

## Australian Government Research Training Program

### Stipend (International) [RTPSI]

### 2021 International Student Rules

#### 1. BACKGROUND

RTPSI scholarships are awarded to students of exceptional research potential undertaking a Higher Degree by Research (HDR). RTPSIs are provided to assist with general living costs.

The following Rules are based on the Australian Government's [Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines \(Research\) 2017 \(legislation.gov.au\)](#) and adapted to comply with QUT's [higher degree research candidate policy](#).

#### 2. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

##### 2.1 Basic Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for an RTPSI, a student must:

- (a) be an international student enrolled in an accredited HDR course of study at an Australian Higher Education Provider
- (b) not be receiving income from another source to support that student's general living costs while undertaking their course of study if that income is greater than 75% of that student's RTP Stipend rate. Income unrelated to the student's course of study or income received for the student's course of study but not for the purposes of supporting general living costs is not to be taken into account.

##### 2.2 QUT Conditions

A student must also:

- (a) have met QUT's Admission criteria
- (b) be undertaking a Higher Degree Research at QUT; and
- (c) be enrolled as a full-time student. International students are required to remain in full-time studies. QUT may not approve a change to part-time students; and
- (d) normally be deemed as an internal student, consistent with the scholarship rule definition\*;
- (e) if undertaking:
  - (i) a Master of Philosophy not hold a Research Doctorate or a Master of Philosophy or an equivalent research qualification; or
  - (ii) a Research Doctorate, not hold a Research Doctorate or an equivalent research qualification

\* For the purpose of these scholarship rules, the HDR student definition of attendance mode is:

**Internal:** where instruction or supervision in all coursework and thesis units in which the student is enrolled is delivered by attendance at a place designated by the Registrar as a campus of the university; or

**External:** in accordance with the Australian Government ESOS Act [Information for students]:

<https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Pages/Regulatoryinformation.aspx#Information>

### 3. APPLICATION, SELECTION AND OFFER PROCESSES AND POLICIES

QUT is responsible for the RTPSD application, selection and offer processes and must make information about the processes, policies and conditions of scholarship readily and publicly available.

#### 3.1 Applications

3.1.1 QUT conducts a competitive application process for awarding RTPSIs.

3.1.2 Applications for RTPSIs must be submitted in the form approved and by the date determined by QUT.

#### 3.2 Selection Policy

QUT maintains an RTPSI selection policy which accords with these Rules and the fairness requirements in Subdivision 19-D of Part 2-1 of *the Act*. QUT selects students for an RTPSI in accordance with the policy.

#### 3.3 Offer Process

3.3.1 QUT must offer as many RTPSIs as it can support through its RTPSI grant, taking into account any rollover of grant amounts as provided for in section 46-35 of *the Act* and liabilities arising from additional scholarship offers, thesis allowances, paid leave provisions and extensions or suspensions of RTPSIs approved by QUT. QUT is responsible for managing these liabilities.

3.3.2 QUT must only offer a student an RTPSI as a result of:

- an application lodged as part of a competitive application process; or
- QUT agreeing to continue an RTPSI for a student who is already in receipt of an RTPSI and is transferring from another Higher Education Provider under paragraph 4.3 of these Rules.

3.3.3 QUT will offer an RTPSI to a student in writing and advise the student in writing of the assistance to which they are entitled and the conditions of the RTPSI.

#### 3.4 Payments to Students

3.4.1 QUT must spend RTPSI grant amounts only on the making of RTPSI payments to students awarded an RTPSI who are undertaking their HDR with QUT.

3.4.2 Each year, QUT must pay each student the full value of their RTPSI unless that student has commenced late or suspended their RTPSI or the RTPSI has been terminated. Where a student is not enrolled over the full period of the year, because of a late commencement or periods of suspension, QUT must pay at least the proportion of the annual stipend for the period in which study is undertaken for that year.

3.4.3 QUT must make fortnightly payments to students in respect of their annual stipend. Payments must be made directly to students. To avoid doubt, payment into an account in the student's name with an Australian ADI (as defined in the [Corporations Act 2001](#)) is considered to be a payment directly to the student.

#### 3.5 Value of Scholarships and Indexation Arrangements

3.5.1 The 2021 RTPSD rates are listed in [Appendix 1](#).

3.5.2 The full-time RTPSI rate for any particular year may be the same as that for the preceding year, indexed in accordance with the method set out in Part 5-6 of *the Act*, or it may be a different amount, as determined by the relevant Government Department.

