



RESEARCH STUDENTS CENTRE  
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## Research Training Program Stipend (International) [RTPSI] 2017 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 [Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#) and adapted to comply with QUT's [Higher degree research candidate policy](#).

### 2. CONTINUING HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH (HDR) STUDENTS PREVIOUSLY AWARDED AN AUSTRALIAN POSTGRADUATE AWARD (APA)

#### 2.1 International Higher Degree Research (HDR) Students who commenced their studies at QUT on or before 31 December 2016 and have been awarded an APA

The Federal Government has notified QUT that from 1 January 2017, the APA will be replaced with the RTPSI.

All current international QUT students holding an IPRS and an APA place on this date will be transferred to a RTPFOI and an RTPSI effective from 1 January 2017.

### 3. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

#### 3.1 Basic Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for an RTPSI, a student must:

- (a) have completed a Bachelor Degree with First Class Honours, or be regarded by QUT as having an equivalent level of attainment in accordance with paragraph 3.2 of these Rules; and
- (b) be undertaking a Higher Degree Research at QUT; and
- (c) be enrolled as an full-time and internal student;; and
- (d) be a international student as defined in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 \(the Act\)](#); and
- (e) if undertaking:
  - (i) a Research Masters, not hold a Research Doctorate or a Research Masters or an equivalent research qualification; or
  - (ii) if undertaking a Research Doctorate, not hold a Research Doctorate or an equivalent research qualification; and
- (f) not previously have held a Commonwealth-funded postgraduate research scholarship unless it was terminated within six months of the scholarship's payments commencing; and
- (g) not be receiving an equivalent award, scholarship (excluding an RTPFOI) or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the RTPSI rate to undertake the HDR. Income from sources unrelated to the course of study is not to be taken into account.

### 3.2 Equivalent Attainment to a Bachelor Degree with First Class Honours

If a student does not hold a Bachelor degree with First Class Honours, then QUT may determine that the student has demonstrated an equivalent level of academic attainment. In determining an equivalent level of academic attainment, QUT may consider previous study, relevant work experience, research publications, referees' reports and other research experience.

QUT's list of criteria for determining First Class Honours is detailed in [Appendix 1](#) of these Rules.

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

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

### 4.1 Applications

4.1.1 QUT conducts a competitive application process for awarding RTPSIs.

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

4.1.2 QUT will include the following statement on the application form, immediately prior to the applicant's signature block: "Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code (Commonwealth)".

### 4.2 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.

### 4.3 Offer Process

4.3.1 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.

4.3.2 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 (HEP) under paragraph 5.3 of these Rules.

4.3.3 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.

### 4.4 Payments to Students

4.4.1 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.

4.4.2 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.

4.4.3 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.

#### 4.5 Value of Scholarships and Indexation Arrangements

- 4.5.1 The 2017 RTPSI rates are listed in [Appendix 2](#).
- 4.5.2 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.

#### 4.6 Thesis Allowance

Students may be eligible for a thesis allowance in addition to the annual stipend for the cost of producing a Research Masters 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).

#### 4.7 Duration of an RTPSI

- 4.7.1 The duration of an RTPSI is three years for a student undertaking full-time Research Doctorate studies.
- 4.7.2 The duration of an RTPSI for a student undertaking Research Masters studies is the standard duration of the Research Masters course (as presented in the relevant [QUT study guide](#)).
- 4.7.3 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 (unless the study was undertaken overseas as part of a Commonwealth Government financially supported international postgraduate research scholarship or award – see paragraph 3.1(g)); or
  - (c) previously while receiving an Australian postgraduate coursework award.
- 4.7.4 The duration of an RTPSI will be increased by any periods of paid sick or maternity leave approved by QUT.

#### 4.8 Extension of an RTPSI

- 4.8.1 QUT may approve an extension to the duration of an RTPSI for a Research Doctorate student of up to six 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.
- 4.8.2 QUT may approve an extension to the duration of an RTPSI for a Research Masters student of up to six months provided the grounds for the extension relate to the study and are beyond the control of the student. QUT will not approve an extension to the duration of an RTPSI for a Research Masters student beyond two years full-time.
- 4.8.3 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. The student's faculty will fund 50% of any approved RTPSI extension..

