

Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship Conditions

Version date: 18/12/2023

The RTP is a scholarship which QUT awards to students of exceptional research potential undertaking a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) at QUT.

The RTP scholarship is able to be provided through Australian Government support. RTP benefits include a stipend to assist with general living costs, a fees offset which covers the cost of tuition fees, and specified allowances.

These conditions are based on the Australian Government's [Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#) and adapted to comply with [QUT - MOPP - D/5.3 Higher degree research candidates](#).

Unless otherwise specified in the scholarship offer, candidates are entitled to the benefits and are bound by the conditions set out in this document.

QUT reserves the right to make reasonable amendments to these conditions without prior notice.

1 ELIGIBILITY

1.1 Applicant eligibility

Applicants must:

- a. meet QUT's admission criteria for the research degree to which the applicant has applied, including the English language requirements
- b. lodge their application as part of QUT's competitive application process, with the exception being where QUT agrees to continue an RTP for a transferring candidate who is already in receipt of an RTP at another Higher Education Provider.

Applicants will NOT be eligible if they:

- c. are currently enrolled in a QUT Research Doctorate and have already completed one year or more of full-time equivalent HDR candidature
- d. are currently enrolled in a QUT Research Masters and have already completed six months or more of full-time equivalent HDR candidature
- e. hold a research qualification regarded by QUT to be equivalent to an Australian Research Doctorate degree or, if undertaking a Research Masters degree, hold a research qualification regarded by QUT to be equivalent to or higher than an Australian Research Masters
- f. receive a primary scholarship stipend or tuition fee scholarship from any source, including QUT, or under another scholarship scheme to support their candidature in a research degree at QUT.

1.2 Enrolment and progress

- a. Candidates must enrol in full-time study in a QUT research degree, unless QUT has approved part-time study in accordance with these conditions.
- b. Candidates are expected to undertake their research in an internal attendance mode at a QUT campus, or another approved QUT location such as a distributed site or research facility.

- c. Scholarships will not normally be awarded to candidates who are enrolled in an external attendance mode. If a scholarship candidate subsequently wishes to change to external enrolment, they may be required to relinquish their scholarship.
- d. An applicant who wishes to be based outside Australia is not eligible for this scholarship.
- e. To remain eligible candidates must demonstrate satisfactory progress in their degree and meet defined milestones to QUT's satisfaction.
- f. QUT expects full-time HDR candidates will spend a minimum of 40 hours per week on their studies, averaged over each year of their candidature. For part-time candidates this amount is 20 hours per week.
- g. Candidates are required to notify QUT immediately of any change in circumstances which may affect their scholarship eligibility.
- h. International applicants must ensure at all times that they comply with the conditions of their Australian visa.

1.3 Approval of part-time study load

International candidates are not permitted to enrol part-time if their visa conditions require full-time enrolment.

Part-time scholarships will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where there are demonstrable, significant carer commitments or where medical circumstances limit capacity to undertake full-time study.

Approval will not be given if a candidate is seeking the part-time status to undertake employment.

To apply for a part-time scholarship, the candidate must provide a statement of reasons to QUT, along with a supporting statement from the supervisor and any other relevant documentation. Candidates must be able to demonstrate the following:

- a. carer responsibilities for a pre-school aged child; or
- b. carer responsibilities for school aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support; or
- c. carer responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent; or
- d. a medical condition which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study.

A candidate on an approved part-time scholarship may request to convert to a full-time scholarship or vice versa.

1.4 Work and other income

Candidates may choose to undertake employment opportunities during their candidature, however, it must not interfere with their research or their ability to undertake study and cannot be accepted as grounds for an extension of the scholarship. You are required to discuss any employment with your supervisory team in the first instance.

For international students, any employment must be consistent with the conditions of their Australian visa.

To be eligible for an RTP stipend a candidate must not be receiving income from another source to support their general living costs while undertaking their program if that income is greater than 75 per cent of the RTP stipend rate. Income unrelated to the candidate's program or income received for their program but not for the purposes of supporting general living costs will not be taken into account.

2 BENEFITS

2.1 Stipend

Stipends are paid into the candidate's nominated Australian bank account fortnightly.

The RTP annual stipend rate is published on the [scholarship website](#). The stipend will be indexed annually taking effect from 1 January of the relevant year.

The stipend is available for the following maximum periods:

- 3.5 years (three years and six months) full-time equivalent for a Research Doctorate degree; or
- 1.75 years (one year and nine months) full-time equivalent for a Research Masters degree

The duration of the stipend will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken in the degree prior to the commencement of the scholarship.

2.2 Research Training Program Fees Offset

Recipients of an RTP stipend will also receive an RTP Fees Offset. The Australian Government contributes to the cost of tuition fees for all HDR domestic candidates via the RTP Fees Offset. The value of the RTP Fees Offset is the estimated annual course cost, as determined by QUT in accordance with the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#), for the standard duration of the research degree. Any additional tuition costs beyond the contribution provided by the Australian Government are provided by QUT.

The RTP Fees Offset will only be used to extinguish the liability to pay tuition fees and cannot be converted into another type of benefit or payment.

The maximum duration of the RTP Fees Offset is up to four years full-time equivalent for candidates of a Research Doctorate degree, or up to two years for candidates of a Research Masters degree.

2.3 Allowances

Single Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

Prior to admission, commencing international students who receive a QUT-issued eCoE to apply for a *student visa* can request that QUT arrange and pay for *single* Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the candidate. Cover will be for the duration of their student visa. Where a candidate requires a visa extension, the OSHC for the period of extension will not be covered. Couples and family cover will not be considered.

Interstate relocation allowance

Candidates may be eligible for a contribution to the costs associated with relocating themselves, their spouse and dependants to Brisbane.

QUT may pay a relocation allowance to candidates who at the time of applying for the scholarship, were living in Australia but 150km or more away from Brisbane's city centre.

The relocation allowance will not be paid:

- for relocation from overseas; or

- to applicants who have studied at an institution in South East Queensland in any mode within 12 months prior to applying for the scholarship.
- to applicants who relocate to Brisbane prior to being offered this scholarship with QUT.

The maximum reimbursement for the sum of both travel and removal expenses is \$1,520. Allowable items are:

- One-way economy airfare from another Australian location 150km or more away from Brisbane's city centre 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 one-way economy airfare costs.
- Removal expenses of up to \$505 per adult and \$255 per child.

Reimbursement claims must be made within 3 months of the move and within the duration of this scholarship. Evidence of all claimed relocation expenses must be provided with the claim.

Visit [Scholarships - HiQ](#) for instructions on claiming this allowance.

Thesis allowance (domestic and international students)

Candidates may be eligible for a contribution to the costs associated with the production of a Research Masters or Doctorate thesis, for example, typing, proof-reading, editing, photocopying and temporary binding. The allowance is not paid for goods which will endure past the production stage such as hardware and/or software.

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

- up to \$420 for a Research Masters thesis
- up to \$840 for a Research Doctorate thesis

The claim must be made within 3 months of final submission of the thesis.

Visit [Scholarships - HiQ](#) for instructions on claiming this allowance.

3 LEAVE

Unless otherwise stated in the scholarship offer, candidates are entitled to apply for leave as set out in this section.

- Candidates must follow the [leave advice and guidelines](#) to apply for all types of leave.
- Candidates should apply for leave and advise of their return from leave as early as possible to ensure the correct leave entitlements can be applied to the scholarship and to reduce the risk of anomalous payments. Four week's notice is preferable wherever possible.
- The Graduate Research Centre will seek advice as needed from QUT International Compliance before approving any leave for international candidates which will extend their candidature milestones.
- For the purposes of leave, a 'working day' is a weekday (Monday to Friday) and not weekend days (Saturday and Sunday) and not Queensland public holidays.

3.1 Paid Leave

Paid leave entitlements are only available to scholarship candidates while they are enrolled. Unused paid leave will be forfeited when the scholarship ends.

Table 1: Paid leave entitlements and conditions

Leave type	Conditions for eligibility	Duration	Supporting documentation required	Scholarship and milestone dates extended?
Recreation Leave	All candidates are eligible from the start of their degree.	Max. of 20 working days per year. Days may be accrued over the duration of the degree.	No	No
Sick/Carer's Leave	All recipients are eligible from the start of their degree.	Max. of 10 working days per year. Days may be accrued over the duration of the degree.	No	No
Additional Sick/Carer's Leave	Available when Paid Sick/Carer's Leave is already consumed.	Max. of 60 working days combined total over the duration of the degree.	Yes - medical certificate, and any other supporting documentation.	Yes
Maternity Leave	After completion of 12 months of the degree. Paid maternity leave may also be approved for primary carers of recently adopted/fostered children.	Max. of 60 working days combined total over the duration of the degree.	Yes – medical certificate, and any other supporting documentation.	Yes
Parenting Leave – for partners of people giving birth or for primary carer partners (to be taken at the time of birth or adoption)	After completion of 12 months of the degree	Max of 10 working days combined total over the duration of the degree And Max of 50 working days combined total over the duration of the degree for primary carers	Yes – medical certificate, and any other supporting documentation.	Parenting Leave only – No Parenting leave and primary carer leave - Yes
Cultural and Ceremonial Leave	Australian Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders are eligible.	Max. of 5 working days per year. Does not accrue.	No	No

3.2 Unpaid Leave

Unpaid leave entitlements are set out below. Taking this type of leave cannot be grounds for an extension of scholarship.

Table 2: Unpaid leave entitlements and conditions

Leave type	Conditions for eligibility	Duration	Supporting documentation required	Scholarship and milestone dates extended?
Leave of Absence (unpaid)	For PhD candidates, after Stage 2. International students must check their visa requirements.	Max. of 12 months FTE combined total over the duration of the degree.	Yes – for international student visa holders	Yes

3.3 Suspend scholarship

Recipients may apply to QUT for a period of suspension of their scholarship. The approval will be at the discretion of QUT and in accordance with HDR policy and guidelines. Typically, a scholarship can only be suspended for a maximum of 12 months.

