

Research Degree Graduate Qualities and their Generic Indicators

A Research Degree Postgraduate of the University of South Australia

1 has an understanding of **current research based knowledge in the field**, its methodologies for creating new knowledge, and can create, critique, and appraise new and significant knowledge.

A research degree postgraduate will

- be informed by the forefront of their academic discipline or professional area
- be able to create new knowledge, making an original and significant contribution to knowledge or to the application of knowledge in their research area
- display critical awareness of current problems and new insights
- command highly specialised and advanced technical, professional research skills to extend the forefront of the discipline or professional area
- demonstrate an informed and critical understanding of the research literature in their research area
- have a knowledge of appropriate research methodologies in their research area

2 is prepared for **lifelong learning** in pursuit of ongoing personal development and excellence in research within and beyond a discipline or professional area.

A research degree postgraduate will

- demonstrate advanced information retrieval and processing skills including data management and bibliographic resources
- be able to apply data analysis software and techniques

- take responsibility for their own continuing professional and academic development
- make professional use of others in support of self-directed learning
- continue to undertake pure and/or applied research and development at an advanced level
- possess a knowledge of the discourse of their discipline or professional area and the learning and thinking strategies that will contribute to their ongoing and future development

3 is an **effective problem solver**, capable of applying logical, critical and creative thinking to a range of research problems.

A research degree postgraduate will

- be able to define researchable questions in the discipline or professional area
- be able to design, select and apply appropriate research methodologies
- initiate creative responses to problems
- deal with complex issues in specialist fields systematically and creatively
- effectively apply intellectual and technological resources and tools to significant research issues

4 can work both **autonomously and collaboratively** within a particular discipline or professional area and within wider but related areas.

A research degree postgraduate will

- demonstrate intellectual independence and be able to work in a self-directed way
- be able to formulate solutions in dialogue with peers, clients and others
- take a role as a recognised leader or consultant in a team situation
- be able to work with and within a research team towards defined outcomes
- be able to negotiate and handle conflict

5 is committed to **ethical action and social responsibility** as a researcher in a discipline or professional area and as a leading citizen.

A research degree postgraduate will

- be aware of ethical obligations to self, family, the research community and society generally
- be aware of ethical dilemmas likely to arise in research and professional practice
- be able to identify issues of social responsibility and sustainability that arise from the implications of new knowledge generated in their research area

6 **communicates effectively** as a researcher in a discipline or professional area and as a leading member of the community.

A research degree postgraduate will

- be able to communicate effectively with a discipline and professional area
- be able to communicate their own research results both orally and in writing

7 demonstrates **international perspectives** in research in a discipline or professional area and as a leading citizen.

A research degree postgraduate will

- appreciate the relation between their local discipline or professional area and its international counterpart
- use a range of research sources and literature that provide an appropriate balance between local and international perspectives

University of South Australia

Research Degree Graduate Qualities

What sort of person is a Research Degree Postgraduate of the University of South Australia?

A postgraduate who has completed a research degree from the University of South Australia has gained some very special Qualities. We call them Research Degree Graduate Qualities. They have been developed as a natural consequence of undertaking their research degree. The Qualities will be of great advantage to the postgraduate in the future.

Research Degree Postgraduates have learned, through their initiation into a research community, how to challenge the boundaries of knowledge and to create and critique new knowledge, how to do research autonomously and collaboratively and how to problem-solve at the cutting edge of research. They have set up lifelong learning networks, learned how to communicate their research in an acceptable manner, learned how to do research ethically and in a socially responsible way and have introduced international perspectives into their research activity. In so doing, they have acquired Qualities that will enrich their personal lives and benefit their professional and academic lives. These same Qualities will position the postgraduate advantageously as regards employment.



University of
South Australia

Who would have an interest in the Qualities acquired by our Research Degree Postgraduates?

You, the Research Degree Postgraduate

Research Degree Postgraduates are by definition cutting-edge scholars, at the very forefront of academic research. As a Research Degree Postgraduate you will achieve advanced Qualities that will enhance your own life and increase your employment potential, whether that employment is to be within the higher education sector, government, industry or the professions. You should be explicitly aware of these Qualities in order to demonstrate your true value to others and for your own self-satisfaction.

Professional associations

Professional associations expect that Research Degree Postgraduates will take a leading role in academic life, in the professions, government, industry and business. They are purveyors of new and exciting thinking. The professional associations have identified the same competencies as being desirable for their own members. They esteem and welcome new Research Degree Postgraduates because they possess these Qualities.

Employers

Years of research work beyond an undergraduate degree have endowed Research Degree Postgraduates with Qualities that are readily transferable to the workplace:

- the ability to undertake long and complex research projects
- the ability to think laterally and creatively
- the ability to sift through large-scale information to find specific and novel solutions
- the ability to work harmoniously in a team situation
- the ability to work in isolation, tenaciously and with resilience
- the ability to communicate effectively about their creative research orally and in writing
- the ability to undertake research in an ethical manner
- the ability to situate their research within international perspectives

The community

Research Degree Postgraduates have the potential to become leading citizens at local, national and international levels. They are able to contribute to local, national and international wellbeing by their original thinking and research. The community needs and welcomes such contributors.

A Research Postgraduate of the University of South Australia

1 has an understanding of **current research based knowledge in the field**, its methodologies for creating new knowledge, and can create, critique, and appraise new and significant knowledge.

2 is prepared for **lifelong learning** in pursuit of ongoing personal development and excellence in research within and beyond a discipline or professional area.

3 is an **effective problem solver**, capable of applying logical, critical and creative thinking to a range of research problems.

4 can work both **autonomously and collaboratively** within a particular discipline or professional area and within wider but related areas.

5 is committed to **ethical action and social responsibility** as a researcher in a discipline or professional area and as a leading citizen.

6 **communicates effectively** as a researcher in a discipline or professional area and as a leading member of the community.

7 demonstrates **international perspectives** in research in a discipline or professional area and as a leading citizen.

How will you know if you have achieved these Research Degree Graduate Qualities?

Indicators

The University has developed what it calls 'generic indicators' to illustrate in general terms the achievement of the Research Degree Graduate Qualities. These indicators are significantly beyond the scope and sophistication of the indicators pertaining to undergraduate outcomes. The back of this brochure identifies the generic indicators of each quality. The profile of Qualities will vary according to the particular research discipline or professional area; they will be elaborated somewhat differently in each discipline or professional area. These indicators will reflect the particular shape of the postgraduate's research experience.

How will you develop these Qualities?

There is no separate learning experience associated with acquiring the Research Degree Graduate Qualities. They are embedded in your research experience. The Qualities should be developed even further throughout your lifetime. You need to recognise them and use them to your own advantage. They will be developed during your research degree education by

- the guidance of your personal supervisors who will design with you a Statement of Agreement, customised to ensure your continuing research progress
- participating in a Research Education Program that will provide you with the motivation and resources to complete your Research Proposal
- drafting a comprehensive Research Proposal as a blueprint for your future research
- attending seminars, academic conferences and discipline based Research Forums or Colloquia where you will be given the opportunity to present your research-in-progress with confidence
- being involved in the academic publishing of your research outcomes
- completing a regular Review of Progress where, in conjunction with your supervisors, you will critically assess your progress and chart your future plans



In the very process of writing a research thesis within an established research environment you will achieve these Qualities. They are not something distinct from the Research Degree experience; they are an integral part of it.

How can achieving these Qualities help you?

Being aware of the Qualities you are enhancing in the course of your research education will clarify the purpose of your research degree program. By the time you graduate, you will have gained unique skills and competencies because of your personal initiative and your involvement in leading research.