RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIPS POLICY

Approved by Council: 8 March 2017
Revised by Council: None

Related Documents

1. **Aims and Objectives**

1.1 The University aims to provide financial support for higher degree by research (HDR) students to develop excellence in research and research training, and to deliver research outcomes that align with the University’s Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan. This Policy establishes rules for the award of Research Scholarships, including the administration of Commonwealth Government Research Training Program funding.

2. **Scope**

2.1 This Policy applies to all prospective and current HDR students who apply for or who are awarded a Research Scholarship.

3. **Definitions**

3.1 “Research Scholarship” means any of the following scholarships:

a) Research Fee Scholarship (RFS)

b) Research Stipend Scholarship (RSS)

4. **Principles**

4.1 Research Scholarships support high quality academic outcomes and the University’s Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan

4.2 The University is committed to providing equitable, transparent and consistent processes for awarding and managing Research Scholarships that cover eligibility, application, assessment, award, termination and any other requirements.

4.3 The University ensures that the award of Research Scholarships is determined according to the academic merit of candidates and research projects.

4.4 The University expends Research Training Program funds in accordance with the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training guidelines.

4.5 No disadvantage is created for students who have been funded by the Research Training Scheme, Australian Postgraduate Awards, or International Postgraduate Research Scholarships in transitioning them to the new Research Scholarships.
5. **Application, Assessment and Award**

5.1 Applications for a Research Scholarship may only be submitted on the application form approved by the Director of Research and published on the University website.

5.2 Applications for a Research Scholarship must be submitted to the University’s Research Office no later than the due date approved by the Director of Research and advertised on the University website.

5.3 The Director of Research may exclude incomplete or ineligible applications from consideration.

5.4 Unless otherwise prescribed in this Policy, Research Scholarships are awarded by the Research Committee. If a Research Scholarship is to be awarded by a body other than the Research Committee, the procedures below must be followed by that body.

5.5 The Chief Financial Officer or delegate may attend but not vote at meetings of the Research Committee held for the purpose of awarding Research Scholarships.

5.6 Any member of the Research Committee who has an actual or perceived conflict of interest in relation to an application must report that conflict of interest to the Committee and may be required by the Committee to leave the meeting during discussion of the application, or to abstain from voting on the application. A conflict of interest includes situations when the member is proposed as the supervisor of applicant’s research project or is from the same College as the applicant.

5.7 The Research Committee assesses applications by:

   a) excluding any applications which it determines are incomplete or ineligible;

   b) excluding any applications which it determines are of insufficient quality to merit funding;

   c) ranking all remaining eligible applications according to the criteria for the Research Scholarship.

5.8 The Research Committee may only award Research Scholarships in accordance with the ranking and within the budget approved by the Council.

5.9 The Research Committee has discretion to award no scholarships in a round; or to award fewer scholarships than are available.

6. **Acceptance and Deferment**

6.1 The Director of Research must ensure that all applicants are notified of the outcome of their applications for Research Scholarships. Offers to successful applicants must indicate the duration, level of funding, and any other terms and conditions of the Research Scholarship.

6.2 In order to accept an offer of a Research Scholarship, successful applicants must complete and return to the Research Office the Research Scholarship Acceptance Form approved by the Director of Research and published on the University website within thirty days of receipt of the offer.
6.3 A successful applicant who accepts the offer of a Research Fee Scholarship or a Research Stipend Scholarship may defer commencement for up to two semesters.

7. **Suspension and Termination of Research Scholarship**

7.1 A Research Scholarship is suspended when any of the following circumstances applies:

a) the candidate takes leave of absence in accordance with the provisions of the University’s Enrolment Policy;

b) the candidate requests suspension of the scholarship and the request is approved by the Director of Research.

7.2 A Research Scholarship terminates when any of the following circumstances applies:

a) the candidate withdraws from the award or transfers to a different award;

b) the candidate is found to have made unsatisfactory progress;

c) the candidate’s enrolment is discontinued;

d) the candidate receives formal notification that the examination of the thesis has been satisfactorily completed;

e) the term of award of the Research Scholarship has expired.

8. **Research Fee Scholarship (RFS)**

8.1 A Research Fee Scholarship provides the tuition fees for a doctoral award for a maximum of four years’ full-time study or part-time equivalent.

8.2 Research Fee Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis against the following criteria:

a) the applicant’s academic record, including demonstrated capacity for research and relevance of prior study to the proposed project;

b) the strength of the research project, evidenced by (i) a clearly defined research question, (ii) demonstrated awareness of existing scholarship, (iii) potential contribution to scholarship and (iv) facility in a methodology appropriate to the project.

c) the potential for the research project to contribute to the University’s Vision, Mission and reputation for research.

