

**RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM (RTP) SCHOLARSHIP
RTP STIPEND and RTP ALLOWANCE
CONDITIONS OF AWARD 2023**

1. OVERVIEW

The main objectives of the Research Training Program (RTP) are to:

- provide flexible funding arrangements to support the training of domestic candidates and overseas candidates undertaking Higher Degrees by Research at Australian Higher Education Providers;
- deliver graduates with the skills required to build careers in academia and other sectors of the labour market;
- support collaboration between Higher Education Providers and industry and other research end-users; and
- support overseas candidates undertaking Higher Degrees by Research at Australian Higher Education Providers.

It is the principal program of the Commonwealth Government for supporting promising researchers, with awards available in all fields of study. The program is administered by the University of Tasmania (the University) and the Commonwealth Department of Education. The University pays award holders all entitlements under the award.

The University has offered you an:

- *RTP Stipend* to assist you with your living costs while undertaking the Higher Degree by Research;
- *RTP Allowance* to assist you with costs associated with relocating to Tasmania to undertake your Higher Degree by Research; and
- *RTP Fees Offset* paid to the University by the Commonwealth Government to cover the costs of tuition fees.

This award does not cover the [Student Services and Amenities Fee \(SSAF\)](#). All domestic Higher Degree by Research candidates are liable for SSAF as determined by the University.

2. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for an RTP Stipend and RTP Allowance, a candidate must be either a domestic candidate or an overseas candidate enrolled in an accredited Higher Degree by Research at the University.

To be eligible for an RTP Stipend a candidate must not be receiving income from another source to support the candidate's general living costs while undertaking their Higher Degree by Research if that income is greater than 75 per cent of the candidate's RTP Stipend rate. Income unrelated to the candidate's course of study (e.g. employment income) or income received for the candidate's course of study but not for the purpose of supporting general living costs will not be taken into account.

To be eligible for an RTP Fees Offset a candidate must not be receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth Government designed to offset tuition fees for their Higher Degree by Research.

In 2023 all domestic applicants will be offered an RTP Fees Offset provided they are not receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth designed to offset Higher Degree by Research tuition fees.

RTP Scholarship awardees are required to accept and commence by the dates stated in their letter of offer. If an awardee wishes to delay the date of commencement, a formal application must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Research for approval, including a justification for the delay, a proposed new date of enrolment and a letter of support from the primary supervisor. A delayed commencement beyond 1 December 2023 will not be approved. If the awardee does not enrol and commence by the maximum commencement date stated on their letter of offer and permission to delay commencement is not granted, then the offer will be withdrawn.

The period of support of an RTP Scholarship is always subject to the awardee making satisfactory academic progress and terminates on the expiry of the Award or on submission of the thesis for examination, whichever is the sooner.

3. RTP STIPEND

RTP stipends are awarded on a competitive basis.

In its competitive selection process, the University will give priority to applicants who:

- hold an Australian or New Zealand bachelor's degree with first class honours or qualifications and/or research experience deemed equivalent by the University;
- have a proposed project in an area identified by the University as one of research strength;
- have not already completed a Doctoral degree or equivalent; and/or
- have not already completed a Master of Research degree or equivalent unless intending to undertake a Doctoral degree.

Applicants who do not satisfy some or all of the above will be considered in the competitive selection process, but may not be prioritised against other applicants who have.

4. RTP STIPEND RATE

Full-time candidates receive a stipend at the rate of AUD\$31,500pa non-taxable (2023 rate, indexed annually).

Part-time candidates may receive a stipend (in specific circumstances) paid at the rate of AUD\$15,750pa taxable (2023 rate, indexed annually).

The stipend rate for any subsequent year is the same as that for the preceding year, indexed in accordance with the method set out in Part 5-6 of the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#).

See also: section 10 STUDY LOAD

5. RTP STIPEND PERIOD OF SUPPORT

The period of support is calculated from the date of enrolment in the Higher Degree by Research, except where the RTP Scholarship is awarded after commencement of candidature.

