PhD and Higher Research Degree Application Guide

Application Checklist

Before commencing your Application to Enrol, you should have confirmed your eligibility for doctoral study and received an invitation to apply.

This guide outlines the information and supporting documentation required to complete your application. Please read it carefully before submitting your application.

Applications cannot be assessed or progressed until all required information and supporting documentation has been received.

Use the checklist below to confirm that you have prepared everything required before submitting your application.

- ☐ Supplementary Details
- ☐ Invitation to Apply
- ☐ Cover Letter
- ☐ Research Proposal
- ☐ Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- ☐ Academic Transcripts and Qualification Certificates
- ☐ Sample of Academic Writing
- ☐ Academic Referees
- ☐ Proof of Identity
- ☐ Evidence of English Language Proficiency (if required)

Preparing your application

The following guidance outlines the information and supporting documentation required to support your application.

Supplementary Details

As part of your application, you will be asked to provide information about:

- your personal details;
- the qualification you are applying for; and
- your previous qualifications.

Invitation to Apply

Please provide evidence that at least one University of Waikato academic staff member has agreed in principle to supervise your research and has invited you to apply.

This may be provided as email correspondence from your proposed supervisor.

Cover Letter

Please upload a cover letter of no more than one page (400 to 500 words) describing your academic background, research experience, preparedness for advanced research study, and motivation and objectives for undertaking doctoral study.

Your cover letter should demonstrate your readiness for doctoral-level research and explain how your skills, experience, and academic interests align with your proposed area of research. It will assist the University in assessing your suitability for doctoral study and your preparedness to undertake research in your proposed field.

Cover letters must be submitted in either English or te reo Māori.



Research Proposal

Please upload a research proposal outlining your preliminary research concept. The complete document should normally be 3-5 pages, including figures and references.

The research proposal helps the University assess the potential, scope, feasibility, and academic merit of your proposed research, as well as your ability to develop a coherent research project. It is not expected to be a fully developed research plan. If you are admitted to the programme, you will have the opportunity to refine and further develop your proposal with your supervisors.

Your research proposal should:

- explain the background and significance of the proposed research;
- identify the research question, objective, or aim you intend to investigate;
- describe your proposed methodology or approach; and
- demonstrate awareness of relevant literature through appropriate citations.

Research proposals must be submitted in either English or te reo Māori.

A **research proposal template** is available to assist you in preparing your proposal and to provide guidance on the expected structure and content. Please read the guidance notes carefully. The template is intended as a guide, and you may use a different structure or format where this better suits your proposed research. The proposal is intended to be concise and should clearly reflect your research interests, ideas, and proposed approach. The proposal must be your own work developed in consultation with your prospective supervisor.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Please upload an academic CV (curriculum vitae) outlining your academic qualifications, research experience, relevant employment experience, and publications, exhibitions, performances, conference presentations, or other research outputs (where applicable).

Academic Transcripts and Qualification Certificates

Please upload official academic transcripts and qualification certificates (degree certificates, graduation certificates, or equivalent) for all tertiary (post-secondary) qualifications you have completed or are currently undertaking

Your transcripts should include:

- papers or subjects completed;
- grades achieved; and
- the institution's grading scale or grading system.

If the grading scale is not included on your transcript, please provide it separately.

If your documents are not in English, you must provide certified English translations.

You do not need to provide transcripts or qualification certificates for study completed at the University of Waikato.

Secondary school or high school qualifications are not required and should not be included with your application.

Sample of Academic Writing

Please upload one sample of academic writing.

This may be:

- a journal article;
- a research report; or
- a chapter from a previous thesis or dissertation.

The sample must:

- be written in English or te reo Māori; and
- not exceed 4,000 words.

The sample helps the University assess your academic writing and research communication skills.

Academic Referees

Please provide the details of two academic referees who have agreed to support your application. Academic referees are individuals who can comment on your academic achievements and research capability, such as a thesis supervisor, lecturer, or academic adviser.

Referees will not automatically be contacted. However, by providing their contact details, you consent to the University of Waikato contacting them directly if further information is required during the assessment of your application.

Proof of Identity

Please upload a copy of your passport (photo page) or your birth certificate.

This information is used to verify your identity and ensure any offer of admission is issued correctly.

Evidence of English Language Proficiency

All applicants must meet the University's English language requirements. Accepted forms of evidence are outlined on the University of Waikato website.

If you do not yet have evidence of English language proficiency, you may still submit your application. However, any offer of admission may be conditional upon you meeting the University's English language requirements before enrolment can be finalised.

What Happens Next?

Once you have submitted your application, the University will review your application and supporting documentation.

Applications can only be assessed once all required information and supporting documentation has been received. If additional information is required, we may contact you, your nominated referees, or your proposed supervisor.

Please monitor the email address provided in your application and respond promptly to any requests for additional information to avoid delays in the assessment process.

If you have questions about the application process or any information not covered in this guide, please contact the School of Graduate Research at sgr@waikato.ac.nz.

While we are happy to provide guidance on application requirements and processes, we are unable to provide pre-assessments of applications or comment on the likelihood of admission prior to a formal application being submitted and assessed.

You will be notified once a decision has been made regarding your application.