



Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Inc

Handbook for Branches

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Purpose of the handbook

The [HERDSA Constitution](#) does not set any specific requirements for the establishment, organisation and conduct of a Branch. However, with the large geographical area that HERDSA serves, branches are vital in supporting members in their regions.

This handbook provides new and existing Branch Chairs and Branch Committees with a set of guidelines and information for organising and running a HERDSA Branch, promoting the aims of HERDSA and supporting the HERDSA membership.

About HERDSA

The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia ([HERDSA](#)) is a scholarly society for people committed to the advancement of higher and tertiary education. It was established in 1972 to promote the development of higher education policy, practice and the study of teaching and learning. HERDSA encourages and disseminates research on teaching and learning and higher education development. It also works to build strong academic communities. The current constitution as adopted in 2017.

HERDSA works to:

- advance educational policy and practice in the higher education and tertiary sector
- facilitate and promote the enhancement of teaching and learning
- encourage and disseminate research on higher education and tertiary teaching, learning, development, research, leadership and policy matters
- recognise and reward outstanding contributions to higher and tertiary education
- encourage collaboration and the development of professional communities in higher and tertiary education
- assist its members in their ongoing professional development.

What is a branch?

A branch is the local arm of HERDSA, made up of the financial members of HERDSA within a region.

Branches promote the aims of HERDSA and provide:

- Professional development activities for members
- Opportunities for members to network and share interests
- A forum for the dissemination of information about HERDSA and current initiatives.

Branches also promote HERDSA and its activities to the broader academic community.

Each branch is run by a Branch Committee comprising a Branch Chair(s) and at least two other members of the branch. All members of the Branch Committee are elected by the Branch membership (or with no election if nominations do not exceed positions).

The current branches are:

- Queensland
- Western Australia
- Australian Capital Territory
- Tasmania
- Victoria
- South Australia
- New Zealand
- Hong Kong
- New South Wales
- Singapore

Establishing a branch

Financial members of HERDSA are encouraged to establish a branch in their region if one does not already exist. This is what you need to do:

1. Get together a small group of HERDSA members who are prepared to form an interim Branch Committee. You will need a minimum of three members, at least one of whom is prepared to take on the role of Chair.
2. Advise the HERDSA President and the HERDSA Office that you have established a branch.

Role of the Branch Chair and Branch Committee

The Branch can determine the number of committee members and term lengths for the Branch Chair and Committee members.

The Branch Chair(s):

- Leads the Branch Committee
- Organises Branch Committee meetings
- Drives the branch activities and their promotion to the local HERDSA community
- Promotes HERDSA to the broader academic community
- Liaises with the HERDSA Office and the HERDSA Executive
- Is familiar with the [HERDSA constitution](#)
- Organises and ensures a fair and transparent process for the regular branch elections (e.g annual or bi-annual elections)
- Organises the induction and hand-over to the new Branch Committee
- Participates in meetings with the Branch Liaison Executive member of the Networks Portfolio and other branch chairs
- Participates in HERDSA Executive meetings when invited by the HERDSA President
- Reports on the branch's activities to the HERDSA Executive through the Branch Liaison Executive member of the Networks Portfolio
- Organises HERDSA webinars with the Branch Liaison Executive member of the Networks Portfolio

The Branch Committee is responsible for:

- Organising branch activities for local members
- Approving financial expenditure

Branch Committees can create other roles on the Committee such as Deputy Chair, whose role it would be to support and assist the Branch Chair, Secretary, who would take minutes and promote forthcoming events, Event coordinator, who could assist organise and manage events, Communication officer/ membership liaison, who manages the communication and coordinates the branch membership list, or Treasurer, who manages and reports the branch financial records (in liaison with the HERDSA Office).

Managing branch finances

Sound financial management is an important part of running a branch.

Branch funds

All branches can access funds to run activities. Some branches have funds as a result of organising the annual HERDSA conference. Where a branch has no dedicated funds, the Branch Chair can contact the HERDSA President and HERDSA Office to request funds to host an event. Each request is determined on its merits.