The duration of the award is 3 years and 6 months for a Doctoral candidate and 2 years for a Masters candidate. There are no provisions for an extension.

A candidate's period of support will be increased pro-rata for those periods of paid leave stipulated in section 14 and approved by the University.

The period of support of an *RTP Stipend* will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the *RTP Stipend*.

There are no provisions for *RTP Stipend* extension.

6. RTP FEES OFFSET

An RTP Fees Offset is awarded to all domestic candidates enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research at the University of Tasmania.

In 2023 the Domestic RTP Fees Offset rate will be in the range of AUD\$31,000 - \$44,500 per annum.

7. RTP FEES OFFSET PERIOD OF SUPPORT

The period of support is calculated from the date of enrolment in the Higher Degree by Research. The RTP Fees Offset period of support is:

- Doctoral Candidates: four years at a full-time candidate load and eight years at a part-time candidate load.
- Master of Research Candidates: two years at a full-time candidate load and four years at a part-time candidate load.

There are no provisions for RTP Fees Offset extensions for candidates undertaking a Doctoral degree or Master of Research.

8. RTP ALLOWANCES

Relocation Allowance:

Award holders may apply for a one-off relocation allowance of up to AUD\$2,000 in total towards the cost of relocating to Hobart, Launceston or the Cradle Coast from within Australia or from overseas to take up the award.

The allowance covers one way travel expenses for the award holder, any dependent spouse/partner and dependent children, equivalent to the cheapest economy airfare to Hobart, Launceston or Burnie. Where an award holder elects to travel by car, they will receive a per kilometre allowance as determined by the University.

Claims for relocation allowance must be submitted:

- once travel has been completed and the award holder has been enrolled;
- within 6 months of the date of commencement of the award; and
- via the HDR Relocation Claim form in the Service Portal accompanied by electronic copies of receipts.

Award holders cannot claim for accommodation, rental bond or meal costs as part of the relocation claim.

9. TRANSFER BETWEEN HIGHER DEGREES BY RESEARCH

The University may approve, on the recommendation of the Dean of Graduate Research, the internal transfer of an RTP Stipend from a Master of Research degree to a Doctoral degree or from a Doctoral degree to a Master of Research degree. The period of support of a transferred RTP Stipend becomes that for the new Higher Degree by Research, reduced by periods of equivalent full-time enrolment (FTE) undertaken towards the related degree prior to the transfer.

10. STUDY LOAD

The award is conditional on maintaining full-time enrolment in your program of study at the University of Tasmania.

Candidates with heavy care commitments or with a medical condition precluding full-time study may be permitted to hold awards on a part-time basis. In making an assessment of an application for a part-time award the following will be considered:

- the reason/s for the request;
- whether the School of Enrolment has sufficient resources to facilitate completion of candidature with respect to supervision, funding, and access to relevant facilities; and whether any thesis submitted by the revised expiry of the maximum degree period will as a body of work still form a supervised, independent and significant contribution to knowledge.

Employment will generally not be a permissible reason to hold a part-time award. Under exceptional circumstances, requests for part-time awards while employed part-time may be considered by the Dean.

A part-time award holder must be enrolled as a part-time candidate and is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time award holder. Award holders approved to study part-time may revert to full-time study at any time. A candidate will be expected to spend the following hours per week progressing their candidature: 38 hours when enrolled full-time, or an average of 19 hours when enrolled part-time.

The University may require the holder of a part-time award to convert to full-time if the exceptional circumstances which were the basis of approval no longer apply.

Under Australian Taxation Law part-time stipends are taxable. Candidates should seek independent taxation advice as the University cannot provide advice regarding taxation.

See also: Section 13 EMPLOYMENT DURING CANDIDATURE

11. TRANSFER OF AN RTP SCHOLARSHIP

An RTP Scholarship can only be taken up at the university at which the application was lodged and candidates are expected to complete their candidature at that university.