### 3.6 Thesis Allowance

Students may be eligible for a thesis allowance in addition to the annual stipend for the cost of producing a Master of Philosophy thesis or Research Doctorate thesis. QUT must maintain and apply its thesis allowance policy. A claim for thesis allowance is assessed against QUT's thesis allowance policy (see [Appendix 2](#)).

### 3.7 Duration of an RTPSD

- 3.7.1 The duration of an RTPSI is 3 years for a student undertaking full-time Research Doctorate studies.
- 3.7.2 The duration of an RTPSD for a student undertaking full-time Master of Philosophy studies is 1.5 years.
- 3.7.3 The duration of an RTPSI will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:
  - (a) towards the degree prior to the commencement of the RTPSI; or
  - (b) towards the degree during suspension of the RTPSI;
  - (c) previously while receiving an RTPSI.
- 3.7.4 The duration of an RTPSI will be increased by any periods of paid sick or maternity leave approved by QUT.

### 3.8 Extension of an RTPSD

- 3.8.1 QUT may approve an extension to the duration of an RTPSI for a Research Doctorate student of up to 6 months, provided the student is making satisfactory progress and the grounds for the extension relate to the study and are beyond the control of the student.
- 3.8.2 QUT may approve an extension to the duration of an RTPSI for a Master of Philosophy student of up to 6 months provided the grounds for the extension relate to the study and are beyond the control of the student where that extension does not exceed a maximum scholarship during of two years full time equivalent.
- 3.8.3 An application to extend the period of tenure of the RTPSI should be submitted using the appropriate QUT form no earlier than three months prior to the end of the RTPSI. Any delays must be highlighted in the Annual Progress Reports.

## 4 CONDITIONS OF SCHOLARSHIP

### 4.1 Ongoing Eligibility

- 4.1.1 QUT monitors students' ongoing eligibility through the Annual Progress Reports and degree milestones to ensure that each student continues to meet the eligibility requirements set out in paragraph 2.1 of these Rules.
- 4.1.2 RTPSI recipients are required to notify the Graduate Research Centre (GRC) as soon as possible of any change in circumstances which may affect eligibility to continue to receive any scholarship entitlements.

### 4.2 Suspensions of an RTPSD

- 4.2.1 Students may apply to QUT for a suspension of their RTPSI. The approval of a suspension will be at the discretion of QUT. (In respect of a scholarship, a suspension means a period of time during which a scholarship holder is not receiving scholarship payments).
- 4.2.2 Any periods of study undertaken during a suspension will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure of the RTPSI.

4.2.3 If prior approval of a suspension is not obtained, the student shall be deemed to be absent without permission and the RTPSI shall terminate.

4.2.4 If the student does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension, or does not make arrangements to extend that period of suspension, the RTPSI will terminate.

#### **4.3 Transfer to another Higher Education Provider (HEP)**

Students who transfer to another HEP may continue to receive their RTPSI only if their new HEP agrees to its continuation and subject to the new HEP having sufficient RTPSI grant amounts of its own available. QUT will (upon request) provide information to the new HEP on any RTPSI payment the student has received and the duration of the RTPSI already consumed.

#### **4.4 Change of Field of Education**

QUT may approve a student's request to change from the research area indicated in the original placement, providing:

- (a) the new research area is one of QUT's areas of research concentration; and
- (b) there will be no extension to the duration of the award arising from the change of research area beyond the period of the original placement, including any previously approved extensions. The only exception is where the change of research area results from circumstances relating to the research which are outside the control of the student and QUT.

#### **4.5 Conversion of Degree**

Unless otherwise specified in the offer of scholarship, the below conditions apply to conversion of degree.

4.5.1 Students may convert from a Master of Philosophy degree to a Research Doctorate degree or from a Research Doctorate degree to a Master of Philosophy degree, and continue to receive their RTPSI.

4.5.2 A student who converts from a Master of Philosophy degree may continue to receive their RTPSI for a Research Doctorate degree provided there is no interval between the completion of the Master of Philosophy degree and the commencement of the Research Doctorate degree, or that such an interval is covered by suspension of the RTPSI.

4.5.3 The maximum duration of a converted RTPSI becomes that for the new research degree minus periods of study undertaken towards the related degree prior to the conversion.

#### **4.6 Leave Entitlements**

4.6.1 Students are entitled to receive up to 20 working days' paid recreation leave and 10 working days' paid sick leave for each year of the RTPSI. These leave entitlements may be accrued over the life of the RTPSI but will be forfeited when the RTPSI is terminated. These leave entitlements can be taken at any time within the term of the award by agreement with the supervisor and do not require Research Degrees Committee (RDC) approval or notification. Milestone dates will not be adjusted and satisfactory progress must be maintained.

4.6.2 Students are entitled to receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of 12 weeks (60 working days) during the duration of the RTPSI for periods of illness where the student has insufficient sick leave entitlements available under paragraph 5.6.1, provided that a medical certificate has been provided by the student to QUT.

- 4.6.3 Sick leave entitlements (including additional sick leave) may also be used to cover leave for students with family caring responsibilities, subject to the usual practice of QUT and provision of relevant supporting documentation by the student to QUT.
- 4.6.4 Students who have completed 12 months of their RTPSI are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks (60 working days) paid maternity leave during the duration of the RTPSI. Subject to the usual practice of QUT, paid leave may also be approved if the student has adopted/fostered a child for whom they are the primary carer. Milestone dates will be adjusted.
- 4.6.5 Students who are partners of women giving birth or are adopting a child during an RTPSI and who have completed 12 months of their RTPSI may be entitled to a period of paid parenting leave (up to 10 working days) at the time of the birth or adoption, subject to the usual practice of QUT. Milestone dates will not be adjusted and satisfactory progress must be maintained.
- 4.6.6 Leave taken in accordance with the entitlements available under paragraphs 4.6.1 and 4.6.5, will not be grounds for an extension of scholarship. All leave must be managed so that it has no adverse impact on the satisfactory completion of your research milestones. If this will not be the case, then please apply for unpaid leave of absence and suspension of your scholarship using the Leave of Absence form.
- 4.6.7 Students may apply to RDC for leave of absence from their degree and suspension of the RTPSI for a total of up to twelve months full-time.
- 4.6.8 RTPSI recipients must apply for leave 4 weeks before the leave of absence occurs to ensure scholarship payments are suspended in a timely manner or the correct paid leave entitlements are applied to the duration of the recipient's leave.

#### 4.7 Work

- 4.7.1 International students may undertake work consistent with the conditions of their student visa and subject to the approval of QUT prior to undertaking such work.
- 4.7.2 A full time student in receipt of a QUTPRA is required to commit to their course of study not less than 40 hours per week, during the normal working week. With the approval of the supervisory team and Head of School in which the course of study is being undertaken (following the advice of the principal supervisor), the student may engage in a limited amount of part-time employment provided that such employment does not interfere with the course of study. Students, therefore, are allowed to undertake up to 10 hours during the normal working week.
- 4.7.3 The supervisory team will report on the amount of part-time employment during the normal working week in the Annual Progress Report.
- 4.7.4 There is no limit on how much income an award holder can receive from part-time paid work which is not related to the research topic (in line with the recommended hours of part-time employment in 4.7.2 above).
- 4.7.5 QUT reserves the right to terminate the award of any recipient whose progress, as a result of additional work undertaken, is not satisfactory.
- 4.7.6 QUT will not approve a student undertaking work unless it is satisfied that the work will not interfere with the student's study for their degree.
- 4.7.7 Work commitments cannot be accepted as grounds for an extension of the duration of the RTPSI.

#### 4.8 Acknowledgement of RTP Scholarship

- 4.8.1 Recipients of RTP Scholarships, their supervisors and any other party who publishes or produces materials such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to the research project carried out by the recipient of the RTP are expected to acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution.
- 4.8.2 The Commonwealth's contribution should be acknowledged in a prominent place and in an appropriate form. The acknowledgement must include mention of the student's support through an "Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship".

