

# Graduate Research FAQs – COVID-19



UNIVERSITY of  
TASMANIA

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## My Research

### What do I need to do now that we have reached stage 3 of the easing of restrictions?

- We need to continue to operate in a way that limits the risk of COVID-19 returning and minimises the risk of community transmission if it does.
- Campus screening, hygiene, and physical distancing (1.5m between each person) continue to be important now and in the months ahead.
- **To help us manage a safe staged return to campus:**
  - ✓ We encourage you to download the [University's SafeZone app](#)
  - ✓ We encourage you to download the [Government's COVIDSafe app](#)
  - ✓ [Complete the induction](#) if your plan is to work on campus (please ensure you have discussed this with your primary supervisor)
  - ✓ Each day before entering University buildings, you must check in at a [health screening station](#).
- Please remain closely connected with your supervisory team and discuss any impacts on your research progress. If you have any questions, please check the [Graduate Research FAQs](#), then contact your supervisory team, or the [Graduate Research Office](#).

### How can I safely meet with my Supervisors, and Graduate Research Coordinator?

- We encourage you to remain connected and to meet with your supervisory team (and Graduate Research Coordinator if required) via [Zoom](#) or in person with 1.5m physical distance.

### How can I contact the Graduate Research Office?

- Please contact our staff via email. You can reach us at:
  - College of Arts, Law and Education – [GraduateResearch.CALE@utas.edu.au](mailto:GraduateResearch.CALE@utas.edu.au)
  - College of Science and Engineering – [GraduateResearch.COSE@utas.edu.au](mailto:GraduateResearch.COSE@utas.edu.au)
  - College of Health and Medicine – [GraduateResearch.CHM@utas.edu.au](mailto:GraduateResearch.CHM@utas.edu.au)
  - College of Business and Economics - [GraduateResearch.TSBE@utas.edu.au](mailto:GraduateResearch.TSBE@utas.edu.au)

### Can I travel for my research?

- Significant travel restrictions are in place, including international and domestic travel.
- Essential travel such as fieldwork will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with Government restrictions. Please discuss this with your Supervisory Team.

### **How can I apply for a candidature extension?**

- You may consider applying for a candidature extension to support your completion. [Applications](#) may be submitted in the final stage of your candidature, usually in the last three months.

### **I am an international onshore candidate, but am overseas and unable to return to campus? What can I do?**

- You may consider a short-term [change of mode](#) from onshore to offshore where research can be conducted and supported remotely. Contact the [Graduate Research Office](#) for further information, it would be worthwhile also discussing your options with an [International Student Advisor](#).
- A Change of Mode in these circumstances will not impact your enrolment or your Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE). It is required for administrative purposes only.

### **I need to arrange leave from my candidature. What are my options?**

- You may wish to consider appropriate leave arrangements that best support you during this time.
- All candidates can take up to four weeks annual leave. Annual leave does not require approval or processing by the Graduate Research Office and is managed locally in your school.
- Alternatively, you may consider applying for General Leave. We recommend taking a [leave of absence](#) only if no progress can be made at all on your research, or if your personal priorities need to shift during this time.

### **I need to reduce the number of hours I can commit to my research project. What can I do?**

- If your candidature has been significantly impacted by campus closures or other COVID-19 impacts such as increased carer responsibilities, it may mean that you're unable to progress your research at a full-time rate.
- As always, discuss your situation with your supervisory team, and you may consider a change of load from [fulltime to part time](#) if required.

### **I feel my original Research Plan is now no longer viable. What do I do?**

- There may be research projects that need to be carefully considered and potentially reshaped due to COVID-19-related complexities.
- Please discuss your concerns with your supervisory team, who can help reshape your Research Plan if required.

### **Can I postpone milestones in iGrad?**

- Where possible, we encourage candidates and supervisors to continue progressing candidature milestones through Zoom. If your progress has been delayed, please discuss this with your supervisory team.

### **What research support is available from librarians?**

- We know how important it is for candidates to be able to access research resources and we want to make this easy for you.
- The Library provides a [research service](#), resources and spaces for HDR students.
- The Research Librarians are available via Zoom, skype and [email](#) to assist you.
- [Please read the library updates](#) for information about library open hours and restrictions.

### **How can I access resources from the Library?**

- University libraries are open. Health guidelines apply. [Read the library updates](#)
- Most library resources remain available [online](#). If the books or journals you need are not available electronically, you can request scanned copies of chapters and/or

extracts which we will email to you. Simply fill out the [request form](#) and select 'Scan and Attach' to email as your delivery option.

## Financial Hardship

### **I am experiencing financial hardship. Where can I go for help?**

- Up-to-date information is available on the [Student support during COVID-19 webpage](#) under the 'Financial support and accommodation' tab.

### **Will the University now refund the Student Services and Administration Fee (SSAF)?**

- During this difficult time we are providing ongoing and high quality student support across a wide range of services. SSAF is crucial funding that enables us to provide those services to you. Some of these services include: financial support, accommodation support, legal services and wellbeing services. Find out more on our [website](#).