Where a candidate seeks to transfer from one university to another during the tenure of their RTP scholarship, the candidate must discuss with the receiving university whether that university is prepared to continue the RTP Scholarship support as RTP funding is not transferable between institutions.

12. TERMINATION

The University will terminate a candidate's RTP Scholarship once the thesis is submitted for examination or at the end of the Award, whichever is earlier. Awards will be terminated before this time:

- if, after due inquiry, the University concludes that the Award holder has not fulfilled obligations, met the eligibility criteria or made satisfactory progress;
- if, in the opinion of the institution, the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of award;
- if, after due inquiry, the University concludes that the candidate has committed serious misconduct, including but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information;
- when the candidate ceases to be full-time and when approval has not been obtained to hold the award on a part-time basis;
- if the award holder does not resume study following a period of suspension or make arrangements to extend that suspension;
- if the award holder takes unapproved leave from their candidature, with no response to attempts at communication by the University;
- if the award holder fails to participate in a formal review of progress and does not respond to reasonable requests to do so;
- if an award holder fails to confirm their candidature within their first twelve months of equivalent full-time candidature or make arrangements for an extension to their confirmation of candidature due date; or
- on the death or incapacity of the candidate, or withdrawal from the program.

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

13. EMPLOYMENT DURING CANDIDATURE

A candidate is expected to spend the following hours per week progressing their candidature:

- 38 hours when enrolled full-time; or
- an average of 19 hours when enrolled part-time

A candidate's award may be terminated or they may be placed on Candidature Management Plan if the University does not consider that their progress is satisfactory.

Full-time candidates

A full-time candidate may undertake *limited* work experience or employment during candidature provided it:

- does not interfere with the timely progression and completion of their research project;
- does not exceed on average over a 12-month period, 20% of a full-time load i.e. 365 hours per annum (this does not apply to work undertaken outside of the 38 hours per week that is dedicated to the research project);
- is documented in an updated Research Plan; and
- is endorsed by the academic unit.

Part-time candidates

Unless otherwise approved by the Dean, recipients of a part-time award are subject to the same restrictions on employment as full-time award holders (listed above).

See also: Section 10 STUDY LOAD

14. LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

PAID LEAVE

Leave entitlements are pro-rated for part-time candidates.

Annual Leave

- Candidates are entitled to 20 working days paid recreation leave each year (accruable). This period does not extend the normal duration of the award.
- The academic unit will manage the application for and granting of annual leave provisions at their discretion.
- The agreement of the Supervisor must be obtained before leave is taken.

Sick Leave

- Candidates are entitled to 10 working days paid sick leave a year (accruable). This period does not extend the normal duration of the award.
- The academic unit will manage the application for and granting of the 10 working days sick leave provision at their discretion.

Medical and Carer's Leave

- For medically substantiated periods of illness lasting longer than ten working days candidates may receive up to a total of 12 weeks paid leave, which can include medical and carer's leave
- Periods of paid medical and carer's leave are additional to the normal duration of the award.
- Applications for medical and carer's leave must be submitted via the Service Portal, accompanied by medical certification and endorsed by the Supervisor, Graduate Research Coordinator and Head of School.

Parental Leave

- Award holders may take up to a maximum of 12 weeks paid parental leave for candidates who give birth to a child, or are the primary caregiver for a newborn child (including surrogacy arrangements) or a newborn child placed with them for adoption or permanent care, during their degree period.
- Paid parental leave may only be taken once and may not be taken within the first 12 months of the award (unpaid parental leave may also be accessed in addition to paid leave, see below).
- Periods of paid parental leave are additional to the normal duration of the award.
- Applications for parental leave must be submitted via the Service Portal, accompanied by medical certification and endorsed by the Supervisor, Graduate Research Coordinator and Head of School.

