



## Research Degrees and Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarships

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### Context and Purpose

This purpose of this procedure is to outline the requirements and processes for the management of Research Degree Scholarships. Except where specified, the procedures apply to Research Training Program (RTP) scholarships and University funded and administered scholarships. These conditions also apply to named scholarships, including those funded within and external to the University.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with Policy AB-59: [Research Degrees and Research Training Program \(RTP\) Scholarships](#).

### Responsibility

Research degree students and research degree supervisors, and staff associated with the support, coordination and leadership of research degree programs and scholarships are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy and its procedure.

All other procedural responsibilities are detailed in this procedure.

### Confidentiality

Refer to Policy A-46: [Confidentiality of Students' Personal Information](#).

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### Procedure

#### A. Research scholarships

1. All research degree student scholarships established at and offered by the University are in accordance with Policy AB-59: [Research Degrees and Research Training Program \(RTP\) Scholarships](#) and this procedure.
2. Research Degrees Committee will recommend new scholarships (or major amendments to current scholarships) to Research Leadership Committee, and ultimately Academic Board, for approval.
3. Research degree scholarships may not be promoted, advertised or awarded until all documentation has been approved and finalised, and funding to cover the duration of the scholarship for the first recipient(s) has been confirmed.
4. Research degree scholarships are normally associated with research projects and the research degree students selected to undertake their research degree on the approved project.

#### B. Applying for a research degree scholarship

5. Applications for research scholarships associated with research projects within the University are integrated with the application for admission.
6. Applications for other scholarships external to the University are in accordance with the processes specified by the scholarship awarding organisation.

#### C. Research degree scholarship conditions and benefits

7. The University awards scholarships to research degree students on the basis of academic merit, including eligibility for admission to the degree, research capacity required for the designated research project, and potential to complete a research degree.

8. The following conditions apply to all scholarships:
  - a. the research degree student is enrolled full-time in a research degree;
  - b. the research degree student must not have completed a research degree at an equivalent or higher level;
  - c. a research degree student receiving a living allowance is not receiving equivalent support providing a benefit greater than 75% of the student's stipend rate (income unrelated to the student's course of study or income, that is not for the purposes of supporting general living costs, is not to be taken into consideration);
  - d. an international research degree student holds a valid student visa for study in Australia;
  - e. in some cases, a research degree student can apply to receive scholarships on a part-time basis if there are compelling reasons (such as the need to provide full-time care of children, disabled, sick, injured or the elderly),
  - f. the research degree student resides in South Australia while receiving the scholarship, except as required by the research project;
  - g. continuing eligibility is subject to satisfactory progress, as defined in Procedure AB-58 P3: [Research Degrees Student Progression](#), clause B.
9. In addition to clause C.8, the following conditions apply specifically to Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) scholarships:
  - a. a research degree student receiving a RTP fee offset must not be receiving a scholarship for which course tuition is a component under any other scholarship program to which the Australian Government makes a substantial contribution.
  - b. the Commonwealth Government's contribution must be acknowledged, via a statement mentioning the student's support through an 'Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship', on all published material relating to the research project carried out by the recipient of a RTP Scholarship.
  - c. domestic research degree students in receipt of a RTP fee offset, who are not receiving a living allowance, may study part-time if approved in accordance with Procedure AB-58 P1: [Research Degrees Admission and Enrolment](#).
  - d. A research degree student receiving a RTP scholarship may not engage in paid employment for more than eight (8) hours per week (or 320 hours per year).
10. The maximum period of support for a research degree scholarship (living allowance and international tuition fee) is up to three (3) years full-time for a Doctoral program or two (2) years full-time for a Masters by Research. Research tuition fee offsets for domestic students are for up to four (4) years for a Doctoral program and up to two (2) years for a Masters by Research. Periods of study towards the research degree within three (3) years prior to commencement will be deducted from the period of the scholarship.
11. Research degree students undertaking doctoral programs may apply for an extension of scholarship where the grounds for extension are beyond the control of the student and are related to their studies. The Dean of Research (or delegate), on application from the research degree student and supported by the Principal Supervisor and Research Degree Coordinator may approve that a doctoral student is eligible for an extension to the scholarship funding for a period normally not exceeding six (6) months.
12. The living allowance (stipend) rates for scholarships are reviewed annually in line with advice from the Australian Government and published in the University's Scholarship Benefits and Conditions ([Domestic](#) and [International](#)). The scholarship value will also be included in the offer of scholarship.

