

# Combined Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery PhD/FRACS Program



The combined PhD/FRACS qualification has been set up to promote and fast track future research leaders in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. By making this combined qualification available we hope to attract candidates with both strong academic and clinical capabilities to our specialty.

By doing this we aim to:

- Enhance the academic and research base of our specialty;
- Advance the capacity and reputation of our specialty as leading innovators in surgery;
- Foster innovation across disciplines, including disciplines outside medicine and surgery, to be at the forefront of the major changes in patient and community health.

Plastic Surgery is a specialty with a strong history of innovation and research. To continue this tradition the specialty must replenish and strengthen its research base and leadership. A strong research and innovation culture requires wide participation across the specialty, but it also needs a small number of truly outstanding individuals who commit to a career pathway that is focused on being international leaders in PRS research.

## INTERESTED? LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

Contact the Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons, Office

✉ Suite G01, Ground Floor, 69 Christie Street St,  
Leonards NSW 2065

☎ +61 2 9437 9200

🌐 [www.plasticsurgery.org.au](http://www.plasticsurgery.org.au)



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## Entry requirements and highlights:

- This program is open only to candidates who are already accepted into the Australian Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery SET Program.
- The combined program is capable of being completed in 7.5 years - less than would normally be required for five years of SET training and three years full-time PhD. For this reason, the combined program will be available only to the best candidates who have both strong academic and strong clinical skills.
- Process:** Applicants must first submit an EOI which will be considered by a selection panel comprised of senior surgeons and academics nominated by the Australasian PRS Research Network. Successful EOIs will be invited to submit a formal application which will require demonstrated PhD supervisor support as well as SET head of home supervisor support. Details are in the EOI and Application forms.
- Finding the right supervisor is vital to the success of a PhD or any Higher Degree by Research as they will be working with you throughout your research degree. You will need to **identify a supervisor** whose academic focus aligns with your own research area of interest. Bear in mind there may be prearranged research topics through the University so make sure you research these whilst looking into a potential supervisor.
- Scholarship opportunities may be offered to candidates at the time of admission.
- Applications are assessed against criteria determined by the Australasian PRS Research Leadership Group and Selection Panel. A maximum of one candidate will be selected annually. The eligibility criteria given below are minimum requirements only and meeting all criteria does not guarantee admission into the combined PhD/FRACS program.

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**Selection criteria:**

Selection criteria provide the minimum requirements only. Satisfying all criteria does not guarantee admission into the program. Admission remains at the discretion of the Selection Panel and relevant Dean of the host University:

1. Prior academic research experience which will usually be demonstrated through successful completion of a research component in a medical qualification, and/or a postgraduate Masters Degree (or equivalent) or publication record. Work must be of a high standard; and
2. Proven high standard in SET assessments (material provided in your SET application will be relevant for this);

Should your application not be accepted, you are within your rights to request feedback from the selection panel. Please write to [MBS@plasticsurgery.org.au](mailto:MBS@plasticsurgery.org.au) to request feedback and include your full name.

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# Program pathway and timelines

Below is a guide only of anticipated dates and deadlines for applicants.

Applicants who are applying for a scholarship stipend through the University, Government, or RACS, please contact ASPS and the institution/organisation providing the scholarship for accurate deadlines.



**Lodge Expression of Interest (EOI)** for study commencing the following year

**Closing**  
April



**EOI outcome notification**

May



**Formal application submitted (by invitation only)** to commence study the following year

**Closing**  
July

Apply for a scholarship\* during this round



**Offers released**  
Unaccepted offers expire 1 month after release, or 1 week after

**Released**  
from August

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University's Research period commences (whichever is earlier).



**Lodge University enrolment**

**Closing**

Depends on University and research period

## A note about PhD Supervision

Finding the right supervisor is vital to the successful completion of your PhD.

You will need to get express agreement from one or two PhD supervisors as part of the Formal Application process. Nominations only are required during the EOI process, though preliminary discussion with the nominated supervisor/s or an appropriate person/unit/body with research experience is presumed for the EOI.

You will need to dedicate some time to researching and identifying the right supervisor. Whilst you are encouraged to select a supervisor currently working in PRS, it is understood that you may need to look outside this specialty to find the right supervisor, depending on your area of interest. It may be that the most suitable supervisor for you comes from a different discipline entirely. The main consideration is that you find a supervisor whose research areas and interests align most suitably to your own proposed research.

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