

Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship

Conditions of Award for 2024

Purpose

- 1.1 *Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarships* are awarded to applicants of exceptional research potential undertaking a Higher Degree by Research (HDR). *RTP Stipend Scholarships* are provided to assist with general living costs through the provision of a stipend.
- 1.2 *RTP Stipend Scholarships* are governed by the Federal Government's [Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\)](#).

Eligibility

- 1.3 To be eligible for an *RTP Stipend Scholarship*, an applicant must:
 - a. be enrolled, or seeking to enrol, as a full-time candidate in a Higher Degree by Research course at the University; and
 - b. be an Australian or New Zealand citizen; or an Australian permanent resident; or an international student eligible to study in Australia on an international student visa.
- 1.4 An *RTP Stipend Scholarship* will not be awarded to a candidate who is in receipt of an equivalent award, scholarship or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the stipend rate to undertake the HDR course. Income earned from sources unrelated to the course of study or income received for the student's course of study but not for the purposes of supporting general living costs is not subject to the 75% rule.

Selection

- 1.5 Selection of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* recipients will be undertaken by the University Research Scholarships Committee on the basis of academic merit and research potential.
- 1.6 Strategic priority may be given to certain groups of students as part of the assessment and selection process, as determined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research & Enterprise.
- 1.7 Application, selection and offer processes for *RTP Stipend Scholarships* are detailed in the [Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Application and Assessment Procedures](#).

Commencement

- 1.8 Recipients must accept both a place in the Higher Degree by Research course and the scholarship by the date specified in the offer letters.

Stipend Rate

- 1.9 The annual rate of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* will be \$35,000 per annum for a candidate enrolled full-time (pro-rata for part-time, see 1.18). The level of the stipend will not be reduced during the period of the award.
- 1.10 The stipend rate will be detailed in the scholarship offer letter.

Duration

- 1.11 The duration of a full-time *RTP Stipend Scholarship* is three and a half years for a candidate undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy course.
- 1.12 The duration of an *RTP Stipend Scholarship* will be reduced by any period of study undertaken towards a Higher Degree by Research course prior to the commencement of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* (e.g. prior enrolment in a PhD course at University of Canberra, a successful research degree transfer from another institution to University of Canberra, or an upgrade/transfer into a PhD), or any period the candidate was in receipt of an *RTP Stipend Scholarship* at this institution or elsewhere.
- 1.13 Some periods of University-approved leave as prescribed in these conditions will extend the end date of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* by the number of days approved (see Paid Leave Entitlements and Unpaid Leave).
- 1.14 Scholarship recipients are expected to notify Graduate Research of any changes to their candidature at least four weeks prior to avoid overpayment of the stipend. Scholarship recipients will be required to repay any stipend payments to which they were not entitled. This should be considered when a scholarship recipient makes a change to their candidature that retroactively affects their scholarship eligibility.

Part-time Study

- 1.15 The University may approve a part-time stipend for a domestic recipient only if the recipient has exceptional circumstances.
- 1.16 For the purpose of part-time study, the University must be satisfied that the exceptional circumstances relate to significant carer commitments or a health condition, including:
- being the primary carer of a pre-school aged child;
 - being the primary carer of a school-aged child and a sole parent with limited access to outside support;
 - being the primary carer for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent;
 - the recipient has a health condition which makes full-time enrolment impossible or unreasonably onerous (appropriate documentation relevant to the condition is required); or
 - other exceptional circumstance assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Dean, Graduate Research.
- 1.17 Requests for part-time enrolment must be made in writing to Graduate Research, and should have the support of the Primary Supervisor. Requests will be assessed by the Dean, Graduate Research.

- 1.18 Stipends for part-time stipend scholarships are not tax exempt.
- 1.19 If a scholarship recipient is approved to undertake their HDR course part-time, their part-time scholarship stipend will be 50 per cent of the full-time stipend rate.
- 1.20 A scholarship recipient approved to study part-time may revert to full-time study with the permission of the University. Information on transferring from full-time to part-time and vice versa is detailed in the [Higher Degree by Research Policy\(ies\)](#).