13. Research degree students in receipt of scholarships are entitled to continuation of the living allowance for leave as detailed in the Scholarship Benefits and Conditions ([Domestic](#) and [International](#)) and their offer letter.
14. Research degree students in receipt of scholarships will be entitled to paid leave as detailed in the Scholarship Benefits and Conditions (Domestic and International) and their offer letter. Research degree students may also apply for periods of unpaid leave, during which their scholarship payments will be suspended. Research degree students may apply for both paid and unpaid leave in accordance with Procedure AB-58 P4: [Research Degrees Leave](#).
15. Research Degree students may undertake industry placements, internships or other similar enrichment activities as part of the research degree. Where placements form part of the research degree, and are unpaid, living allowance and tuition fee scholarships (as applicable) will continue. Where placements are not directly related to the research degree and will impact upon the research degree student's progress, and/or where placements are paid at greater than 75% of their living allowance, research degree students should apply for unpaid leave of absence, in consultation with their supervisor(s). An unpaid leave of absence will defer the end date of the scholarship by the period of the leave.
16. Industry placements and similar activities cannot be accepted as grounds for an extension of the scholarship.
17. Scholarships (tuition fee and/or living allowance/stipend) cease:
  - a. Automatically upon the event of any of the following, whichever is earlier:
    - i. when the thesis is approved for examination by the Dean of Research (or delegate);
    - ii. when the maximum period of the scholarship expires;
    - iii. if the research degree student does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of leave of absence or does not arrange to extend that period of leave of absence; or
    - iv. on the death, incapacity, resignation or withdrawal of the research degree student.
  - b. Following notification to the student in the event of any of the following:
    - i. if the student ceases to meet the conditions of the scholarship in C.8 and C.9, or any additional conditions included in the offer of scholarship (including if the research degree student takes up full-time employment); or
    - ii. if the research degree is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of candidature, and no suitable alternative arrangements can be made for continuation of the postgraduate degree.
18. Scholarships are not transferable to or from another university or provider, unless specified otherwise in the procedures governing a particular scholarship.
19. All research degree students, including those with scholarships, will be entitled to:
  - a. supervision as detailed in Procedure AB-58 P2: [Research Degrees Supervision](#)
  - b. resources as detailed in Appendix AB-58 AD1: [Minimum Resources for Research Degree Students](#).
20. Grievances relating to scholarships are managed according to Procedure AB-58 P8: [Research Degrees Appeals and Grievances](#).

#### D. Scholarship Awards and Allocation

21. The University selects students for a research degree scholarship against published selection criteria for all research projects. The awarding of the scholarship is conditional on continuing eligibility under those criteria, including future enrolment and/or performance in a program of research at the University.
22. Criteria for the awarding of a scholarship includes competitive academic merit but may also include or take account of factors that contribute to a student's relative disadvantage in their capacity to demonstrate academic merit.
23. A research degree student who wishes to be considered for a scholarship is required to apply for admission in accordance with the published process and, where applicable, the application closing dates.
24. Where a student becomes ineligible for, or rejects the offer of a scholarship, an offer may be made to the next ranked student providing they meet the selection criteria.
25. Students who commenced prior to 1 January 2017, and who were in receipt of one or more of the previous Australian Government scholarships (i.e. Australian Postgraduate Award, International Postgraduate Research Award, Research Training Scheme) will be offered an appropriate RTP scholarship as a replacement for their previous scholarship. The conditions, benefits and length of the previous scholarship will be maintained.

