

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE AUSTRALIAN POSTGRADUATE AWARDS (APA)



2008 SCHOLARSHIP CONDITIONS

1.0 DEFINITIONS

1.1 In these conditions, unless the context or subject matter otherwise indicates or requires:

"APA" means an Australian Postgraduate Award;

"Committee" means the Research Training Sub Committee of the Research Committee;

"Pro Vice-Chancellor" means the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of enrolment of the scholar;

"Program" means the course of study undertaken by the scholar;

"Scholar" means the recipient of the scholarship;

"Scholarship" means the APA awarded to the scholar;

"University" means the University of Newcastle;

"DEST" means the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training;

1.2 The Dean of Graduate Studies makes determinations on behalf of the University in respect of most research scholarship matters.

2.0 ELIGIBILITY

A scholarship is available to a scholar who will be undertaking an approved research Masters or Doctoral (PhD) degree at the University upon commencement of the award and who:

2.1 has completed a Bachelor Degree with First Class Honours or equivalent. (In determining an equivalent level of academic attainment, consideration may be given to previous study, relevant work experience, research publications, and other research experience);

2.2 is an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen or an Australian permanent resident at the closing date for applications;

2.3 is enrolling as a full-time student or has approval from the Dean, Graduate Studies to undertake part-time study;

2.4 is not receiving an equivalent award, scholarship or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the APA base stipend rate to undertake the proposed program. Income earned from sources unrelated to the program of study is not subject to the 75% rule;

2.5 has not already completed a degree at the same level as the proposed candidature or at a higher level;

2.6 has not previously held an Australian Government-funded postgraduate research scholarship (APA or APA Industry) (excluding an Endeavour International Postgraduate Research Scholarship) unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits;

2.7 has not completed more than two full-time equivalent semesters towards a research Masters, if applying for a scholarship to support a Masters program, or more than four full-time equivalent semesters towards a PhD, if applying for a scholarship to support a PhD program, at the commencement of the year of the award of scholarship.

2.8 Must be commencing a research higher degree on campus and remain enrolled on campus for the majority of the degree (also refer to Section 10 of these conditions).

3.0 SELECTION

3.1 Selection shall be undertaken by the Committee or its nominee(s).

3.2 Selection shall be on the basis of academic merit, and in accordance with guidelines issues by DEST and guidelines approved by Academic Senate.

4.0 COMMENCEMENT

- 4.1 A scholarship may not be deferred to a subsequent year.
- 4.2 The scholar shall normally take up the scholarship in semester one in the year for which the scholarship is granted.
- 4.3 The scholar may apply for approval from the Dean, Graduate Studies, to commence in semester two but must commence by the agreed date in the year of award.
- 4.4 If the scholar has not enrolled and commenced the scholarship by the agreed start date in clause 4.3 the scholarship will be forfeited.

5.0 TENURE

- 5.1 A full-time scholarship may be held for two years to support a full-time Masters program or three years for a full-time PhD program.
- 5.2 Periods of study already taken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the award will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.
- 5.3 A part-time scholarship may be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies where the applicant is able to demonstrate heavy carer commitments or a medical condition such as:
 - 5.3.1 Carer responsibilities for a pre-school child; or
 - 5.3.2 Carer responsibilities for school-aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support; or
 - 5.3.3 Carer responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent; or
 - 5.3.4 A medical condition, which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification).
- 5.4 A part-time scholar is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time award holder and therefore receives approximately half of the benefits for each year of study for up to four years for a Masters program or six years for a PhD program.
- 5.5 If a part-time scholarship is converted to full-time then the period of time that the scholar is regarded as having been in receipt of the part-time scholarship immediately prior to the conversion will be halved. For the purpose of determining the duration the scholar is regarded as having been in receipt of a full-time scholarship immediately after conversion.
- 5.6 If a full-time scholarship is converted to part-time then the period of time that the scholar is regarded as having been in receipt of the full-time scholarship immediately prior to the conversion will be doubled. For the purpose of determining the duration the scholar is regarded as having been in receipt of a part-time scholarship immediately after conversion.
- 5.7 A PhD scholar may apply to the Dean of Graduate Studies for a maximum extension of up to six months subject to satisfactory progress, provided the grounds are related to study and are beyond the control of the candidate. A completion plan must accompany the request.
 - 5.7.1 No extensions are possible for Masters scholars.
- 5.8 Conversion of program:
 - 5.8.1 A Masters scholar may upgrade to a PhD program during the tenure of the scholarship, if upgrade of candidature is approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee. The award duration then becomes three years.
 - 5.8.2 A PhD scholar may convert to a Masters program during the tenure of the scholarship, if conversion of candidature is approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee. The maximum award duration then becomes two years.

6.0 TRANSFER OF AWARD OR PROGRAM

- 6.1 A scholarship can only be taken up at the University from which the scholar receives an offer of award and scholars are expected to complete their candidature at that University.

- 6.2 Scholars who transfer to another provider may continue to receive their scholarship only if their new provider agrees to its continuation and subject to the new provider having sufficient APA grant amounts of its own available. The new provider must ensure that it has received information from the former provider on any APA payment the scholar has received and the duration of the APA already consumed.
- 6.2.1 Transfer of University is not in itself sufficient grounds for the subsequent extension of scholarship.
- 6.3 Transfer of program: A scholarship may be transferred to another program of study subject to:
- 6.3.1 the scholar receiving formal approval for entry to that program by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee;
- 6.3.2 the Dean of Graduate Studies' approval of the transfer of the scholarship to the new program.
- 6.3.3 transfer of program is not in itself sufficient grounds for the subsequent extension of scholarship.

7.0 SUSPENSION

- 7.1 After twelve months, a scholarship may be suspended for a period of up to twelve months upon receipt of written notification by the Office of Graduate Studies.
- 7.2 Any further suspension will only be granted where the scholar can demonstrate exceptional circumstances, beyond the scholar's control, and if approved by the Dean, Graduate Studies. The maximum period of any further extension will be twelve months.
- 7.3 Periods of approved suspension will not be deducted from the overall scholarship tenure if the scholar takes approved leave of absence from candidature for the duration of the suspension. Where a scholar does not take such approved leave of absence from candidature, the suspended period shall be deducted from the scholarship tenure.
- 7.4 The Dean of Graduate Studies may suspend a scholarship if he or she believes on reasonable grounds that the scholar's study is affected by circumstances which prevent the scholar from pursuing the program.
- 7.5 The Dean of Graduate Studies will not suspend a scholarship without inviting the scholar to show cause why the scholarship should not be suspended.
- 7.6 Any leave of absence from candidature on a semester basis must be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee.
- 7.7 Periods of study undertaken towards the degree during suspension of the award will be deducted from the maximum period of scholarship tenure.

8.0 EMPLOYMENT

- 8.1 The scholar shall not be *required* to undertake paid employment as a condition of award of the scholarship.
- 8.2 Scholars may, however, undertake a limited amount of part-time paid employment up to a maximum of eight hours per week (Monday - Friday) provided it does not interfere with their studies. Scholars should also note clause 2.4 above.

9.0 LEAVE

- 9.1 Scholars are entitled to up to twenty days paid recreation leave each year calculated on a pro-rata basis within the period of the scholarship. This may be accrued over the tenure of the scholarship. Any unused leave remaining when the scholarship is terminated or completed will be forfeited.
- 9.2 Scholars are entitled to up to ten days paid sick leave each year calculated on a pro-rata basis within the period of the scholarship. This may be accrued over the tenure of the scholarship.

- 9.2.1 For medically substantiated periods of illness lasting longer than ten days, scholars may receive up to a total of twelve weeks paid sick leave which are *additional* to the normal duration of the award.
 - 9.2.2 Sick leave entitlements may also be used to cover scholars with family responsibilities caring for sick children or relatives.
 - 9.2.3 All applications for sick leave must be accompanied by medical certification.
- 9.3 Scholars may receive up to twelve weeks paid maternity leave for a childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the award. Paid maternity leave may not be taken within the first twelve month of the award; however unpaid maternity leave may be accessed through the suspension provisions. Periods of paid maternity leave are in addition to the normal duration of the award. All applications for maternity leave must be accompanied by medical certification.
- 9.4 Scholars who are partners of women giving birth may receive up to two weeks paid parental leave for a childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the award. Paid parental leave may not be taken within the first twelve months of an award however unpaid parental leave may be accessed through the suspension provisions. Paid parental leave must be taken during the three week period prior to the expected birth or placement of the child, and up to six months after the actual birth or placement of the child. Periods of paid parental leave are in addition to the normal duration of the award. All applications for parental leave must be accompanied by medical certification.
- 9.5 If approval has been given to hold a part-time scholarship, leave provisions apply for the same period of time as a full-time scholar.

10.0 RESEARCH AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS

- 10.1 Scholars may be eligible to receive scholarship benefits during periods of research at other institutions in Australia or overseas, if the research is essential for the completion of the scholar's program. The period shall not exceed twelve months (or eighteen months for anthropology and other special cases), and is subject to the approval of the scholar's supervisor and the Dean, Graduate Studies.
- 10.2 Continuation of scholarship benefits is dependent upon approval by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee, for the period of off-campus study, and the scholar's continued enrolment in the program for which the award was granted at the University.
- 10.3 Approval of such continuation of scholarship benefits will not normally be given earlier than six months after commencement of the scholarship.