Paid Leave Entitlements

- 1.21 The duration of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* may be extended by periods of approved leave, as specified below.
- 1.22 All leave entitlements will be forfeited once the scholarship has ended.
- 1.23 For the purpose of calculating leave entitlements, one working day is considered to be one calendar day.

Sick Leave

- 1.24 The recipient is entitled to 10 working days paid sick leave per scholarship year, as per the scholarship duration detailed on the scholarship offer letter. Any paid sick leave not consumed in a scholarship year may be accrued over the duration of the scholarship award.
- 1.25 All sick leave requires the submission of an *Application for Leave from Candidature Form* to Graduate Research. The application for leave must have the Primary Supervisor's endorsement and the approval of the Faculty Associate Dean Research. For sick leave of less than 10 consecutive working days, the end date of the scholarship will not be extended, except in circumstances where the recipient has a relevant Reasonable Adjustment Plan in place.
- 1.26 Recipients may also receive additional paid sick leave of up to 60 working days during the scholarship for periods of medically substantiated illness lasting longer than 10 consecutive working days.
- 1.27 Applications for additional sick leave must be submitted via the *Application for Leave from Candidature Form* to Graduate Research. The application for leave must have the Primary Supervisor's endorsement and the approval of the Faculty Associate Dean Research. The end date of the scholarship will extend for periods of approved additional sick leave of 10 or more consecutive working days.
- 1.28 Sick leave entitlements may be used to cover recipients with family responsibilities, caring for sick children or relatives.
- 1.29 All sick leave applications must be submitted within 30 calendar days of the end date on the leave period. The application must include supporting evidence and documentation of illness, carer responsibilities or compelling and or compassionate circumstance.
- 1.30 Once all paid sick leave entitlements have been exhausted, the end date of the scholarship will not be extended if further leave is taken.

Recreation Leave

- 1.31 *RTP Stipend Scholarship* recipients are entitled to 20 working days paid recreation leave per scholarship year. Any paid recreation leave not consumed in a scholarship year may be accrued over the duration of the scholarship award.
- 1.32 Recreation leave is managed within the recipient's host Faculty and does not require the submission of a form. The end date of the scholarship will not be extended for periods of recreation leave.

Parental Leave

- 1.33 Scholarship recipients who have completed 12 months full-time (365 days) of their award are entitled to a maximum of 60 working days paid parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child, during the tenure of their award.
- 1.34 Scholarship recipients who have an enrolment status of part-time at the time of applying for parental leave must have completed the equivalent of 12 months full-time (730 calendar days part-time) of their award to be entitled to a maximum of 60 working days paid maternity leave (120 working days part-time).
- 1.35 Scholarship recipients whose partners are giving birth, and who have completed 12 months full-time (or part-time equivalent) of their award, are entitled to a period of 10 working days paid parental leave at the time of the birth. Parental leave may be taken one week before the birth, and up to five weeks after the birth of the child.
- 1.36 A medical certificate stating the anticipated date of birth must be submitted to Graduate Research at least six weeks before leave is planned.
- 1.37 An application for parental leave requires the submission of an *Application for Leave from Candidature Form* to Graduate Research. The application for leave must have the Primary Supervisor's endorsement and the approval of the Faculty Associate Dean Research.
- 1.38 If parental leave is approved, the scholarship end date will be adjusted and increased by the number of leave days taken.
- 1.39 Recipients who have not completed 12 months of their award may access unpaid parental leave through the award's suspension provision (see 1.39).

Unpaid Leave Entitlements (suspension)

- 1.40 An *RTP Stipend Scholarship* will be suspended during approved intermission or unpaid leave from candidature.
- 1.41 In the case of a recipient who is studying on an international student visa, any temporary suspension of enrolment must be in accordance with the relevant sections of the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* (the *National Code 2007*) established under the *Educational Services for Overseas Students Act 2000* (the *ESOS Act 2000*).