#### E. Awarding scholarships

26. Student and Academic Services formally offer all research degree scholarships on the recommendation of the appropriate selection committee.
27. Offers made to a scholarship recipient are made in writing, either by email or letter, and include:
  - a. the name and amount of the scholarship;
  - b. the duration of the scholarship;
  - c. program details;
  - d. supervision details;
  - e. payment details;
  - f. the donor, where applicable, and any additional requirements;
  - g. contact details of the area or person responsible for administering the scholarship;
  - h. inclusion of candidature information and scholarship conditions; and
  - i. an acceptance slip requiring the recipient to agree to the terms and conditions and accept the offer of the scholarship in writing and to abide by the University's policies and procedures.
28. Scholarship recipients may apply to vary their candidacy in accordance with the requirements of the University's Scholarship Benefits and Conditions (Domestic or International), or where applicable, those applying to a named scholarship.
29. For changes to the student's research project that result in a new Field of Education, or for changes in program level (Masters and Doctoral or the reverse) refer to Procedure AB-58 P5: [Research Degrees Program Transfer](#).
30. For changes to load (from full to part-time, or the reverse), refer to Procedure AB-58 P1: [Research Degrees Admission and Enrolment](#) (clause F). An approved change in load will normally change the scholarship stipend (living allowance) value accordingly.

31. A research degree student who relinquishes a scholarship may have it reinstated, subject to approvals and funding being available.
32. The research degree student with a scholarship stipend (living allowance) receives payment fortnightly through the University's established payment procedures, following the research degree student's formal enrolment in the program.
33. All variations to payment of research degree scholarships must be authorised by the relevant Dean of Research (or delegate). For Commonwealth and University funded scholarships, variations to levels of funding must also be authorised by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

#### **F. Establishing donor-funded external scholarships**

34. University researchers may negotiate with potential funding bodies in order to establish donor-funded external scholarships. Approaches to potential external donors may be coordinated through the Dean of Graduate Studies.
35. All external funds received for the purpose of an approved scholarship may be directed to the University's Foundation and are managed in accordance with the principles outlined in the [Code of Practice: University philanthropic activity](#), for the purposes specified by the donors. The University reports annually on the use of the funds to the donors or their trustees.
36. The University reserves the right not to accept scholarship funds from a donor, and not to accept particular conditions on funding, such as the establishment of a scholarship in a particular area, or the requirement to impose certain criteria associated with a new scholarship.
37. If, for any reason, a donor is unable to meet the financial obligations associated with a scholarship, the University is not responsible for providing ongoing payments to scholarship recipients.
38. To ensure that a scholarship is administered in a fair and transparent manner, consistent with the principles of equity and equal opportunity, each new scholarship is formalised through a written agreement with the donor, detailing:
  - a. eligibility criteria;
  - b. financial contribution;
  - c. selection criteria;
  - d. special conditions;
  - e. intellectual property;
  - f. industry placements (where relevant); and
  - g. other relevant matters.
39. Wherever possible, the selection criteria and scholarship conditions of new scholarships should comply with the established University scholarship conditions.
40. All such agreements with external donors are to comply with the Vice Chancellor's designations established by the University's Council.
41. The Dean of Graduate Studies, in conjunction with the Academic Unit's Dean of Research (or delegate) and Advancement Services, manages relationships with donors of scholarships that are specific to the relevant research degree programs, including recommending ways to formally acknowledge donations through naming of scholarships (subject to conditions).

42. Student and Academic Services maintain a database containing details and conditions of all University research degree scholarships. The database may also include details of non-University scholarships available to research degree students.

## Definitions

**Academic Unit** is a major organisational unit with responsibility for academic programs. At UniSA, there are seven Academic Units: UniSA: Allied Health & Human Performance; UniSA: Business; UniSA: Clinical & Health Sciences; UniSA: Creative; UniSA: Education Futures; UniSA: Justice & Society; and UniSA: STEM.

