations Uganda and Zambia joined the 3MT family, along with the first West Indies country, Saint Kitts and Nevis.

UQ’s own competition was strongly contested in 2018, its eleventh year. The winner was Micha Jackson from the School of Biological Sciences for her presentation titled Maintaining the magic of migration. Micha has enjoyed many benefits following participation in the 3MT competition.

“Participating in 3MT has helped me communicate beyond the academic community to get members of the public engaged and excited about my research.”

Starting out as the Trans-Tasman 3MT competition in 2010, the Asia-Pacific 3MT competition was bigger than ever in 2018. A total of 58 universities were represented, with participants from countries across the Asia-Pacific region. Eight semi-finals were held and ten finalists were selected. The eventual winner was Yasmin Mustapha Kamil from Universiti Putra Malaysia for her presentation titled Dengue Detective. Yasmin also won the People’s Choice award, taking her prize haul to $6,000!

Next year is sure to be a big one for 3MT with 2019 being the tenth year of the Asia-Pacific competition.
Yasmin Mustapha Kamil from Universiti Putra Malaysia presenting her winning 3MT
Wonder of Science is a program that promotes a STEM culture in Queensland schools - where students understand the importance of STEM and believe that STEM education and careers are accessible to them.

The Graduate School hosts Wonder of Science and the two are linked through the Young Science Ambassadors program. Through the program, HDR students visit participating schools. They work with students on challenging tasks, and support them to develop group presentations.

The ambassadors are inspiring role models for both students and teachers, who describe them “as bringing STEM to life”. The ambassadors support implementation of Wonder of Science, and judge presentations at the student conferences.

In 2018, Wonder of Science was supported by over 100 HDR students who participated in the Young Science Ambassador program, with 77 coming from UQ. Over the year, the program gave Queensland schools 20,000 student contact hours with a scientist.

HDR students who participated in the program enhanced their transferable skills and gained valuable experience nurturing the next generation of Queensland’s scientists.

Contact Wonder of Science:

wonderofscience@uq.edu.au    wonderofscience.com.au
The Graduate School is building a culture of shared responsibility by partnering with HDR candidates in a range of initiatives which support the goals of the Student Strategy 2016-2020.

**Student-led events**
The Graduate School is committed to supporting HDR candidates in a wide range of development experiences. To support this, a new scheme was introduced to support student-led conferences or other events designed to benefit UQ HDR candidates. This scheme requires students to enter a competitive application process for funding up to $2000 per event. This year, funding was provided for expenses such as catering, keynote speaker fees, and venue hire. The scheme will be open for applications again in early 2019.

**Student representatives forums**
Three student representatives forums were held throughout 2018 with a range of topics discussed. By partnering with students through these forums, the Graduate School is able to gather valuable feedback and suggestions relating to HDR matters.

**Confirmation lunches**
A new initiative in 2018, the Graduate School held four ‘celebration’ lunches for newly confirmed HDR candidates. The lunches were not only a way of recognising the achievement of this critical milestone, but provided some much-needed social time out and gave students an opportunity to network with other candidates. These lunches will continue in 2019 as a way in which the Graduate can update and inform candidates of opportunities and support mechanisms that are available as they transition into the next phase of their HDR journey.

**Shut up and write sessions**
Following an approach from an HDR candidate, the Graduate School partnered with her to support two Shut Up and Write intensives to assist students to improve their writing outputs. The students who attended were highly productive and were positive about the approach. The Graduate School has plans to support another four intensives in 2019.

**3MT livestream event**
Running alongside the main UQ 3MT Final at Customs House, the livestream event was held at the Red Room, St Lucia. Over 500 students attended and enjoyed watching the 3MT competition. There were also many prizes, games and generally a fun atmosphere for all who attended.

**UQ Association of Postgraduate Students (APS)**
The Graduate School worked with APS on a number of events in 2018. Two movie nights were held where screenings of the PhD Movies 1 and 2 entertained students. The Graduate School will continue to partner with APS in 2019 to provide support for events that benefit UQ’s HDR community.
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Professor Alastair McEwan with PhD candidates from the Global Change Scholars Program