- 1.42 Recipients may apply for a temporary suspension of their scholarship for a period totalling up to 12 months during the total period of the award. In exceptional circumstances only (circumstances beyond the recipient's control), recipients may apply for suspensions beyond 12 months.
- 1.43 If intermission from study or a suspension of the scholarship are approved, the recipient's scholarship end date will be adjusted and increased by the number of leave days taken.
- 1.44 All applications for unpaid leave must be submitted via the *Application for Leave from Candidature Form* to Graduate Research. The application for leave must have the Primary Supervisor's endorsement and the approval of the Faculty Associate Dean Research.
- 1.45 Recipients must notify Graduate Research at least four weeks prior to resuming study following a period of approved intermission from study.
- 1.46 Recipients who suspend their studies without notifying Graduate Research will be required to repay any scholarship stipend payments to which they were not entitled.

Stipend Payments

- 1.47 The stipend will be paid in fortnightly instalments directly into the recipient's bank account.
- 1.48 International candidates who have been approved to commence their course offshore will not be paid their stipend until they are in Australia. Once in Australia, the stipend will be back paid from commencement date, provided that the candidate arrives in Australia within 12 months. If the candidate does not arrive within 12 months, the scholarship will lapse. A special case may be made to the Dean, Graduate Research for an extension on the 12-month deadline to arrive in Australia.

Continuing Eligibility

- 1.49 Recipients must continue to meet all requirements and conditions contained in this Scholarship Conditions of Award document, in addition to all progress requirements of the University in accordance with the *Higher Degree by Research Policy(ies)* and *Higher Degree by Research Procedure(s)* to maintain eligibility for the scholarship.

Course Transfer Between Research Degrees

- 1.50 Recipients may apply to transfer to a different Higher Degree by Research degree during the tenure of the scholarship and may be eligible to retain their scholarship.
- 1.51 Applications for transfer will be considered in accordance with the *Higher Degree by Research Policy(ies)* and the *Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research)*.
- 1.52 A course transfer that impacts the progress of a recipient resulting in enrolment beyond the maximum period of support detailed in clauses 1.11-1.14 is not a valid reason for a request for extension of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship*.
- 1.53 In the case of a transfer from a Doctor of Philosophy to Master by Research degree, the duration of the degree will be adjusted and will include time enrolled in the previous Higher Degree by Research

degree. A recipient who has been enrolled in an HDR course for more than two years full-time (or equivalent part-time) will be required to forfeit the scholarship.

- 1.54 A recipient who has been enrolled in the PhD course for less than two years and is approved to transfer to a Master by Research course will be entitled to retain their scholarship. The maximum scholarship duration for a student enrolled in a Master by Research course is two years full-time (or equivalent part-time). The scholarship duration will be reduced by any period the recipient was in receipt of the scholarship while enrolled in the PhD prior to the transfer to Master by Research. The recipient will not be entitled to an extension of the stipend scholarship.

Change of Topic or Discipline

- 1.55 Recipients are able to request a change in topic or research project in accordance with the *Higher Degree by Research Policy(ies)*.
- 1.56 Recipients must advise Graduate Research in writing of any change to their research project topic or title to ensure that any change to field of education is recorded.
- 1.57 A significant change in topic may have implications on submission, resources and supervisory arrangements. A change in topic that impacts the progress of a recipient resulting in enrolment beyond the maximum period of support is not a valid reason for a request for extension of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* (see 1.57 – 1.61).

Extensions

- 1.58 The scholarship does not provide any extensions beyond the scholarship duration specified in clauses 1.11 – 1.14.

Employment and Other Funding

- 1.59 *RTP Stipend Scholarship* recipients are permitted to:
- obtain funds for fieldwork, equipment or other expenses not covered by the *RTP Stipend Scholarship*;
 - obtain funding for overseas travel costs from other Australian Government awards or any other source; and
 - receive income derived from part-time work as long as employment does not impact detrimentally on the recipient's progress in the degree and is consistent with the conditions of the student visa.

Concurrent Study

- 1.60 A recipient (during the duration of the award) may not enrol in any academic course of study leading to a qualification which is not a course related to the recipient's Higher Degree by Research course.