Stipend payments will be suspended in such circumstances and periods of suspension will not be deducted from the recipient’s stipend entitlement.

Periods of suspension will not count towards consumption of the recipient’s RTP Fees Offset or Tuition Fee Sponsorship duration.

4 TRANSFERS AND RETURNING TO PREVIOUS STUDIES

Unless otherwise specified in the offer of scholarship, the below conditions apply to transferring degrees.

4.1 Transfer within QUT

Candidates may apply to transfer between Research Masters and Research Doctoral degrees and, if approved, will continue to receive the scholarship, and the maximum duration of the scholarship becomes that for the new research degree minus periods of study undertaken towards the initial degree.

4.2 Returning to prior QUT studies

If a candidate withdraws from an HDR degree at QUT and then wishes to return (after any period of time) to the project they were originally doing, they may apply for a new scholarship and if successful, the duration of the scholarship will be reduced by any:

- a. previous enrolment in the course of study prior to taking up the award
- b. credit received for previous study towards the current degree

If an entirely new research project is initiated upon their return, the candidate would be eligible to apply for a new scholarship.

4.3 Transfer to another institution

Recipients who transfer to another Higher Education Provider (HEP) may continue to receive their scholarship only if their new HEP agrees to its continuation and subject to the new HEP having sufficient RTP grant amounts of its own available. QUT will (upon request) provide information to the new HEP on RTP stipend payments the recipient has received and the duration of the scholarship already consumed.

4.4 Transfer from another institution

Candidates may transfer from another participating HEP and be eligible for RTP scholarships, provided QUT has sufficient RTP funds available and the other eligibility criteria set out in this procedure are satisfied. For the purposes of the RTP, a transfer occurs where:

- a. a candidate who is enrolled in an HDR program and, without completing the requirements of that program, commences a different HDR program at the same level; and
- b. there is no interval between the two enrolments unless the interval is covered by an approved period of leave; and
- c. the research undertaken by the candidate is continued or modified to meet the requirements of the new program.

Where a transfer occurs, QUT will obtain details regarding the candidate's enrolment and consumption of RTP entitlement while enrolled with the previous HEP so that the candidate's remaining entitlement can be determined.

5 FURTHER CONDITIONS

5.1 Subject to change

These conditions may be updated from time to time. Recipients will be notified in writing if the conditions are significantly changed. Recipients are responsible to abide by the current published conditions.

5.2 Development activities as part of an HDR program

If opportunities for optional industry placements, research internships, professional practice activities or other similar development activities undertaken as part of an HDR program are available, the Graduate Research Centre should be consulted regarding any impact on the scholarship. Where the scholarship is impacted, this will usually be managed through a suspension of the scholarship.

5.3 Overpayment of a scholarship

If, in the opinion of QUT, a recipient has been overpaid any part of the scholarship entitlement (either through the student not meeting the conditions or for any other reason, including due to QUT error) the recipient will be required by QUT to repay the overpayment. Notice of the overpayment will be given in writing to the recipient.

5.4 Acknowledgement of scholarship provider

Recipients of RTP scholarships must acknowledge the Australian Commonwealth Government's contribution in relation to the RTP scholarship. This acknowledgment must occur at all times during or after the completion of the HDR program when the recipient of a RTP scholarship, his/her supervisor, or any other party, publishes or produces material 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 scholarship. Acknowledgment must include the mention of the candidate's support through an "Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship".

6 TERMINATION OF ENTITLEMENTS

A candidate's entitlements are terminated if a candidate:

- a. has their candidature suspended, discontinued or terminated;
- b. withdraws from the degree;
- c. ceases to undertake their studies and has not requested a period of leave;
- d. completes the course of study (lodges their thesis for examination);
- e. exhausts the maximum period of entitlement;
- f. does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of leave or does not make arrangements to extend that period of leave;

- g. ceases to be enrolled full-time in the degree and has not obtained approval to hold the scholarship while enrolled part-time;
- h. deliberately provides incorrect, inaccurate, fraudulent or misleading information in order to gain or retain a scholarship; or
- i. if QUT determines that the candidate has not complied with these conditions, or that the candidate has committed serious misconduct.

7 GRIEVANCE AND REVIEW PROCEDURES FOR HDR CANDIDATES

Candidates have the right to request a review of the decisions made by QUT in relation to their scholarship application outcome. This will be managed as per [QUT – MOPP – E/9.2 Grievance resolution procedures for student related grievances](#).

8 APPROVALS

Where exceptional circumstances exist, a candidate may request an exception to a scholarship condition. In the first instance, the candidate should email the Graduate Research Centre detailing the request and exceptional circumstances, providing supporting documentation.

9 CONTACT

This scholarship is administered by QUT's Graduate Research Centre who can be contacted by telephone on +61 7 3138 7200, by email: hdr@qut.edu.au, and via our website: www.qut.edu.au