All branch funds are held by the HERDSA Office except the funds for the New Zealand Branch which is incorporated and manages their income and expenditure through a separate bank account. The Hong Kong branch also holds their own funds. Branch Chairs can contact the HERDSA Office to find out the current balance of their branch funds.

Branch income

Branch income is derived primarily from organising the annual HERDSA conference. When a branch organises a conference, 50% of any conference surplus, up to a maximum of \$10,000, is allocated to the Branch.

The HERDSA Executive tries to rotate the location of the annual conference around the branches. However, the conference is regularly held in one of the larger cities on the east coast of Australia, with the New Zealand branch hosting a conference approximately every five years and other regions once every ten years. This means that some branches have less or no opportunity to generate funds. Those branches can still access HERDSA funds.

Conference locations are determined at least two years in advance. Contact the HERDSA President if your branch would like to organise a conference.

Branch expenditure

Subject to funds being available, a Branch Committee can approve expenditure of branch funds up to a maximum of \$1000 per event that promotes the aims of HERDSA and provides:

- Professional development activities for their local members and/or
- Opportunities for members to network and share interests.

Funding initiatives above \$1000 must be authorised by the HERDSA President before proceeding. Funds should not be used to cover committee member conference registration fees, travel expenses or to sponsor events held by other parties.

In approving expenditure, the Branch Committee needs to consider:

- How the event promotes the aims of HERDSA
- Value for money
- Co-badging and financial input from others such as local higher education institutions.

A record of all approved expenditure should be kept in branch meeting minutes.

Access to branch funds

Once approval has been obtained, Branch Chairs can access their branch's funds by contacting the HERDSA office. To access funds, provide the HERDSA Office with the invoice to pay, or make the expenditure, provide the receipts and request a refund.

Keeping branch members informed

Keeping in contact with the branch membership and letting them know about branch matters and branch events is an important part of running a branch.

Email communication

Email is a quick and efficient way to keep in contact with the branch members. Each branch will be provided with a HERDSA branch email and instructions for setup. No other emails should be used for branches including gmail.

After the annual conference, the HERDSA office will provide Branch Chairs with a current list of branch members and their email addresses. All email correspondence with branch members should maintain confidentiality and thus utilise blind carbon copying (BCC).

HERDSA Notices

The branch can also use the weekly [HERDSA Notices](#) to promote events. To submit an announcement for this list, complete the online form at <http://herdsa.org.au/herdsa-notices>.

HERDSA Calendar

Branch Events can go up on the HERDSA Calendar and this is recommended as a quick place for members to view what is happening. The Branch Event form located on the Branch page should be used for information purposes and submitted to the person advised on the form.

Branch web presence

The branches have a presence on the [HERDSA website](#). Here the branches can:

- Provide a short overview of the branch
- List the members of the Branch Committee and their email contact details
- Link to another page for additional branch information. Please note branch information must be sent to office@herdsa.org.au to go up on the branch page. Include information about past and future branch events.

The Branch Chair is responsible for ensuring that the information on the HERDSA website is accurate and up-to-date. Contact the HERDSA Office to update information.

HERDSA Connect Blog

Coming soon

Brochures and publicity material

The HERDSA office can provide branches with a HERDSA banner, and promotional material about HERDSA, HERDSA publications and initiatives including the HERDSA Fellowship Scheme and the HERDSA SoTL modules for display at local events. Branches can buy their own banner from branch funding. Please contact the office and you will be sent the file for printing.

Engaging with the HERDSA Executive

The HERDSA Executive recognises that the branches are critical in connecting members and providing activities for members and the wider tertiary education community. The Executive is keen to foster communication and interaction between branches and the Executive. The branches, through the Branch Chairs, are encouraged to bring issues to the attention of the Executive.