Partner Leave

- Candidates whose partner has given birth or who is the main carer of the newborn child placed with them for adoption or permanent care and who have completed 12 months of their award, may take up to a maximum of 2 weeks paid leave during a period through 1 week before the expected birth, adoption or permanent placement of the newborn child and 5 weeks after the birth, adoption or permanent placement of the newborn child.
- This leave can be taken only once during the tenure of the award (additional partner leave may be accessed as unpaid leave, see below).
- Paid partner leave is additional to the normal duration of the award.
- Applications for partner leave must be submitted via the Service Portal, accompanied by medical certification and endorsed by the Supervisor, Graduate Research Coordinator and Head of School.

UNPAID LEAVE

Award holders may apply for periods of unpaid leave.

- Candidates who have not completed 12 months of their award or who wish to take a period of unpaid parental or partner leave in addition to the period of paid parental or partner leave, may apply for an unpaid leave of absence.
- The total period of leave from the award during its duration generally may not exceed 12 months. In exceptional circumstances, where the recipient of the award can demonstrate reasons outside their control, additional periods of leave may be granted. Only under exceptional circumstances will leave be possible beyond 2 years in total.
- The end date of the award will be adjusted to account for the period of unpaid leave approved by the University.
- Applications for a leave of absence should be submitted via the Service Portal in line with the [HDR Candidature Management and Enrolment Variation procedure](#)

15. APPEALS

The appeal mechanism for resolution of disputes which may arise during candidature are described in the [Research Training Ordinance](#). Appeals against decisions concerning the allocation of awards must be made in writing to the Dean of Graduate Research within 14 days of the applicant being notified of the decision. The Dean shall consider the case made by the applicant and convey its decision to the applicant. The applicant may, within 14 days of notification of the decision, lodge a written appeal against such decision for consideration. All correspondence is to be via the Graduate Research Office.

16. RESEARCH OVERSEAS

Candidates may be permitted to undertake fieldwork or research overseas when this is considered necessary by the supervisor and Head of School. Applications for overseas study should be lodged with the Graduate Research Office prior to commencement of the overseas study in accordance with the [HDR Candidature Management and Enrolment Variation Procedure](#).

The Award holder will not generally be allowed to undertake overseas study in the first six months of scholarship tenure. Candidature undertaken prior to the taking up of the scholarship will be taken into account in determining the earliest date on which the candidate may pursue paid overseas study.

17. RESEARCH AT OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The University may permit a candidate to conduct part of the research at other organisations provided that there is adequate support and supervision for the award holder.

18. OTHER COURSES

An award holder may not engage in any academic course of study leading to a qualification which is not an essential part of the award holder's research higher degree.

19. PAYMENT OF STIPEND

Stipends are paid fortnightly in arrears and must be paid into an Australian bank account (with an Australian authorised deposit-taking institution) in the candidate's name.

20. RECOVERY OF MONIES OWED

The University shall be entitled to recover money owed by candidates arising from payment of a scholarship or allowance to which the candidate is not entitled.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to be aware of their entitled scholarship and notify the Graduate Research Office should their received entitlements differ from their offer.

21. SPECIFIC OBLIGATIONS OF AWARD HOLDERS

The award holder shall diligently and to the best of their ability apply themselves to the successful completion

The award holder shall abide by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University.

The award holder is required to conform to the regulations and statutes (including disciplinary provisions) of the University and to the rules and procedures of research higher degrees.

The award holder must provide all reports required by the University including an annual review of progress submitted through the supervisor and Head of School. If the University does not consider that progress is satisfactory, the Award may be terminated or the holder placed on a Candidature Management Plan .

The Award holder is responsible for seeking independent taxation advice in relation to their scholarship.

Acknowledgement of Australian Government support

- Award holders are required to acknowledge the Commonwealth Government's support in any published materials related to your Higher Degree by Research. This relates to any time, both during and after completion of the award holder's Higher Degree by Research. Materials include items such as the thesis or exegesis, books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to the award holder's Higher Degree by Research project.
- The acknowledgement must be in a prominent place and in an appropriate form. The acknowledgement must include the mention of the award holder's support through an "Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship".