

Australian Government Research Training Program

Stipend (Domestic) [RTPSD]

2021 Domestic Student Rules

1. BACKGROUND

RTPSD scholarships are awarded to students of exceptional research potential undertaking a Higher Degree by Research (HDR). RTPSDs 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 RTPSD, a student must:

- (a) be a domestic 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, unless QUT has approved a part-time RTPSD for the student under paragraph 3.3 of these Rules; 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: where instruction or supervision in one or more coursework and thesis units in which the student is enrolled is delivered other than by attendance at a campus of the university.

2.3 Approval of a part-time RTPSD

2.3.1 QUT may approve a part-time RTPSD for a student only if the student is a domestic *student* and the student has exceptional circumstances.

2.3.2 For the purpose of paragraph 2.3.1, QUT must be satisfied that the exceptional circumstances relate to significant caring commitments or a medical condition which limits the student's capacity to undertake full-time study.

2.3.3 Examples of caring commitments include, but are not limited to:

- caring responsibilities for a pre-school child; or
- caring responsibilities for school-aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support; or
- caring responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent.

A Statutory Declaration, Birth Certificate or other proof will be necessary to substantiate any of the conditions above.

2.3.4 In determining exceptional circumstances when approving a part-time RTPSD, QUT will not determine that a student is in exceptional circumstances unless it is satisfied that the student's personal or family circumstances are such that it would be unreasonable to expect the student to study on a full-time basis.

2.3.5 Part-time awards are not available to applicants seeking to undertake paid employment on a full-time or substantial part-time basis, and recipients are subject to the same restrictions on the amount of employment as full time RTPSD recipients.

2.3.6 Part-time awardees are expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time award.

2.3.7 A student who has a part-time RTPSD may revert to full-time study at any time with the permission of QUT.

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 RTPSDs.

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

3.2 Selection Policy

QUT maintains an RTPSD 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 RTPSD in accordance with the policy.

3.3 Offer Process

3.3.1 QUT must offer as many RTPSDs as it can support through its RTPSD 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, relocation and thesis allowances, paid leave provisions and extensions or suspensions of RTPSDs approved by QUT. QUT is responsible for managing these liabilities.

3.3.1 QUT must only offer a student an RTPSD as a result of:

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

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

3.4 Payments to Students

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

3.4.2 Each year, QUT must pay each student the full value of their RTPSD unless that student is part-time, has commenced late or suspended their RTPSD or the RTPSD has been terminated. Where a student is not enrolled over the full period of the year, because of part-time study mode, 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 RTPSD 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 Relocation Allowance

Students may be eligible for a relocation allowance in addition to the annual stipend for the cost of relocating themselves, their spouse and dependants to a new place of residence where this is necessary to enable the student to undertake the HDR. QUT must maintain and apply its relocation allowance policy. A claim for relocation allowance is assessed against QUT's relocation allowance policy (see [Appendix 2](#)).

3.7 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 3](#)).

3.8 Duration of an RTPSD

3.8.1 The duration of an RTPSD is 3 years for a student undertaking full-time Research Doctorate studies, and 6 years for a student undertaking part-time Research Doctorate studies (under paragraph 2.3 of these rules)

- 3.8.2 The duration of an RTPSD for a student undertaking full-time Master of Philosophy studies is 1.5 years, and 3 years for a student undertaking part-time Research studies (under paragraph 2.3 of these rules).
- 3.8.3 The duration of an RTPSD will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:
- (a) towards the degree prior to the commencement of the RTPSD; or
 - (b) towards the degree during suspension of the RTPSD; or
 - (c) previously while receiving an RTPSD.
- 3.8.4 The duration of an RTPSD will be increased by any periods of paid sick or maternity leave approved by QUT.

3.9 Extension of an RTPSD

- 3.9.1 QUT may approve an extension to the duration of an RTPSD for a Research Doctorate student of up to 6 months full-time (or 12 months part-time), 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.
- 3.9.2 QUT may approve an extension to the duration of an RTPSD for a Master of Philosophy student of up to 6 months full-time (or 12 months part-time), provided the grounds for the extension relate to the study and are beyond the control of the student.
- 3.9.3 An application to extend the period of tenure of the RTPSD should be submitted using the appropriate QUT form no earlier than three months prior to the end of the RTPSD. Any delays must be highlighted in the Annual Progress Reports.
- 3.9.4 If a part-time RTPSD is converted to a full-time RTPSD then the period of time that the student is regarded as having been in receipt of the part-time RTPSD immediately prior to the conversion will be halved for the purpose of determining the duration the student is regarded as having been in receipt of a full-time RTPSD immediately after conversion.
- 3.9.5 If a full-time RTPSD is converted to a part-time RTPSD then the period of time that the student is regarded as having been in receipt of the full-time RTPSD immediately prior to the conversion will be doubled for the purpose of determining the duration the student is regarded as having been in receipt of a part-time RTPSD immediately after conversion.

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 RTPSD 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 RTPSD. 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 RTPSD.

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

4.3 Transfer to another Higher Education Provider (HEP)

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

4.5.2 A student who converts from a Master of Philosophy degree may continue to receive their RTPSD 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 RTPSD.

4.5.3 The maximum duration of a converted RTPSD 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 RTPSD. These leave entitlements may be accrued over the life of the RTPSD but will be forfeited when the RTPSD 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 during the duration of the RTPSD for periods of illness where the student has insufficient sick leave entitlements available under paragraph 4.6.1, 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 RTPSD are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks paid maternity leave during the duration of the RTPSD. 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 RTPSD and who have completed 12 months of their RTPSD 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 RTPSD for a total of up to twelve months full-time equivalent. Periods of leave greater than 20 days must be approved by the RDC.
- 4.6.8 RTPSD 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 Domestic students may undertake work outside the HDR, subject to QUT's approval.
- 4.7.2 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 RTPSD.

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 RTPSD

4.9.1 QUT must terminate an RTPSD:

- (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 RTPSD 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 and approval has not been obtained from QUT to hold the RTPSD on a part-time basis; 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 RTPSD; 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 RTPSD 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 RTPSD has provided false or misleading information to QUT in relation to the RTPSD, QUT must immediately: re-assess the student's entitlement to the RTPSD; 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 RTPSD 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

RTPSDs are administered by QUT’s Graduate Research Centre:

<p>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 Email: research.scholarships@qut.edu.au</p>	<p>Queensland University of Technology GPO Box 2434 Brisbane QLD 4001 Australia www.qut.edu.au/research/scholarships-and-funding</p>
---	---

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

RTPSD 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: Relocation Allowance

A relocation allowance is available to domestic students who must move from another Australian city to Brisbane to take up the award. The maximum level of reimbursement for the sum of both travel and removal expenses is \$1,520.

Allowable items include:

- one-way economy airfare from another Australian city to Brisbane for the student, spouse and/or dependants. Boarding passes must be provided.
- where a student elects to travel by car, a per kilometre allowance up to the equivalent (economy) airfare costs.
- removal expenses of up to \$505 per adult and \$255 per child.

Applicants who relocate to Brisbane prior to being offered an RTPSD with QUT will **not** be eligible to receive the relocation allowance.

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

Appendix 3: 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.