The Networks Portfolio has an Executive member responsible for liaising with the Branch Chairs. The Branch Liaison Executive member arranges virtual meetings with Branch Chairs during the year and convenes a meeting with the HERDSA President and the Branch Chairs at the annual HERDSA conference. For more information on the Network Portfolio Roles and Responsibilities see Appendix A.

When the HERDSA Office calls for portfolio reports and agenda items for each HERDSA Executive meeting, the Branch Liaison Executive member will invite Branch Chairs to submit items for the agenda. Agenda items can come collectively from the branches or an individual branch. The HERDSA Office will provide the Branch Chairs with a copy of the agenda and associated reports and Branch Chairs can provide comment on matters under consideration by the HERDSA Executive. This should be done through the Branch Liaison Executive member. Branch Chairs can also directly contact the HERDSA President to raise issues or provide comment.

Branch Chairs are asked to provide a short report to be presented at the HERDSA Executive meetings as part of the Networks Portfolio report.

From time to time the HERDSA Executive may invite Branch Chairs to participate in a HERDSA Executive meeting as an opportunity to engage with the Executive and raise issues.

The HERDSA conference is the place for Branch Chairs to meet face-to-face (or online) with one another and members of the HERDSA Executive, and to engage with new and existing members of their branch. All Branch Chairs or a proxy are strongly encouraged to attend.

The Branch Chairs are invited to the 'New to HERDSA' breakfast held at the HERDSA conference and introduced to the delegates. The HERDSA executive members also attend the 'New to HERDSA'

breakfast. This is a great opportunity to connect with new members from your respective branches as well as members of the HERDSA Executive.

Each branch can hold a branch lunch at the HERDSA conference where members of each branch can meet. This should be organised through the Networks Portfolio branch liaison executive member who will liaise with the conference planning committee.

Branch AGM and elections

Each branch should hold an annual general meeting (AGM) for its members where the year's activities of the branch are shared and input is invited from the membership. If an election for the Branch Chair and the Branch Committee is required, it can be held at the AGM. Some templates for running an AGM are included in Appendix B.

When an AGM cannot be held, the election can be conducted electronically. The HERDSA Office can advise on how to conduct the election.

Transitioning to a new Branch Committee

When a new Branch Committee and/or new Branch Chair(s) is elected, the outgoing Branch Chair is asked to ensure a smooth transition by completing the following:

1. Informing the HERDSA office, the Branch Liaison Executive member of the Networks Portfolio and the HERDSA President of the names and contact details of the new Committee and Branch Chair. The HERDSA Office will update the details on the HERDSA website.
2. Handing over branch documents including previous minutes, financial records and the membership list to the incoming Branch Chair and Committee
3. Providing a brief induction including where to access information about the HERDSA Executive, the HERDSA Constitution and the Handbook for Branches.

Connecting with other scholarly networks and organisations

Branches are encouraged to engage with, promote and support the work of other scholarly organisations and even hold joint events. These networks include organisations such as:

- ACEN – Australian collaborative education network - <http://acen.edu.au/>
- Ako Aotearoa - <https://ako.ac.nz/>
- ALTF – Australian learning and teaching fellows - <https://altf.org/>
- Ascilite - Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education - <https://ascilite.org/>
- CAULLT (formerly CADAD) – Centre for Australian University leaders for learning and teaching - <http://www.cadad.edu.au>
- Promoting excellence networks such as:
 - NSW/ACT- <https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/nswact-promoting-excellence-network>
 - Queensland - <http://qpen.ltcommunities.com/>
 - Vic/Tas - <https://vtasnetwork.com/>

Useful contacts

Prof Christy Collis, President – office@herdsa.org.au

Jennifer Ungaro, HERDSA Office – office@herdsa.org

Prof Michelle Picard, Branch Liaison Executive member – Julia.choate@monash.edu

HERDSA Branches – <http://www.herdsa.org.au/branches>

HERDSA Executive and Portfolios - <http://www.herdsa.org.au/about-herdsa/herdsa-executive>

APPENDIX A

HERDSA NETWORKS PORTFOLIO

PORTFOLIO ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary role of the Networks Portfolio is to grow and enhance interactions and collaborations within the HERDSA community. Branch and regional networks are strongly encouraged within HERDSA and Portfolio responsibilities involve liaising regularly with the branches to support opportunities for shared research, visiting scholar presentations and communicating with other groups and branches. Networking between HERDSA members and with other professional groups occurs through the Special Interest Groups.

