

2017 Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship

Conditions of Award 2017

The Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarships are awarded to students of exceptional research potential undertaking a Higher Degree by Research (HDR), and provided to assist with general living costs.

1. RTP Stipend Scholarship Student Eligibility Requirements

1.1 An RTP Stipend Scholarship Recipient (“**Recipient**”) must:

- (a) be a **Domestic** student, awarded an RTP Stipend Scholarship (“**Scholarship**”) as result of a competitive selection process. The selection of Recipients for a Scholarship will be based on the published selection criteria for the Scholarship, as detailed on the Curtin Scholarship webpage;
- (b) have completed a Bachelor Degree with First Class Honours, or be regarded as having an equivalent level of attainment;
- (c) be undertaking a Higher Degree by Research (“**HDR**”);
- (d) be enrolled as a full-time **internal** student, unless the student has gained approval to study on a part-time basis;
- (e) if undertaking:
 - (i) a Masters by Research, not hold a Research Doctorate or a Masters by Research degree or an equivalent research qualification; or
 - (ii) a Research Doctorate, not hold a Research Doctorate degree or an equivalent research qualification;
- (f) not previously have held an Australian Government-funded postgraduate research scholarship, unless it was terminated within six months of the scholarship’s payments commencing; and
- (g) not be receiving an equivalent award, scholarship or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the RTP stipend rate (75% Rule) to undertake the HDR. Income earned from sources unrelated to the course of study is not subject to the 75% Rule.

1.2 For the purposes of this RTP Fee Offset Scholarship - Conditions of Award 2017:

- (a) a student complying with (1) above is defined as a Recipient;
- (b) a Domestic Student is as defined in the Higher Education Support Act (HESA) 2003 Act;
- (c) the HESA Act 2003 is defined as the main piece of legislation governing higher education in Australia;
- (d) a Higher Degree by Research is defined as a Doctor of Philosophy, Masters by Research or Professional Doctorate by Research course, where research typically forms two-thirds or more of the program of learning;
- (e) a Higher Education Provider is defined as:
 - (i) a constitutional corporation that offers or confers a regulated higher education award; or
 - (ii) a corporation that:
 - (A) offers or confers a regulated higher education award; and
 - (B) is established by or under a law of the Commonwealth or a Territory; or
 - (C) a person who offers or confers a regulated higher education award for the completion of a course of study provided wholly or partly in a Territory.

- (f) an Internal student is defined as an on-campus student whose mode of attendance involves regular ongoing face-to-face learning at the institution for the purpose of supervision and/or instruction.
- (g) a Leave of Absence is defined as a formally approved break in candidature which does not count against the minimum and maximum duration of study, per clause 10 of Rule No. 10 Made Pursuant to Statute No. 12 – Enrolment: Degree of Doctor by Research and clause 10 of Rule No. 11 Made Pursuant to Statute No. 12 – Enrolment: Degree of Master by Research.
- (h) Conditional status is defined as the academic status associated with the Recipient's enrolment where the Recipient is constrained by conditions to be met by a set deadline determined by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee or the Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research Training.
- (i) Good Standing is defined as the academic status associated with the Recipient's enrolment where the Recipient has achieved satisfactory course progress and is permitted to continue in the course.

2. Commencement

- (a) Unless there are exceptional circumstances, Recipients offered a Scholarship are expected to commence the degree within the dates specified in the letter of offer or the Scholarship will be withdrawn by the University. Approval to commence the Scholarship after the dates specified in the letter of offer of the awarding year must be obtained from the Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research Training. Scholarships cannot be deferred to the following year.

3. Period of Support

- (a) Recipients are entitled to a maximum of three years full-time equivalent study if undertaking an eligible Research Doctorate and a maximum of two years full-time equivalent study if undertaking a Masters by Research.
- (b) The duration of the Scholarship will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:
 - (i) towards the degree prior to the commencement of the Scholarship; or
 - (ii) towards the degree during suspension of the Scholarship; or
 - (iii) previously while receiving an Australian Postgraduate Course Award (APCA).
- (c) The duration of the Scholarship will be increased by any periods of paid sick or maternity leave approved by the University.
- (d) The maximum period of entitlement is calculated from the course commencement date.

