

2017 Scholarship Conditions - Stipend and Allowances

This document provides the scholarship conditions for candidates awarded any one of the following scholarships commencing in 2017. These conditions are effective from 1 January, 2017.

- **Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend and RTP Allowances**
- **UON Global Engagement Research Stipend and Allowances**
- **UNRSC Stipend and Allowances**
- **UNRSC50:50 Stipend and Allowances**
- **UNRSC25:75 Stipend and Allowances**
- **VIED Scholarships**

1.0 DEFINITIONS

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

Committee means the Research Training Sub Committee of the Research Committee

CSC means China Scholarship Council

DIBP means the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Border Protection

Doctoral Degree (Research) means Doctoral of Philosophy or PhD

Domestic candidate means a candidate who is not an overseas student as defined in the Higher Education Support Act 2003

FTE means Full Time Equivalent

HDR means Higher Degree by Research, formerly known as Research Higher Degree (RHD)

International candidate(s) means an overseas student as defined in the Higher Education Support Act 2003 as a person who:

- (a) is not an Australian citizen; and
- (b) is enrolled, or proposes to become enrolled, in:
 - (i) a course of study with a higher education provider; or
 - (ii) a unit of study access to which was provided by *Open Universities Australia;

but does not include:

- (c) a person entitled to stay in Australia, or to enter and stay in Australia, without any limitation as to time; or
- (d) a New Zealand citizen; or

- (e) a diplomatic or consular representative of New Zealand, a member of the staff of such a representative or the spouse, de facto partner (within the meaning of the Acts Interpretation Act 1901) or dependent relative of such a representative.

Master Degree (Research) means Master of Philosophy or MPhil

MOU means a Memorandum of Understanding

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

RTP means the Research Training Program Scholarship as defined in the [Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#)

RTP Allowance means the Research Training Program Scholarship Allowance

RTP Fees Offset means the Research Training Program Fees Offset as defined [Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#)

RTP Stipend means the Research Training Program Scholarship Stipend

Scholar means the recipient of the scholarship

Scholarship means the stipend and/or allowance type awarded to the scholar

Stipend means a living allowance

University means the University of Newcastle

VIED means Vietnam International Education Development of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)

Please note that the terms **candidate**, **student** and **scholar** are used interchangeably throughout these conditions.

- 1.2 The Dean of Graduate Research 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 Master Degree (Research) or Doctoral Degree (Research) at the University upon commencement of the award and who:

- 2.1 is enrolling as a full-time candidate or has approval from the Dean of Graduate Research to undertake part-time study;
- 2.2 is not receiving an equivalent award, scholarship or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the RTP Stipend base rate to undertake the proposed program. Income earned from sources unrelated to the program of study is not subject to the 75% rule;
- 2.3 is commencing a Higher Degree by Research on campus and will 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 The Guidelines for Commonwealth Scholarships (Research) 2017 issued by the Department of Education and Training and the Guidelines approved by the Research Training Sub-Committee.

4.0 COMMENCEMENT

- 4.1 The scholar must be enrolled and commence the scholarship no later than the date specified in the scholarship offer letter. If this condition is not met the offer will be forfeited.

5.0 TENURE

- 5.1 A full-time scholarship may be held for two years to support a full-time Master Degree (Research) or three and a half years for a full-time Doctoral Degree (Research).
- 5.2 The duration of the scholarship will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:
- 5.2.1 towards the course of study prior to the commencement of the scholarship; and
 - 5.2.2 during suspension of the scholarship if approved leave of absence is not also taken.
- 5.3 A part-time scholarship may be approved by the Dean of Graduate Research 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 Master Degree (Research) or seven years for a Doctoral Degree (Research).
- 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 International candidates with a Student Visa cannot study on a part-time basis and therefore cannot apply to receive a scholarship part-time, in accordance with the [ESOS Act](#).
- 5.8 **Conversion of program:**
- 5.8.1 A Master Degree (Research) scholar may upgrade to a Doctoral Degree (Research) program during the tenure of the scholarship, if upgrade of candidature is approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee. The stipend and allowances duration then becomes three and a half years.
 - 5.8.2 A Doctoral Degree (Research) scholar may convert to a Master Degree (Research) program during the tenure of the scholarship, if conversion of candidature is approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee. The maximum stipend and allowances 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 should contact the provider to determine whether or not they may be awarded a scholarship at that institution. If so, the provider must ensure that it has received information from the former provider on any RTP payment the scholar has received and the duration of the RTP scholarship already consumed, including approved periods of leave.
- 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 Research's approval of the transfer of the scholarship to the new program.
- 6.3.3 If transferring to a new School or Faculty, the funding being available in that Faculty/School if applicable.

