

RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS POLICY



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Approved by Council: 8 Mar 2017
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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:** Any of the following scholarships:

- a) Research Fee Scholarship (RFS)
- b) Research Stipend Scholarship (RSS)
- c) Research Allowance Scholarship (RAS)

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.

5. Eligibility

5.1 A person is eligible to apply for and be awarded a Research Scholarship if the person is:

- a) eligible to apply for admission to the Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor of Theology as a domestic student or an overseas student
- 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

- c) not in receipt of an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth designed to offset HDR fees (for RFS), or to offer a stipend (for RFS and RSS)
- d) (for RSS) not in receipt of income from another source to support general living costs if that income is greater than 75% of the RSS rate (income unrelated to the candidate's course of study or income received for the candidate's course of study but not for the purposes of supporting general living costs is not to be taken into account).

6. Application, Assessment and Award

- 6.1 Applications for a Research Scholarship may only be submitted on the application form approved by the Dean of the School of Graduate Research and published on the University website.
- 6.2 Applications for a Research Scholarship must be submitted to the University's Research Office no later than the due date approved by the Dean of the School of Graduate Research and advertised on the University website.
- 6.3 The Dean of the School of Graduate Research may exclude incomplete or ineligible applications from consideration.
- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 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.
- 6.7 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.
- 6.8 The Research Committee may only award Research Scholarships in accordance with the ranking and within the budget approved by the Council.
- 6.9 The Research Committee has discretion to award no scholarships in a round; or to award fewer scholarships than are available.

7. Acceptance and Deferral

- 7.1 The Dean of the School of Graduate 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.
- 7.2 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 Dean of the School of Graduate Research and published on the University website within thirty days of receipt of the offer.
- 7.3 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.

8. Suspension and Termination of Research Scholarship

- 8.1 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 Dean of the School of Graduate Research
 - c) (for RSS recipients not on industry placements or research internships only) the candidate transfers from full-time to part-time candidature.
- 8.2 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
 - f) the candidate transfers to a different Higher Education Provider
 - g) the candidate ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in section 5 of this Policy, other than during a period in which a suspension has been approved.

9. Research Fee Scholarship (RFS)

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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.

9.3 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.

9.4 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.

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

9.6 A person who is awarded a Research Fee Scholarship may be enrolled as either a full-time or part-time candidate.

9.7 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."

10. Research Stipend Scholarship (RSS)

10.1 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.

10.2 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.

10.3 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.

10.4 Applications for Research Stipend Scholarships may only be submitted on the application form approved by the Dean of the School of Graduate 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 Dean of the School of Graduate 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.

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

10.6 A person who is awarded a Research Stipend Scholarship must be enrolled as a full-time candidate for the duration of the scholarship, unless the person is on an industry placement or a research internship related to the project in which case the scholarship holder may be permitted to enrol as a part-time candidate for the duration of the placement or internship.

10.7 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."

11. Employment (Paid or Voluntary Work)

11.1 Full-time RSS and RFS students

- a) The University does not require an award holder to undertake employment
- b) It is recommended that full-time candidates should limit work or activity unrelated to their research project to eight hours per week during normal office hours (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm). Overseas students must ensure any work undertaken is consistent with visa conditions
- c) Employment may only be undertaken with the approval of the Principal Supervisor and Research Coordinator
- d) Outside of normal working hours there is no limit on the amount of time that a student can work
- e) A student is required to maintain an appropriate level of contact hours in accordance with enrolment. If a student undertakes employment the student must ensure that it does not impede academic progress. The student acknowledges that the award may be terminated or that the student may be placed on probation if the University does not consider that progress is satisfactory
- f) The Principal Supervisor and Research Coordinator are responsible for ensuring that excessive employment is not undertaken to the detriment of the award holder's study program
- g) Work commitments are not be considered applicable grounds for extension to the scholarship.

11.2 Part-time RFS students

- a) Part-time scholarship holders are subject to the same employment restrictions and obligations as a full-time scholarship holder indicated above
- b) Where there are exceptional circumstances, a written request to increase the allowable hours may be lodged with the Research Coordinator and the Research Office.

12. Industry Placements, Research Internships, Professional Practice Activities

- 12.1 RSS and RFS students may undertake industry placements, internships, and professional practice activities of up to six months' duration that are approved as part of their eligible HDR program.
- 12.2 RFS students have their scholarship extended by the duration of the placement, internship, or professional practice activity up to the maximum period of RFS support.
- 12.3 RSS scholarships may be available for the duration of industry placements, research internships and professional practice activities if:
 - a) the student already holds an RSS
 - b) there is no other income associated with these activities
 - c) the maximum duration of the academic program has not been reached
 - d) the thesis examination process has not been finalised.

12.4 Students undertaking a placement, internship, or professional practice are not eligible to have their RSS scholarship extended beyond the maximum period of RSS support.

13. Date of next review

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