4. Scholarship Extensions

- (a) Recipients making satisfactory progression may apply to the University for a scholarship extension for a period of up to six months where the study exceeds durations listed in clause 3(a).
- (b) Scholarship extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis.
- (c) A request for an extension must be submitted no sooner than six months before the Scholarship end date and no less than four weeks prior to the end date of the Scholarship. Extensions will not be approved if requested after the Scholarship end date.
- (d) No extensions are available for Masters by Research Recipients.
- (e) The transfer of a Scholarship, as defined in clause 12, does not constitute sufficient grounds for a subsequent extension.
- (f) Work commitments, as defined in clause 13, cannot be accepted as grounds for an extension of duration of the Scholarship.

5. Value of Scholarship

5.1 Stipend and additional allowances

- (a) The University will administer to each full-time Recipient an approved annual stipend of \$26,682.00 which will be indexed annually and is exempt from taxation. Where a full-time Recipient is not enrolled over the full period of the year, because of a late commencement or periods of suspension, the University will provide at least the proportion of the annual stipend for the period in which study is undertaken for that year.
- (b) Part-time Recipients are only entitled to the approved part-time stipend rate of \$13,341.00. Part-time stipends are not exempt from taxation. The part-time rate is adjusted for taxation so that part-time Recipients receive half the amount paid to full-time Recipients. This amount is determined each year by the government.
- (c) The stipend rates are indexed each year in accordance with the Department of Education and Training, Research Block Grants.
- (d) The Recipient is permitted to:
 - (i) obtain funds for fieldwork, equipment or other expenses not covered by the Scholarship;
 - (ii) obtain funding for overseas travel costs from other Australian Government awards or any other source; and
 - (iii) receive income derived from part-time work undertaken within the Conditions set by the University.

5.2 Relocation allowance

- (a) Recipients may be eligible for a relocation allowance in addition to the annual stipend for the cost of relocating themselves, their spouses and dependants to a new place of residence where this is necessary to enable the Recipient to take up the HDR at the University from another place of residence within Australia.
- (b) Relocation Allowance is paid at the rate of \$505 per adult and \$255 per child up to an absolute maximum of \$1,455.

5.3 Thesis allowance

- (a) Recipients may be eligible for a thesis allowance in addition to the annual stipend for the cost of producing a Masters by Research or Doctoral thesis. The allowance must be claimed within one year of submission of the thesis or no more than two years after termination of the Scholarship, whichever date occurs first.
- (b) The thesis allowance is paid at \$375 for a Masters by Research thesis and \$750 for a Doctoral thesis. The allowance is a contribution to the costs of production of the thesis and does not include costs such as purchase of computer equipment.
- (c) The thesis allowance is also payable for costs associated with the re-submission of a thesis, or the lodgement of bound copies of the thesis following approval. The combined total of allowances for submission and re-submission must not exceed the approved maximum amount.

5.4 Allowance reimbursement claims

- (a) The University will make reimbursement payments to all Recipients on provision of receipts and or tax invoices for all payments. Recipients will receive full reimbursement for the eligible claims they make, up to the approved maximum amount. This includes reimbursement for any GST amounts specified in the receipts provided.

6. Approval of a Part-time Scholarship

- (a) Request to undertake part-time study must be made in writing to the Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research Training. In approving a part-time Scholarship, the institution must be satisfied that the Recipient has an exceptional circumstance which limits the Recipient's capacity to undertake full time study. The University may approve a part-time Scholarship where a Recipient has:
 - (i) carer responsibilities for a pre-school child;
 - (ii) carer responsibilities for school-aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support;
 - (iii) carer responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent; or
 - (iv) a medical condition, which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification).
- (b) A part-time Scholarship is not available to Recipients seeking to undertake paid employment on a full-time, or on a substantial part-time basis. Part-time Recipients are subject to the same restrictions on employment as full-time Scholarship Recipients.
- (c) Scholarship Recipients approved to study part-time may revert to full-time study at any time with the permission of the institution.

7. Changing Course

- (a) Where a Recipient changes course of study to another HDR degree at the same level, the period of support remains unchanged. This includes changes from one field of education to another. For example, a Recipient who has completed one year of a Masters by Research and then changes to a different Masters by Research, will only be entitled to a further 12 months full-time equivalent study.

8. Progression to a Research Doctorate Degree after Completing a Masters by Research Degree

- (a) A Recipient who completes a Masters by Research degree may continue the Scholarship for Doctoral studies provided there is no interval between Masters and Doctoral candidature, or that such an interval is covered by a suspension of the Scholarship as approved by the University.
- (b) The Recipient is entitled to a maximum of three years full-time equivalent study, including the time enrolled in the Masters by Research degree.

9. Upgrade from a Masters by Research Degree to a Research Doctorate Degree

- 9.1 Where a Recipient commences studies in a Masters by Research degree and then upgrades to a Research Doctorate, the Recipient is entitled to a maximum of three years full-time equivalent study, including the time enrolled in the Masters by Research degree.
- 9.2 An upgrade occurs where:
 - (a) a Recipient enrolled in a Masters by Research is undertaking research at such a standard that either the University recommends that the Recipient upgrade their degree to a Research Doctorate or the Recipient seeks to upgrade to a Research Doctorate and this is supported by the University; and
 - (b) there is no break between the candidature for the Masters by Research degree and the Research Doctorate degree unless the interval is covered by a period of suspension; and
 - (c) the research undertaken by the Recipient while enrolled for the Masters by Research is continued for the Research Doctorate or modified to meet the requirements for the Research Doctorate.

10. Downgrade from a Research Doctorate Degree to a Masters by Research Degree

- (a) Where a Recipient elects or is required, for academic or personal reasons, to downgrade candidature from a Research Doctorate to a Masters by Research, the Recipient is limited to Scholarship funding for a maximum period of two years full-time equivalent study including the time enrolled in the Research Doctorate degree.

11. Suspension of Scholarship

- (a) Recipients may apply for a suspension of their Scholarship for up to 12 months. The approval of suspensions will be at the discretion of the University.
- (b) In exceptional circumstances, Recipients may apply for suspensions of their Scholarship beyond 12 months, and the Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research Training must be satisfied that the exceptional circumstances are beyond the Recipient's control and warrant a further suspension of the Scholarship.
- (c) Recipients are not normally allowed suspension of their Scholarship within six months of taking up the Scholarship or prior to having their candidacy approved.
- (d) Periods of suspension approved pursuant to clause 11 (a) should be covered by a Leave of Absence to cease the enrolment. Such periods will be deducted from the maximum period of the tenure of the Scholarship.
- (e) The University may suspend the Scholarship if the Recipient has been placed on Conditional status by the University, and has failed to meet those conditions within the specified timeframe.
- (f) The Scholarship stipend will not be back paid during the suspension period, per clause 11 (e), if a Recipient is re-instated to Good Standing.

12. Transfer of a Scholarship to another HEP

- (a) The decision to grant transfer of a Recipient to another HEP is at the discretion of both HEPs in question.
- (b) The continuation of the entitlements of the Scholarship is at the discretion of the new HEP accepting the transferring Recipient, and this HEP will be liable for funding the Scholarship. Approval may be granted based on exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
- (c) The period of support for the transferring Recipient will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in discussion with both HEPs.

13. Work

- (a) The University does not require Recipients to undertake employment.
- (b) In agreed circumstances, the University may permit a Recipient to undertake a limited amount of University teaching or other work, as long as these activities do not interfere with progress in the HDR course.
- (c) There is no limit on the income a Recipient can receive from part-time employment. Recipients are expected to seek independent advice on taxation matters relating to such employment.
- (d) A full-time Recipient is permitted to undertake during weekdays no more than eight hours part-time paid employment between 9.00am to 5.00pm. This excludes university holidays.
- (e) Recipients are expected to dedicate four days a week to study.
- (f) Fractional-time or casual academic-equated appointments will not be permitted unless there is compliance with clause 13 (d).
- (g) Volunteer work or service to University committees will not be permitted unless there is compliance with clause 13 (d).

14. Off-Campus Research

- (a) The University may approve Recipients conducting up to 12 months of their research off-campus and/or outside Australia. Approval will only be granted if the research is essential for completion of the degree.
- (b) The University will only approve overseas research if there is adequate supervision, the Recipient remains enrolled and the work can be credited to the Recipient's postgraduate program.
- (c) The Recipient must have gained candidacy and appropriate ethics clearance prior to undertaking research overseas.
- (d) Failure to resume study at the University on the date specified for return after a period of approved off-campus research may result in the Scholarship being terminated as detailed in clause 16.

15. Research at Other Organisations

- (a) The University may approve a Recipient conducting substantial amounts of research at organisations outside the higher education system provided that adequate support, supervision, training, and research freedom for the Recipient is available at the other organisation and on the understanding that the University will still be responsible for the Recipient.
- (b) The rights to intellectual property should be resolved prior to commencement at the other organisation.
- (c) The required ethics approval from the University will be obtained prior to conducting this research.

16. Termination of Scholarship

16.1 The Scholarship will be terminated in the following circumstances:

- (a) on the day the thesis is submitted for examination or at the end of the Scholarship, whichever is earlier;
- (b) if the Recipient ceases to meet the eligibility requirements specified per clause 1 of these Conditions, other than during a period in which the Scholarship has been suspended or during a period of approved leave;
- (c) 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 Scholarship;
- (d) if the University has suspended the Scholarship and the Recipient fails to demonstrate progress within a reasonable time frame;
- (e) on completion of the course of study, or the death, incapacity, resignation or withdrawal of the Recipient;
- (f) if the University determines the Recipient has committed serious misconduct, including but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information;
- (g) if the Recipient does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension or does not make arrangements to extend the period of suspension;
- (h) if the Recipient accepts another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake their HDR providing a benefit greater than 75% of the base stipend rate; and/or
- (i) if the Recipient ceases to be a full-time student and when approval has not been obtained from the institution to hold the Scholarship on a part-time basis.

16.2 If the Scholarship is terminated, it cannot be re-activated unless the termination occurred in error.

17. Eligibility for Concurrent Scholarships

- (a) A Recipient may receive a concurrent scholarship to undertake their HDR if the concurrent award or scholarship provides a benefit less than 75% Rule of the base stipend rate Scholarship.
- (b) Income earned from sources unrelated to the course of study is not subject to the 75% Rule.

18. Leave Entitlements

18.1 Recipients are entitled to the following leave entitlements.

- (a) receive up to 20 working days paid recreation leave and 10 working days paid sick leave for each year of the Scholarship. These leave entitlements may be accrued over the life of the Scholarship but will be forfeited when the Scholarship is terminated.
- (b) up to a total of twelve weeks additional paid sick leave during the life of the Scholarship for periods of illness lasting longer than 10 days, for which a medical certificate has been provided. Sick leave entitlements (including additional sick leave) may also be used to cover leave for Recipients with family responsibilities. Recipients must take a Leave of Absence for periods of extended sick leave.
- (c) Recipients who have completed 12 months of their Scholarship are entitled to a maximum of 60 working days paid maternity leave during the duration of the Scholarship. This paid leave may also be approved if the Recipient has adopted a child.
- (d) Recipients who are partners of women giving birth while receiving a Scholarship and who have completed 12 months of their Scholarship are entitled to a period of 10 working days paid parenting leave at the time of the birth or adoption. This period of leave is to be taken during the period one week before the birth and five weeks after the birth of the child.

19. Erroneous Overpayment of Scholarship

- (a) A Recipient who is taking leave from their HDR course is expected to submit the prescribed approval form in a timely manner and, where possible in advance in order to avail receiving an overpayment of their Scholarship. In circumstances where an overpayment does occur, reimbursement of the overpaid amounts are required in accordance with the instructions of the University.
- (b) In the situation where a Recipient is overpaid an amount in excess of a full fortnightly Scholarship disbursement, the University may recover the overpayment by withholding future stipend payments at the same rate which the stipend was overpaid.

20. Confidentiality

- (a) The deliberations and decisions of Faculty Graduate Study Committee (FGSC) and/or delegate officers relating to allocation, selection and award of Scholarships are confidential.

21. Legal Advice

- (a) All Recipients are strongly recommended to seek their own independent legal advice regarding intellectual property and other contractual arrangements, both with the University and any other external parties.