11.0 BENEFITS

- 11.1 An APA provides a full-time living allowance of \$20,007 p.a (2008 rate). Full-time living allowances are indexed annually and will be paid fortnightly through the University Payroll Office. Part-time stipends are taxable. The part-time living allowance is \$10,710 p.a (2008 rate).
- 11.2 Relocation allowance (upon production of receipts): Scholars relocating to take up their award or on approved transfer are eligible for:
 - * travel expenses within Australia equivalent to the economy/student airfare for scholar, spouse and dependants to the University up to a total of \$1455; or
 - * a per kilometre allowance for travel by car, as determined by the University, up to the equivalent airfare costs. Scholars cannot claim for accommodation or meal costs if they elect to travel by car; and
 - * removal expenses of up to \$505 per adult and \$255 per child up to a maximum of \$1,455.
 - * an establishment allowance of \$500 when a travel claim is made.
- 11.3 Thesis allowance: An allowance of up to \$500 (Masters or PhD) will be paid on production of receipts for costs associated with thesis production. The allowance must be claimed within one year of thesis submission and no more than two years after termination of the award. The amount paid will be up to the maximum rate applicable at the time of submission of the thesis. The allowance is a contribution to the costs of the production of the thesis such as paper, printing and binding and does not include such costs as purchase of computer equipment, editing or proofreading.

A thesis allowance is also payable on production of receipts for costs associated with the

resubmission of a thesis, or the lodgement of the bound copy of the thesis following approval, provided that the claim is made within one year of the resubmission or lodgement date. The combined total of allowance for submission and resubmission must not exceed the maximum amount specified above.

12.0 TERMINATION

- 12.1 The scholarship will be terminated if any of the following apply:
- 12.1.1 the scholar ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in section 2.0 of these conditions, other than during a period in which the scholarship has been suspended or during a period of approved leave; or
 - 12.1.2 on the expiry of the period for which the scholarship was granted; or
 - 12.1.3 fourteen days after the submission of the first soft-bound copies of the thesis for examination; or
 - 12.1.4 if, in the opinion of the Committee the scholar has failed to observe any condition of the Rules or the RHD Code of Practice in which event any monies paid to the scholar subsequent to that breach shall immediately become repayable to the University; or
 - 12.1.5 If, in the opinion of the Committee, the scholar has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress and the candidature is terminated; or
 - 12.1.6 upon the death or incapacity of the scholar, or written resignation or withdrawal from enrolment is received from the scholar by the Office of Graduate Studies; or
 - 12.1.7 if the scholar does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension or does not obtain approval to extend that period of suspension; or
 - 12.1.8 when the scholar ceases to be a full-time scholar and when approval has not been obtained to hold the award on a part-time basis (but not when the scholar is to revert to full-time study after an approved period of part-time study); or
 - 12.1.9 if the scholar accepts another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the program providing a benefit greater than 75% of the stipend and the scholar does not suspend the scholarship for the period of the concurrent award, scholarship or salary.
- 12.2 If a scholarship is terminated, it cannot be re-activated.

13.0 OBLIGATIONS

- 13.1 The scholar shall accept the award of the scholarship subject to these conditions and shall agree to abide by the conditions.
- 13.2 The scholarship conditions which have been agreed between the University and the scholar shall normally not be varied during the tenure of a scholarship.
- 13.2.1 Where the Dean of Graduate Studies does approve variations of conditions the scholar shall have the option to accept the amended conditions or to retain the original conditions.
 - 13.2.2 No scholar will suffer disadvantage because of any variation to conditions.
- 13.3 The scholar is required to conform to the Rules of the University governing their program (including disciplinary provisions).
- 13.4 The University shall provide a code of supervisory practice for research higher degrees.

14.0 APPEAL

- 14.1 Students and scholars may appeal to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) against decisions taken by the Dean, Graduate Studies or the Committee, on the grounds that the procedures followed were deficient. Written appeals shall be submitted to the Manager, Graduate Studies, within 21 days of notification of a decision of the Dean, Graduate Studies. The determination by the Deputy Vice-

Chancellor (Research) is final.

15.0 RELAXATION CLAUSE

- 15.1 To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in a particular case, the Dean, Graduate Studies, may relax any provision of these conditions, except those specifically expressed as conditions as advised by DEEWR.