7.0 SUSPENSION

- 7.1 After twelve months FTE the scholar may apply to the Dean of Graduate Research for suspension of scholarship for a period of up to twelve months during the tenure of the scholarship.
- 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 of Graduate Research. 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 Research 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. Suspensions for all above listed scholarship types will be in accordance with the RTP Scholarship Policy.
- 7.5 Any leave of absence from candidature on a semester basis must be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee.
- 7.6 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 university requires that scholars do not undertake paid employment of more than eight hours per week within the hours of 9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.
- 8.2 A scholar with a student visa may not undertake employment that is inconsistent with the conditions of their visa.
- 8.3 The scholar shall not be *required* to undertake paid employment as a condition of award of the scholarship.

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 60 working days 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 and submitted within the tenure of the award.

9.3 Scholars may receive up to 60 working days paid parental leave for childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the scholarship. Paid parental leave applies only to the primary carer and may not be taken within the first twelve month of the award; however unpaid parental leave may be accessed through the suspension provisions. 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 and submitted within the tenure of the award.

9.4 Scholars who are partners of women giving birth may receive up to ten working days paid parental leave for a childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the scholarship. 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 and submitted within the tenure of the award.

9.5 If approval has been given to hold a part-time scholarship, periods of leave provisions are adjusted for part-time equivalent.

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 of Graduate Research.

10.2 Continuation of scholarship benefits is dependent upon approval by the Dean of Graduate Research on recommendation from 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 Stipend

The **RTP Stipend** provides a full-time living allowance of \$26,682 per annum (2017 rate). The stipend is indexed annually and will be paid fortnightly through the University Payroll Office. Part-time stipends are taxable. The part-time living allowance is \$13,341 per annum (2017 rate).

The R&I Global Engagement, UNRSC, UNRSC50:50, UNRSC25:75 and VIED scholarships provide a full-time living allowance of \$26,682 per annum (2017 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 \$13,341 per annum (2017 rate).

11.2 Relocation Allowance

The **RTP Allowance** provides a relocation allowance of \$1,500 will be paid to scholars who have relocated to Newcastle or Ourimbah from an overseas country to take up their scholarship award. This will be paid as a lump sum payment and included in the first pay.

Scholars who relocate to Newcastle or Ourimbah from within Australia will be eligible for a relocation allowance of up to \$1,500 upon production of tax invoices/receipts relating to the relocation. Expenses claimable include:

- Travel to Newcastle/Ourimbah equivalent to the economy/student airfare, for scholar, spouse and dependents;
- Removalist expenses
- A per kilometre allowance if travelling by car, as determined by the University,

up to the equivalent economy/student airfare costs. Scholars cannot claim for accommodation, meal costs, or direct petrol costs;

The maximum total amount payable for relocation allowance is \$1,500.

The R&I Global Engagement, UNRSC, UNRSC50:50, UNRSC25:75 and VIED scholarships provide the same relocation allowance as the RTP Allowance.

11.3 **Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)**

For international scholars receiving an RTP Stipend, R&I Global Engagement, UNRSC, UNRSC50:50 or UNRSC25:75, OSHC will be provided for the duration of the visa.

VIED scholars will be covered for single overseas student health cover for the duration of the visa.

Candidates are personally required to cover the cost of OSHC for any period of Visa where OSHC is not funded by a scholarship, for example ELICOS and/or extension of candidature beyond the two (MPhil) or four year (PhD) tenure.

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 Governing Higher Doctoral Degrees](#) or the [Code of Practice for Research Higher degree Candidature](#) 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 UON Graduate Research; 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.

- 13.3 Recipients of RTP funded scholarships are required to acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution when, at any time during or after completion of the program, they publish or produce material such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to the research project carried out during their program. The acknowledgment must include mention of the support through an "Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship".
- 13.4 No scholar will suffer disadvantage because of any variation to conditions.
- 13.5 The scholar is required to conform to the Rules of the University governing their program (including disciplinary provisions).
- 13.6 The University shall provide a [Code of Practice for Research Higher Degree Candidature](#).

14.0 APPEAL

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

15.0 RELAXATION CLAUSE

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