### 5. CONDITIONS OF SCHOLARSHIP

#### 5.1 Ongoing Eligibility

- 5.1.1 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 3.1 of these Rules.
- 5.1.2 RTPSI recipients are required to notify the Research Students Centre (RSC) as soon as possible of any change in circumstances which may affect eligibility to continue to receive any scholarship entitlements.

## **5.2 Suspensions of an RTPSI**

- 5.2.1 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).
- 5.2.2 Any periods of study undertaken during a suspension will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure of the RTPSI.
- 5.2.3 If prior approval of a suspension is not obtained, the student shall be deemed to be absent without permission and the RTPSI shall terminate.
- 5.2.4 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.

## **5.3 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.

## **5.4 Conversion of Degrees**

- 5.4.1 Students may convert from a Research Masters degree to a Research Doctorate degree or from a Research Doctorate degree to a Research Masters degree, and continue to receive their RTPSI.
- 5.4.2 A student who completes a Research Masters degree may continue to receive their RTPSI for a Research Doctorate degree provided there is no interval between the completion of the Research Masters degree and the commencement of the Research Doctorate degree, or that such an interval is covered by suspension of the RTPSI.
- 5.4.3 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.

## **5.5 Leave Entitlements**

- 5.5.1 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.
- 5.5.2 Students are entitled to receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of 12 weeks during the duration of the RTPSI for periods of illness where the student has insufficient sick leave entitlements available under paragraph 5.5.1, provided that a medical certificate has been provided by the student to QUT.
- 5.5.3 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.
- 5.5.4 Students who have completed 12 months of their RTPSI are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks 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.
- 5.5.5 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.

- 5.5.6 Leave taken in accordance with the entitlements available under paragraphs 5.5.1 and 5.5.5, 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.
- 5.5.7 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.
- 5.5.8 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.

## **5.6 Work**

- 5.6.1 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.
- 5.6.2 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 between 8 to 10 hours during the normal working week. Also refer to 5.6.4 below regarding income for part-time employment.
- 5.6.3 The supervisory team will report on the amount of part-time employment during the normal working week in the Annual Progress Report.
- 5.6.4 There is no limit on how much income an award holder can receive from part-time work which is not related to the research topic (in line with the recommended hours of part-time employment in 5.6.2 above).
- 5.6.5 QUT reserves the right to terminate the award of any recipient whose progress, as a result of additional work undertaken, is not satisfactory.
- 5.6.6 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.
- 5.6.7 Work commitments cannot be accepted as grounds for an extension of the duration of the RTPSI.

## **5.7 Acknowledgement of RTP Scholarship**

- 5.7.1 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.
- 5.7.2 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".

## **5.8 Termination of an RTPSI**

- 5.8.1 QUT must terminate an RTPSI:
  - (a) if the student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in paragraph 3.1 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 5.5 of these Rules; or
  - (b) when the student ceases to be a full-time student (e.g., when the student lodges for examination and adopts the status "under examination"); or

- (c) when the student completes the course of study, unless completing a Research Masters degree and undertaking a Research Doctorate degree under paragraph 5.4.2 of these Rules; or
- (d) 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 5.9.

5.8.2 If an RTPSI is terminated, it cannot be re-activated unless the termination occurred in error.

### 5.9 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.

## 6. MISCELLANEOUS

### 6.1 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.

### 6.2 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.

### 6.3 Appeals

Students have the right to appeal against decisions made by QUT in relation to their RTPSI. In the event of a dispute arising, the student should first approach his or her supervisor who will then direct the student through the appropriate channels within QUT. The RDC has the authority to hear appeals from applicants who consider that their application has been incorrectly assessed. Appeals can only be heard against process issues and not against committee decisions or assessor ratings and comments.

### 6.4 Contact

RTPSIs are administered by QUT's Research Students Centre:

**Administrative Officer (Scholarships)**

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

Queensland University of Technology

GPO Box 2434  
Brisbane QLD 4001  
Australia

Tel: +61 7 3138 4923 or +61 7 3138 2932

Fax: +61 7 3138 1304

Email: [research.scholarships@qut.edu.au](mailto:research.scholarships@qut.edu.au)

[www.qut.edu.au/research/scholarships-and-funding](http://www.qut.edu.au/research/scholarships-and-funding)

**Appendix 1: Guidelines for Determining H1 and H2A equivalence (based on 2016 criteria and subject to change)**

## Guidelines for Determining H1 and H2A Equivalence

The following table lists criteria approved to judge Honours 1 (H1 and H1E) for scholarships and Honours 2A (H2A and H2AE) for admission equivalency eligibility.

### H1 or H1E for Scholarships\*

- Eligibility for most QUT-funded scholarships (excluding the IPRA and WRE) requires First Class Honours (H1)

**H1 Actual:** A completed Australian Bachelor Honours Degree<sup>1</sup> in the First Class (H1) **OR**

**H1E Actual (O/S):** A completed overseas qualification comparable to the educational level of an Australian Bachelor Degree<sup>1</sup>:

- with a duration of normally no less than 4 years (either as a four year award or a three year Bachelor followed by an end on Honours year) **AND**
- an overall GPA comparable to at least a 6.0 on a 7-point scale (where pass = 4) for a four year award or a 6.5 on a 7-point scale (where pass=4 for a 1 year end on honours **AND**
- containing a significant and major thesis, dissertation, design project or creative work that has been  
⇒ successfully examined by at least two examiners<sup>2</sup> **OR**
  - Awarded a grade of at least 6.0 on a 7-point scale (where pass =4)

**H1E (Completed Masters by Research):** A completed domestic or overseas qualification comparable to the educational level of an Australian Masters Degree (by Research)<sup>1,3</sup> **OR**

**H1E (Completed Masters O/S):** A completed overseas qualification containing:

- a significant research component<sup>4</sup> of at least 50%; **AND**
- awarded an overall grade of at least a Distinction and/or at least 75% **OR**

**H1E (Completed Coursework Masters):** A completed Australian Masters by Coursework or overseas qualification (comparable to the educational level of an Australian Masters by Coursework Degree) containing:

- a relevant research component<sup>4</sup> of at least 25% **AND**
- documented relevant research experience<sup>5</sup> **AND**
- awarded an overall grade of at least a Distinction and/or at least 75% **OR**

**H1E (Completed 4-year Bachelor):** A completed Australian or overseas qualification containing:

- a relevant research component<sup>4</sup> **AND**
- at least three years of documented relevant research<sup>5</sup> **OR**

**H1E (a current enrolment) with:**

- a timely Doctoral Confirmation of Candidature<sup>6</sup>; **OR**
- a timely Articulation<sup>6</sup> (from a Masters Degree by Research)<sup>1,3</sup>

## H2A or H2AE for Admission

- Admission to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) requires a minimum equivalence level of Upper Second Class (H2A)

**H2A Actual:** A completed Australian Bachelor Honours Degree<sup>1</sup> in the Upper Second Class (H2A) **OR**

**H2AE Argument:** A completed overseas qualification comparable to the educational level of an Australian Bachelor Degree<sup>1</sup>:

- with a duration of normally no less than 4 years **AND**
- an overall GPA comparable to between 5.0 and 5.9 on a 7-point scale (where pass = 4) **AND**
- containing a significant and major thesis, dissertation, design project or creative work that has been
  - ⇒ examined by at least two examiners<sup>2</sup> **OR**
  - ⇒ has a grade comparable to between 5.0 and 5.9 on a 7-point scale (where pass = 4) **OR**

**H2AE (M by CW):** A completed Australian Masters Degree<sup>1</sup>, or a completed qualification comparable to the educational level of an Australian Masters Degree<sup>1</sup>,

- with greater than 25% research **AND**
- an overall GPA of at least 5.0 on a 7-point scale (where pass = 4) **OR**

**H2AE Argument:** A current doctoral enrolment with either:

- a non-timely Doctoral Confirmation of Candidature<sup>6</sup> **OR**
- a non-timely<sup>6</sup> Articulation from Masters Degree (Research) **OR**
  - a completed Doctoral Stage 2 milestone

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of its admission and scholarship assessment process, QUT uses Australian Education International's National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) and the National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom (UK-NARIC) to assist in determining the comparability of an overseas qualification to an appropriate level of Australian qualification.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of the research work and both examiners reports must be submitted. Examiners may not be part of the supervisory team. Where the examiners reports are written in a language other than English a complete, certified translation must be provided.

