

Australian Government Research Training Program

Fees Offset (Domestic) [RTPFOD]

2021 Domestic Student Rules

1. BACKGROUND

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 [Doctor of Philosophy Regulations](#) and [Higher degree research candidate policy](#). QUT reserves the right to make minor amendments to these conditions without prior notice.

2. DOMESTIC HIGHER DEGREE RESEARCH (HDR) STUDENTS

2.1 Domestic Higher Degree Research (HDR) Students who commenced their studies at QUT on or after 1 January 2017

In 2021, all eligible domestic HDR students commencing their studies at QUT will be provided with a RTP Fees Offset.

A RTP Fees Offset covers all course tuition fees.

3. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Basic Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for a RTP Fees Offset (Domestic) a student must not be receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth or other provider designed to offset HDR fees.

4. APPLICATION, SELECTION AND OFFER PROCESSES AND POLICIES

QUT will allocate an RTPFOD place to all eligible applicants as part of the competitive admission process

4.1 Applications

4.1.1 Applications for admission must be submitted in the form approved by QUT.

4.2 Selection Policy

QUT maintains an RTP 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 RTPFOD in accordance with the policy.

4.3 Offer Process

4.3.1 QUT will offer as many RTPFOD as it can support through its RTPFOD grant, taking into account:

- (a) any rollover of grant amounts made in accordance with section 46-35 of *the Act*; and

- (b) liabilities arising from extensions and suspensions of RTPFOD approved by QUT, and accepting students transferring from another Higher Education Provider (HEP) as specified in paragraph 3.25.10.
- 4.3.2 QUT is responsible for managing any liabilities arising under paragraph 4.3.1(b), and the Australian Government will not reimburse any over-expenditure on that account.
- 4.3.3 QUT may only offer an RTPFOD as a result of:
- (a) an application lodged as part of a competitive application process; or
 - (b) QUT agreeing to continue an RTPFOD for a student who is already in receipt of an RTPFOD and:
 - (i) is transferring from another HEP under paragraph 6.3 of these Rules; or
 - (ii) is converting their degree under paragraph 6.4 of these Rules; or
 - (iii) has completed a Master of Philosophy and is immediately proceeding to a Research Doctorate in a related field.
- 4.3.4 QUT must offer a scholarship to a student in writing and advise the student in writing of the benefits to which they are entitled and the conditions of the scholarship. Where QUT does not include the cost of any other compulsory fees in the cost of the course of study, the letter of offer must state that the prospective student will be responsible for the payment of these compulsory fees, unless QUT chooses to cover those fees for the student.

5. PAYMENTS TO STUDENTS

QUT must use RTPFOD grant amounts only on the making of RTPFOD payments in respect of students awarded an RTPFOD.

5.1 Value of Scholarships

The maximum value of an RTPFOD in a year is equal to:

- (a) the estimated annual course cost, as determined by QUT in accordance with *the Act*.

5.2 Non-commencements and Withdrawals

5.2.1 QUT may apply its usual policies concerning:

- (a) the non-refundability of course costs for students who withdraw after commencing study; and
- (b) administrative charges for students who do not commence their study after having received an offer of a place.

5.2.2 QUT may use RTPFOD grant amounts to:

- (a) discharge course costs, where the course fee is not refundable to a withdrawing student; or
- (b) pay administrative charges for a student who does not commence their study after receiving an offer of a place.

5.3 Duration of an RTPFOI

5.3.1 The duration of an RTPFOD is for up to 4 years for a Research Doctorate degree and up to 2 years for a Master of Philosophy degree.

5.3.1 The duration of an RTPFOD will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:

- (a) towards the course of study prior to the commencement of the RTPFOD; and
- (b) during suspension of the RTPFOD.

5.4 Extension

QUT may approve an extension to the duration of an RTPFOD, subject to paragraphs 6.3 and 6.5.

5.5 Conversion of Degrees

5.5.1 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 RTPFOD.

5.5.2 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 RTPFOD.

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

6. CONDITIONS OF SCHOLARSHIP

6.1 Ongoing Eligibility

6.1.1 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 these Rules.

6.1.2 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.

6.2 Suspensions of an RTPSD

A student may apply to QUT for a suspension of their RTPFOD. The approval of suspensions will be at the discretion of QUT.

6.3 Transfer to another Higher Education Provider (HEP)

6.3.1 If a student in receipt of an RTPFOD transfers to another HEP, the scholarship may be transferred with the student in exceptional circumstances only.

6.3.2 Students may continue to receive an RTPFOD only if the former HEP supports the student's transfer and the new HEP agrees to continue the RTPFOD.

6.3.3 The new HEP must ensure that it receives information from the former HEP on any RTPFOD duration consumed by the student.

6.3.4 Change of HEP does not constitute sufficient grounds for a subsequent extension of the RTPFOD.

6.4 Approval of a Part-Time RTPFOD

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

6.4.2 For the purpose of paragraph 3.3.1, 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.

6.4.3 Examples of caring commitments include, but are not limited to:
(a) caring responsibilities for a pre-school child; or

- (b) caring responsibilities for school-aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support; or
 - (c) 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.

- 6.4.4 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.
- 6.4.5 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.
- 6.4.6 Part-time awardees are expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time award.
- 6.4.7 A student who has a part-time RTPSD may revert to full-time study at any time with the permission of QUT.
- 6.4.8 A student who is external or converts to external study mode at any time during candidature will normally be deemed ineligible to hold or continuing to hold an RTPSD.

6.5 Change of Field of Education

QUT may approve a student's request to change from the research area indicated in the original placement or RTPFOD offer, 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 RTPFOD arising from the change of research area beyond the period of the original placement or RTPFOD offer, 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.

6.6 Work

- 6.6.1 QUT may not approve a student undertaking work unless it is satisfied that the work will not interfere with the student's study program. QUT may approve work subject to conditions determined by QUT. Paragraph 6.6.2 does not apply in relation to work that is specified as a course requirement.
- 6.6.2 Work commitments cannot be accepted as grounds for an extension of the duration of the RTPFOD.

6.7 Acknowledgement of RTP Scholarship

- 6.7.2 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.
- 6.7.3 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".

6.8 Termination of an RTPFOD

QUT will terminate an RTPFOD:

- (a) if the student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in paragraph 2.1 of these Rules other than during a period in which the RTPFOD has been suspended; or
- (b) once the maximum duration of the RTPFOD has been reached; or
- (c) on completion of the course of study; or
- (d) if QUT determines that:
 - i. the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence; 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 6.9.

6.9 Provision of False or Misleading Information

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

- (a) re-assess the student's entitlement to the RTPFOD; and
- (b) 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.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

7.1 Supervision and Facilities

QUT must:

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

7.2 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.



7.3 Contact

RTPFODs are administered by QUT's Graduate Research Centre:

**Senior HDR Operations Officer
(Scholarships)**

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Approval & modification history

| DATE | AUTHORITY | DETAILS |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 3 December 2020 | 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