Research at Other Organisations

- 1.61 The University may approve the recipient to conduct research or fieldwork at other organisations, including organisations outside the Australian Higher Education system (including placements and internships). In such cases, the University must ensure adequate support, supervision, and training for

the recipient is available at the other organisation. Approval must be provided by the Primary Supervisor and the Faculty Associate Dean Research.

- 1.62 A recipient approved to conduct research work at other organisations outside the Australian Higher Education system must maintain enrolment for that period in their Higher Degree by Research course.
- 1.63 Recipients will generally be permitted to conduct research project work external to the University for up to 12 months of candidature, unless further time is deemed necessary by the Faculty.
- 1.64 Recipients are eligible to receive their stipend while undertaking research, fieldwork, placement, or internship at other organisations if:
- There is no other income associated with these activities;
 - The internship or placement is within the scholarship period of support and the salary or stipend does not exceed the amount specified in 1.77; and
 - The thesis examination has not been finalised.
- 1.65 Periods of research undertaken at another organisation while in receipt of the *RTP Stipend* will not extend the maximum period of support detailed at 1.11.
- 1.66 Recipients who undertake an internship or placement which provides a salary or stipend with a total value of \$26,250 (75% of the scholarship stipend rate) or more must request a pause to their RTP Stipend payments, which will be reinstated following the completion of the internship or placement. The end date of the stipend will be adjusted by the period the stipend was paused.
- 1.67 If the total value of the salary or stipend paid to the recipient while on placement or internship is less than \$26,250 (75% of the scholarship stipend rate), the recipient can choose to continue to receive the *RTP Stipend* concurrently with the industry salary or stipend during the period.
- 1.68 Requests to pause the RTP Stipend Scholarship during a placement or internship must be sent by email to Graduate Research.

Transfer to University of Canberra

- 1.69 Recipients who wish to transfer their candidature to the University of Canberra from another university may apply to transfer their *RTP Stipend Scholarship* concurrently on their application for entry into the University of Canberra Higher Degree by Research course.
- 1.70 The University may agree to the continuation of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* in the following circumstances:
- the recipient meets the University of Canberra policy on Higher Degree by Research admission and the scholarship criteria as per the conditions of award;
 - the recipient meets the criteria for *RTP Stipend Scholarship* award as set out in the [Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\)](#);
 - the recipient meets the scholarship ranking standards applied in the previous application round for scholarships, and is found to be competitively ranked; and
 - the University of Canberra has sufficient funding available to support the remaining *RTP Stipend*

Scholarship duration.

Acknowledgement of RTP Stipend Scholarship

- 1.71 At any time during or after completion of the HDR course, if the stipend recipient or their supervisor publishes or produces material such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to the research project carried out by the recipient, the recipient and their supervisor must acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution.
- 1.72 The Commonwealth's contribution must be acknowledged in a prominent place and in an appropriate form, and the acknowledgement must include the mention of the student's support through an 'Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship'.

Termination of Award

- 1.73 The *RTP Stipend Scholarship* will be terminated after the first pay period following the recipient's submission of the thesis for examination, or when the scholarship expires, whichever is earlier.
- 1.74 Awards will be terminated before this time:
- if the recipient ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in these conditions of award;
 - if, in the opinion of the University, the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of the *RTP Stipend Scholarship*;
 - when a recipient ceases to be a full-time student in a case where approval has not been obtained from the University to hold the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* on a part-time basis;
 - if the recipient does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of intermission, and approval has not been obtained from the University to extend that period of intermission; or
 - if the recipient has committed serious misconduct, including, but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information in relation to the *RTP Stipend Scholarship*.
- 1.75 If the RTP Stipend Scholarship is terminated, it cannot be reactivated unless the termination occurred in error.

Grievances

- 1.76 Grievances relating to academic or administrative actions or decisions taken by the University and its staff in relation to the *RTP Stipend Scholarship* are to be resolved informally in the first instance.
- 1.77 If informal resolution is not possible, the procedures outlined in the [Student Grievance Resolution Policy](#) should be applied.

Questions relating to the administration or payment of Research Training Program Stipend Scholarships should be directed to Graduate Research: graduateresearch@canberra.edu.au or 6206 8370.