HERDSA BRANCHES

Branches are an important part of the HERDSA community. On the HERDSA Executive, the Branch Liaison within the Network portfolio, has a central role supporting Branch Chairs and developing community between the branches. They are the conduit between the branches and the National Executive, advocating their needs back to the Executive.

This role comprises the following responsibilities:

- Supporting Branch Chairs through the provision of a Branch Chair handbook and organising meetings of the Branch Chairs
- Coordinating roadshows by academic fellows and scholars
- Providing a session at the annual conference for Branch Chairs to meet with the HERDSA executive, particularly the Executive members responsible for the Network Portfolio
- Providing a session at the annual conference for Branch Chairs to meet with their branch members (if requested)
- Liaising with Branch Chairs to:
 - Identify areas of support and presenting these to the National Executive
 - Encourage communication between branches and sharing of ideas/practice
 - Organise the annual HERDSA webinars
 - Provide feedback to the national executive
- Compiling a written Branch Report (as part of the Networks Report) for the 3 Executive meetings
- Providing relevant feedback to the branches from National Executive meetings

HERDSA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

HERDSA encourages the development of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) by facilitating opportunities to meet like-minded colleagues at each HERDSA conference. A member of the Networks portfolio oversees SIGs and ensures that HERDSA heightens the potential for collaborative research activities. This may involve identifying potential groups and leaders, supporting the initiation and development of a SIG and actively monitoring their progress and research activities.

APPENDIX B

Notification of AGM and Nomination for member of Branch Committee form

Dear HERDSA <insert branch name> Branch Member

We would like to invite all HERDSA members to the Annual General Meeting for HERDSA <insert branch name> Branch, to be held on <insert date> at <insert time> at <insert location>.

There are four key Branch positions:

Chair

Deputy Chair

Secretary

Events Coordinator

And we are also looking for General members for the Branch Committee. Committee membership is not onerous but rewarding (please see Allan Goody's article 'From the President' HERDSA news Summer 2017, page 2 (http://herdsa.org.au/sites/default/files/HERDSANews20173901_0.pdf)).

If you would like to nominate for a key Branch position please could you complete the attached form and return to <insert person's name and contact details> by <insert deadline – usually a week before the AGM date>.

If you are interested in becoming a General member please feel free to self-nominate via email to <insert person's name and contact details> by <insert deadline – usually a week before the AGM date>.

Hoping you will be able to join us at the AGM.

HERDSA (<INSERT BRANCH NAME>) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER ELECTION <INSERT YEAR>

COMMITTEE MEMBER CANDIDATE NOMINATION FORM

This form must be used for Committee Member Candidate Nominations for the Annual General Meeting. Nominations must be received by the Branch Secretary (<insert name of secretary and contact details>) no later than COB <insert date>.

CANDIDATE NOMINATED

Title	
First Name	
Last Name	
HERDSA Membership Number	

for the position of (please check the appropriate box):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Branch Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deputy-chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Secretary
<input type="checkbox"/>	Event Coordinator

NOMINEE

Title (Prof./Dr./Mr./Ms./Miss)	
First Name	
Last Name	
HERDSA Membership Number	
Signature	

SECONDER

Title (Prof./Dr./Mr./Ms./Miss)	
First Name	
Last Name	
HERDSA Membership Number	
Signature	

CONSENT OF CANDIDATE

I hereby advise the Branch Chair of my consent to this nomination.

First Name	
Last Name	
Signature	
Date	