#### 4.9 Termination of an RTPSI

- 4.9.1 QUT must terminate an RTPSI:
- (a) if the student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria and other conditions specified in paragraph 2.1 and 4.1 of these Rules, other than during a period in which the RTPSI has been suspended or during a period of leave in accordance with paragraph 4.6 of these Rules; or
  - (b) when the student ceases to be a full-time student; or
  - (c) when the student lodges for examination and adopts the status "under examination"; or
  - (d) when the student completes the course of study, unless completing a Master of Philosophy degree and undertaking a Research Doctorate degree under paragraph 4.5.2 of these Rules; or
  - (e) if QUT determines that:
    - (i) the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of the RTPSI; or
    - (ii) the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress; or
    - (iii) the student has committed serious misconduct, including, but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information in terms of paragraph 4.10.
- 4.9.2 If an RTPSI is terminated, it cannot be re-activated unless the termination occurred in error.

#### 4.10 Provision of False or Misleading Information

If QUT knows or has reason to believe that a student in receipt of an RTPSI has provided false or misleading information to QUT in relation to the RTPSI, QUT must immediately:

- re-assess the student's entitlement to the RTPSI; and
- notify the relevant Australian Government Department of the suspected offence and provide a copy of the student's application and any other relevant information requested by the Government Department.

## 5 MISCELLANEOUS

### 5.1 Supervision and Facilities

QUT must:

- (a) ensure that adequate facilities and appropriate supervision are available for each student undertaking a HDR; and
- (b) establish, make publicly available, and abide by, a code of supervisory practice for students undertaking a HDR.

### 5.2 Overpayment of a scholarship

If, in the opinion of QUT, a student has been overpaid any part of an RTPSI entitlement (either through the failure of the student to comply with these Rules or for any other reason), the student will be required to repay the full amount of the overpayment, without deduction within thirty days of being requested to do so by QUT.

### 5.3 Appeals

Students have the right to request a review of the decisions made by QUT in relation to their scholarship application outcome. In the event of a dispute arising, the student should first approach his or her supervisor/faculty who will then direct the student through the appropriate channels within QUT. Any formal appeals can only be heard through the QUT Appeals Committee.

### 5.4 Contact

RTPSIs are administered by QUT’s Graduate Research Centre:

**Senior HDR Operations Officer  
(Scholarships)**

Graduate Research Centre  
Level 4, 88 Musk Avenue  
Kelvin Grove QLD 4059

Tel: +61 7 3138 7693 or +61 7 3138 2932

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#### Approval & modification history

DATE	AUTHORITY	DETAILS
3 December 2020	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Reviewed changes approved
5 November 2019	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Reviewed changes approved
3 September 2018	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Reviewed changes approved
4 September 2017	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Reviewed changes approved

Responsible Officer: Coordinator (Admission and Scholarships), Graduate Research Centre

### Appendix 1: Value of Awards

RTPSI rates are determined by the Commonwealth Government and are indexed annually.

Year	Full-Time Rate (per annum)	Full-Time Rate (fortnightly)	Part-Time Rate (per annum)	Part-Time Rate (fortnightly)
2021	\$28,597	\$1,096.12	\$14,298	\$548.06
2020	\$28,092	\$1076.76	\$14,046	\$538.38
2019	\$27,596	\$1057.75	\$13,798	\$528.87
2018	\$27,082	\$1038.04	\$13,541	\$519.02
2017	\$26,682	\$1,022.72	\$13,341	\$511.36
2016	\$26,288	\$1007.62	\$13,144	\$503.81
2015	\$25,849	\$990.79	\$12,924	\$495.37
2014	\$25,392	\$973.26	\$12,696	\$486.43
2013	\$24,653*	\$944.94	\$12,326	\$472.45
2012	\$23,728	\$909.49	\$12,898	\$494.38
2011	\$22,860	\$876.22	\$12,388	\$474.83



## Appendix 2: Thesis Allowance

*(Note: Effective 1 January 2013, QUT no longer requires a hard bound thesis to be provided as part of the examination process. Any copies made would be for faculty, school, supervisor, student or other key stakeholders consistent with any faculty-based requirements and/or identified student need.)*

A thesis allowance can be claimed after lodgement of the thesis and on production of receipts:

- up to \$420 for Master of Philosophy theses
- up to \$840 for Research Doctorate theses

Claims are allowed for costs associated with the production of the thesis (e.g. typing, proof-reading, editing, photocopying and temporary binding) and not for goods which will endure past the production stage such as hardware and/or software.

Claims must be made within two (2) years of termination of the award and within twelve (12) months of submission of the thesis.