22. Variation of Conditions

- (a) These conditions may be varied from time to time at the discretion of the Associate Deputy Vice Chancellor, Research Training.

23. Provision of False or Misleading Information

23.1 If the University knows or has reason to believe that a Recipient has provided false or misleading information to the University in relation to the Scholarship, the University will immediately:

- (a) re-assess the Recipient's Scholarship entitlements; and
- (b) notify the Department of Education and Training of the suspected offence and provide a copy of the Recipient's application and any other relevant information requested by Department of Education and Training.

24. Acknowledgement of Commonwealth Support

- (a) Recipients will acknowledge the Australian Government's support in any published materials relating to their HDR. This relates to any time, both during and after completion of the HDR. Materials include items such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to your HDR project.
- (b) The acknowledgement must include the mention of your support through an "Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship".

25. Specific University Obligations

- (a) The University has a code of supervision of Higher Degrees by Research.
- (b) The University will be fair and equitable in the use of its discretionary powers.
- (c) The right of the Recipient to appeal decisions is recognised. The University will advise Recipients of appropriate appeal mechanisms for resolution of any disputes which might arise during their candidature.

26. Specific Recipient Obligations

26.1 A Recipient acknowledges and agrees that he or she :

- (a) shall diligently and to the best of their ability apply themselves to the successful completion of the degree;
- (b) shall conform to the rules (including disciplinary provisions) of the University;
- (c) must provide all reports required by the University including an annual progress report submitted through the Graduate Research School. If the University does not consider that progress to be satisfactory the Recipient will be placed on Conditional status and/or the Scholarship may be terminated; and
- (d) shall abide where relevant by the National Health and Medical Research (NHMRC) and Australian Research Council (ARC) Codes on Human and Animal Research Conditions and decisions of the Safety and Ethics committees of the University.

26.2 A Recipient must advise the University within 14 days in writing if he or she:

- (a) leaves Australia for reasons other than approved overseas study, approved suspension or approved annual leave;
- (b) discontinues full time study;
- (c) is absent from full time study for a period of 14 days or longer without prior approval; and/or
- (d) is granted another scholarship from the Australian Government or its statutory authorities, or other industry support in the form of a scholarship of equal value.

27. Related Links

Curtin Scholarships webpage

[\(http://Scholarships.curtin.edu.au/\)](http://Scholarships.curtin.edu.au/)

Rule No. 10 Made Pursuant to Statute No. 12 – Enrolment: Degree of Doctor by Research

[\(http://policies.curtin.edu.au/legislation/statutes_rules.cfm\)](http://policies.curtin.edu.au/legislation/statutes_rules.cfm)

Rule No. 11 Made Pursuant to Statute No. 12 – Enrolment: Degree of Master by Research

[\(http://policies.curtin.edu.au/legislation/statutes_rules.cfm\)](http://policies.curtin.edu.au/legislation/statutes_rules.cfm)

DO NOT DETACH SCHOLARSHIP ACCEPTANCE FROM CONDITIONS OF AWARD

SCHOLARSHIP ACCEPTANCE

- I have read, understood and accept the attached Conditions of Award governing the Scholarship and I agree to abide by these conditions and obligations outlined therein.
- I accept Curtin University's offer of a Scholarship under the conditions specified.
- I understand if I fail to meet my obligations as outlined in the Conditions of Award, I risk my Scholarship being terminated. Should this occur, I understand I will not be eligible to receive the Scholarship for the remainder of my studies with the university.
- I consent to the collection, use, storage and disclosure of my personal information by Curtin University in connection with the Scholarship, including (without limitation) for the administration of the Scholarship, Curtin University's general administrative purposes which includes communications involving surveys, the availability of courses, alumni activity, newsletters and promoting the Scholarships program through any medium whatsoever (including, without limitation, through advertisements, posters, books, articles, social media websites and on the world wide web generally) for public relations, promotional, commercial and advertising purposes.

DECLARATION

- I declare I have not consumed any entitlement of a Commonwealth scholarship with Curtin or any other Higher Education Provider I have not previously disclosed during the application process.

Curtin Student ID: _____

Student Full Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness Full Name: _____