8.3 A person is eligible to apply for a Research Fee Scholarship if the person is:

a) eligible to apply for admission to the Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Theology; or

b) currently enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Theology at the University of Divinity, has made satisfactory progress for a period of at least six months’ full-time candidature (or part-time equivalent) and has completed any requirement of the course of study that fell due before or at the date of application.

8.4 Applications for Research Fee Scholarships must include a statement by the applicant of no more than 2,000 words that addresses:
a) the criteria for the scholarship
b) the merits of the applicant
c) the significance of the research project
d) progress (if any) made to date on the research project.

8.5 Applications for Research Fee Scholarships are considered twice annually by the Research Committee of the Academic Board.

8.6 Special requirements

A person who is awarded a Research Fee Scholarship must include the following statement in the thesis: “I acknowledge the contribution of the Commonwealth Government to this research through a Research Scholarship funded by the Research Training Program.”

9. Research Stipend Scholarship (RSS)

9.1 A Research Stipend Scholarship provides a stipend for a doctoral award for a maximum of three years for candidates who are enrolled full-time, and is usually awarded in addition to a Research Fee Scholarships. The stipend is paid at the minimum level determined by the Commonwealth Department of Education.

9.2 Research Stipend Scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis against the following criteria:

a) the applicant’s academic record, including demonstrated capacity for research and relevance of prior study to the proposed project;

b) the strength of the research project, evidenced by (i) a clearly defined research question, (ii) demonstrated awareness of existing scholarship, (iii) potential contribution to scholarship and (iv) facility in a methodology appropriate to the project.

c) the potential for the research project to contribute to the University’s Vision, Mission and reputation for research.

9.3 A person is eligible to apply for a Research Stipend Scholarship if the person is:

a) eligible to apply for admission to the Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Theology; or

b) currently enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Theology at the University of Divinity, has made satisfactory progress for a period of at least six months’ full-time candidature (or part-time equivalent) and has completed any requirement of the course of study that fell due before or at the date of application.

9.4 Applications for Research Stipend Scholarships may only be submitted on the application form approved by the Director of Research and published on the University website, and must be submitted to the University’s Research Office no later than the due date approved by the Director of Research and advertised on the University website. The application must include a statement by the applicant of no more than 2,000 words that addresses:
a) the criteria for the scholarship
b) the merits of the applicant
c) the significance of the research project
d) progress (if any) made to date on the research project.

An applicant for a Research Stipend Scholarship who is also applying for a Research Fee Scholarship need only submit one statement.

9.5 Applications for Research Stipend Scholarships are considered twice annually by the Research Committee of the Academic Board.

9.6 Special requirements

A person who is awarded a Research Stipend Scholarship must include the following statement in the thesis: “I acknowledge the contribution of the Commonwealth Government to this research through a Research Scholarship funded by the Research Training Program.”

10. **Transitional arrangements**

10.1 Students whose fees are funded by a Research Training Scheme place as at 31 December 2016 are automatically transferred to a Research Fee Scholarship as at 1 January 2017. The Research Fee Scholarship meets the tuition fees for the maximum remaining duration of the student’s current enrolment that is permissible under the relevant Regulation and Determination or until the Research Fee Scholarship is terminated in accordance with the provisions of section 7 of this Policy, whichever is earlier.

10.2 Students who hold an Australian Postgraduate Award as at 31 December 2016 are automatically transferred to a Research Stipend Scholarship as at 1 January 2017. The Research Stipend Scholarship provides a stipend at the minimum rate published by the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training until the recipient has completed three and a half years of full-time study or part-time equivalent or until the Research Stipend Scholarship is terminated in accordance with the provisions of section 7 of this Policy, whichever is earlier.

10.3 Students who hold an International Postgraduate Research Scholarship as at 31 December 2016 are automatically transferred to a Research Fee Scholarship and, if applicable, a Research Stipend Scholarship as at 1 January 2017. These Research Scholarships are only available for the same period which would have applied under the student’s original International Postgraduate Research Scholarship, or until the Research Scholarship is terminated in accordance with the provisions of section 7 of this Policy, whichever is earlier.

10.4 The Director of Research must inform all students affected by this section of the Policy in writing no later than 31 December 2016, specifying the name of their new Research Scholarship or Scholarships, and the duration and level of funding provided.

11. **Date of next review**

11.1 This policy must be reviewed no later than 31 December 2021.