<sup>3</sup> The Australian Qualification Framework's definition of a research degree requires it to contain a minimum of 2/3 (66.7%) research, research training and independent study.

<sup>4</sup> Relevant<sup>^</sup> Research component: Courses that encompass learning outcomes that establish research skills through course work content and assessment. For instance, undertaking an individually produced (and supervised) research project that includes a written report with a combined minimum course volume equivalent, or more than four units at QUT, as completed as part of a bachelors degree or coursework masters degree. Research carried out in groups should at least have been graded individually.

<sup>5</sup> Relevant<sup>^</sup> research experience must be evidenced. Relevant research experience demonstrates research 'preparedness' in that you have planned and executed research work and/or a body of research and scholarship with independence. Research preparedness can be demonstrated by providing evidence in at least one of the following ways:

- Scholarly papers involving a substantial contribution as an author, appearing in relevant quality\* academic journals or in volumes published by academic publishers(\*list/scimago score provided by Faculty).
- Relevant research or technical reports prepared for industry, government or business, which adhere to the broad conventions of academic publishing (i.e. contain an up-to-date review of relevant literature, a description of relevant research methods and an evaluation of results, etc.) and which identify you as a significant contributor.
- A portfolio of relevant published creative work together with published critical discussion of some or all of that work, or of a comparable body of work by others, and which demonstrates your development of a scholarly approach to creative work as research investigation.
- Proven relevant industry or work experience, of at least two years, where you can demonstrate that you have planned and executed a research project, working with a high level of independence.

<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of QUT's admission and scholarship assessment process, a 'timely' doctoral confirmation of candidature and 'timely' articulation is one that is completed not more than 13 months FTE after commencement of the degree.

*\*If you do not hold one of the above qualifications, you will only be considered for a scholarship if you have significant relevant research experience in which case you may be referred to the Dean for consideration, based on Faculty advice*

*^ The term 'relevant' in this context refers to the faculty or field of research the applicant is applying to enter*

Approval & modification history

DATE	AUTHORITY	DETAILS
6 December 2012	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Reviewed changes approved
3 May 2016	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Reviewed changes approved
March 2015	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Reviewed; no changes required
11 September 2014	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Minor changes approved
24 July 2014	Chair, QUT Research Degrees Committee	Minor changes approved
7 July 2014	QUT Research Degrees Committee	Reviewed; minor changes approved
11 June 2013	QUT Research Degrees Committee	Approved methodology for determining H1 equivalence

**Responsible Officer:** Coordinator (Research Scholarships, Admission and Enrolment), Research Students Centre

## Appendix 2: Value of Awards

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

Full-time RTPSIs are exempt from tax; Part-time RTPSIs are taxable.

Year	Full-time Rate (per annum, tax exempt)	Full-time Rate (fortnightly, tax exempt)	Part-time Rate (per annum, before tax)	Part time Rate (fortnightly, before tax)
2017	\$26,682	\$1026.23	\$13,341	\$513.12
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

\* Prior to 2013, the part-time RTPSI included a component to ensure that part-time HDR students received the equivalent of half a full-time stipend rate after tax. From the 2012-13 financial year the [tax-free threshold](#) increased to \$18,200. As a result, the part-time stipend rate is half of the full-time rate.

## 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 Research Master 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. Receipts and a Supplier Maintenance Form ([http://www.frp.qut.edu.au/forms/supplier\\_maintenance.doc](http://www.frp.qut.edu.au/forms/supplier_maintenance.doc)) must be provided to the Research Students Centre.