

POLICY STATEMENT: PROFESSIONAL EDITORS FOR RHD THESES

24 August 2017

GSA position

GSA supports the University of Melbourne's current policy which precludes the use of professional editors for research theses in all but exceptional cases, and must be limited to editorial intervention in accordance with Standards D and E in the [The Australian Standards for Editing Practice](#).

RHD candidates who have difficulty with the high level of academic English required for research theses are better served by being provided opportunities for the development of academic writing skills during the early and middle phases of their candidature, and the University should provide more support for these opportunities.

Rationale

- Research theses are intended to be the sole work of the research candidate, and the use of a professional editor may undermine this.
- Providing more opportunities for research candidates to develop their academic writing skills will improve the quality of University of Melbourne candidates, and enhance candidates' success in their degrees and future careers. Professional editing of a thesis is unlikely to provide similarly beneficial outcomes.
- Research supervisors already have the responsibility for reading and critiquing candidates' theses.
- Professional editors are expensive, and not all students would be able to afford to hire one. Thus, allowing the use of professional editors may disadvantage some students.

Relevant research and information

Graduate Research Training Policy (section 4.77)

POLICY	CATEGORY	REF	AMENDED/ CREATED	NEXT REVIEW
Professional editors for RHD theses	Teaching and Learning	1.1	November 2016	November 2018