## Graduate Certificate in Research

### **I am enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Research as part of my Higher Degree by Research enrolled. How will classes be delivered?**

- During COVID-19 restrictions and partial campus closures, XGR501 and XGR502 will be delivered online by the Research Division. You will be contacted for more information about accessing the sessions if you are enrolled in these units.
- You will need to enquire directly to the College/School about the two optional units.

## My Scholarship

### **I am currently on a scholarship. Can I receive an extension?**

- The University of Tasmania's 3.5-year scholarships already include an extension up-front to account for potential disruption to studies. Many other institutions manage this as a 3-year scholarship with an application process for a 6-month extension. We have simplified the process by offering 3.5-year scholarships.

### **I have read that the Australian Government is offering 4.5-year RTP scholarships. How do I access this?**

- The Department of Education, Skills and Employment recently announced an extension to the maximum period of RTP scholarship support to 4.5 years for PhD candidates. However, they did not provide additional funds to support extensions.
- The current scholarship tenure at the University of Tasmania is 3.5 years for PhD candidates. Any candidates experiencing financial hardship at the end of their scholarship tenure should discuss options with their supervisory teams.

## Completion

### **My student visa is due to expire. What should I do?**

- If your student VISA is due to expire then you may be able to apply to the [Department of Home Affairs](#) for a bridging VISA if you need to remain in the country after your student VISA expires. If you require a letter confirming your enrolment, please contact the [Graduate Research Office](#).

### **I am due to submit my thesis for examination this year. Can I still do this?**

- You will still be able to submit your thesis online. Where your discipline requires an exhibition or presentation, the Graduate Research Office is working with your School to develop viable alternatives.

### **Can I still graduate?**

- Information about future graduation ceremonies can be found online at [utas.edu.au/graduation/dates](https://utas.edu.au/graduation/dates).

## **Apply**

### **I am an International applicant. Will my application be considered?**

- The University of Tasmania welcomes applications from both international and domestic applicants, and applications are being considered year-round. Scholarships are very limited. Dates for consideration are available at [utas.edu.au/research/degrees/scholarships](https://utas.edu.au/research/degrees/scholarships).

### **Can I still apply and commence a Higher Degree by Research at the University of Tasmania?**

- The University of Tasmania welcomes applications to commence a Higher Degree by Research.
- Please check our entry requirements at [Apply Now](#).

## **Offer**

### **I've received an offer at the University of Tasmania. Can I still commence?**

- If you have received an offer for a Higher Degree by Research at the University of Tasmania but haven't yet commenced, please discuss your options with your supervisor in the first instance. We will support flexible options to commence where possible.

### **I am an international applicant with an offer. When can I commence?**

- There have been significant changes in the Australian Government Home Affairs policy as it relates to travel to Australia and Tasmania for non-residents.
- As you have accepted an offer to study a Higher Degree by Research at the University of Tasmania as an International Student, this may mean your ability to travel to Australia and commence your degree with us has become more difficult.
- The Graduate Research Office would like to reassure you that we are exploring all possible options to make this period of uncertainty less stressful for you.
- As a first step, please stay in close contact with your nominated Primary Supervisor and keep them updated on your individual situation. By keeping in regular contact, your supervisor can work with you to explore how your project may commence. This may include the possibility of you commencing your candidature offshore, depending on the nature of your research and your support structure.

## **Commence**

### **I am an international applicant with a scholarship, commencing offshore during COVID-19 restrictions. How can I receive payment?**

- The Graduate Research Office can make arrangements for payment into an international bank account for a short period until you are able to join us on campus, at which point you will need to nominate an Australian bank account for payments. These payments will occur monthly.

## **I am an international applicant who commenced offshore. What do I need to do when travel restrictions are lifted?**

- Once travel restrictions are lifted, you must make arrangements to move onshore.
- Once your travel plans are approved and you have a firm date for arrival, you must notify the Graduate Research Office and your supervisory team of your arrival in Tasmania. This is crucial for the University's reporting requirements and induction processes.
- For those on a scholarship, it is at this point that an Australian Bank Account will be required to switch payments from the international account.

## **Facilities on campus**

### **How can I access Library resources?**

- University libraries are open. Health guidelines apply. [Read the library updates](#)
- Resources at all libraries around the state can be accessed [online](#). If the books or journals you need aren't available electronically, you can request scanned copies of chapters and/or extracts which we will email to you. Simply fill out the [request form](#) and select 'Scan and Attach' to email as your delivery option.

### **How can I return to campus?**

- A guide for returning to campus is outlined in the [Campus buildings staged opening program](#).
- To do everything we can to keep you safe, activities on campus need to allow physical distancing of 1.5m per person.
- As each situation is specific to individual HDR candidates, please arrange use of campus facilities with your supervisory team.

### **Can I get a refund for my parking permit?**

- Campus Services are offering partial refunds (commensurate with cancelled time period) for those with paid parking permits. Please return your permit to Campus Services by sending to Private Bag 69, Hobart 7000 with a request to cancel.

## **IT support**

### **Where can I get information about IT support?**

- To help you transition to online learning, the following support is available:
  - [IT Service Desk support is available online](#) or call [+61 3 6226 2600](#)
  - [Zoom](#)
  - [Web conferencing](#) in MyLO
  - Installed VPN (install guides for [PC](#), [Mac](#)) to access the University network and some web-based systems.