**Dean of Research** is the research leadership role in each Academic Unit who enacts the University's research strategy and is responsible for the oversight of research degree programs in their Academic Unit. The Dean of Research may delegate the leadership and management of research education and related activities to a Professorial Lead with portfolio responsibility for the research degrees in the Academic Unit.

**Enrolment** is the process by which persons who have been admitted to a University program are formally registered to undertake one or more courses within their program as either commencing or continuing students.

**Enterprise Agreement/Collective Agreement** is the University of South Australia Enterprise Agreement 2019 and the University of South Australia Senior Staff Collective Agreement 2006 (as varied or replaced from time to time).

**Research Degrees Committee** is a sub-committee of Research Leadership Committee and has delegated authority in matters relating to the research education and training strategy and the management and administration of research degrees. This includes responsibility for making decisions on each candidate's completion of all requirements for the award of a research degree and for recommending to the University Council that the degree be awarded.

**Research degree student** is an individual enrolled in a research degree.

**Research project** is a peer-reviewed and University approved statement of a research program, including designated resources, and an appropriate team of research supervisors.

**Research Training Program (RTP)** is a Commonwealth-funded program for research degree students. Forms of support available may consist of a fee offset, a stipend for general living costs, or allowances related to the ancillary cost of research degrees, as specified in the scholarship offer.

**Scholarship (Research)** is an award selected on merit to assist a research degree student to undertake or complete a program of research at the University, in accordance with the selection criteria. A scholarship may take the form of monetary payment or assistance with specified costs, including an offset (payment) for student fees, a stipend to support the student's living costs, or ancillary costs.

**Staff member** is an individual employed by the University under its Enterprise Agreement or Collective Agreement, and also includes adjuncts, visiting academics and guest lecturers, and volunteers, whether they are paid or unpaid.

**Supervisors** are members of the University Community who have oversight and/or direction of the work of staff or students.

**University Community** refers to all students and staff members of the University including honorary title holders, adjuncts, visiting academics, guest lecturers and volunteers who are contributing to the work of the University but who are not staff members.

### **Further Assistance**

[Graduate Research Team, Student and Academic Services](#)

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### **Related Documentation:**

Policy AB-58: [Research Degrees](#)

Policy AB-59: [Research Degrees and Research Training Program \(RTP\) Scholarships](#)

Policy A-46: [Confidentiality of Students' Personal Information](#)

Procedure AB-58 P1: [Research Degrees Admission and Enrolment](#)

Procedure AB-58 P2: [Research Degrees Supervision](#)

Procedure AB-58 P3: [Research Degrees Student Progression](#)

Procedure AB-58 P4: [Research Degrees Leave](#)

Procedure AB-58 P5: [Research Degrees Program Transfer](#)

Procedure AB-58 P6: [Research Degrees Thesis Preparation and Examination](#)

Procedure AB-58 P7: [Research Degrees Student Research Misconduct](#)

Procedure AB-58 P8: [Research Degrees Appeals and Grievances](#)

Appendix AB-58 AD1: [Minimum Resources for Research Degree Students](#)

Guideline AB-58 AD10: [Key Responsibilities in Research Degrees Management and Supervision](#)

[Code of Practice: University philanthropic activity](#)

[Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#)

[Guidelines on Electronic Communication with Students](#)

[University's Scholarship Benefits and Conditions \(Domestic\)](#)

[University's Scholarship Benefits and Conditions \(International\)](#)

**Officer Responsible for Update and Review:** Deputy Vice Chancellor: Research and Enterprise

**Approved by:** Academic Board

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**History:** Clauses in this procedure were previously referenced in Policy RES 9.5: Higher Degrees by Research Scholarships (incorporating RTP Scholarships Policy), which has been replaced by Policy AB-59: Research Degrees and Research Training Program Scholarships.