

## **Graduate Research Degrees Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship Policy**

### **Purpose and Scope**

This policy outlines the rules concerning the administration and allocation of the RTP Scholarships at Murdoch University, as required by the *Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017* which provides for Commonwealth Scholarships under Part 2-4 of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*. Basic scholarship eligibility requirements are stipulated in the [Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#). Further information for candidates is also available from the Department of Education and Training (DET) at [Research Training Program – Frequently Asked Questions](#).

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the *Graduate Research Degrees Regulations* and other documents as outlined in this policy.

Recipients of the RTP Stipend will read this policy in conjunction with the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions* as posted on the GRO website.

This policy applies to all staff and students.

#### **Objectives**

- To provide information governing RTP Scholarships, as required by the [Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#).
- To provide governance to support the administration and allocation of the RTP Scholarships.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Different levels of University staff have different levels of responsibility in relation to this policy as outlined below:

- The Dean through the Business Manager is to ensure that funds received from the Australian Government Research Training Program are allocated in accordance with the terms set out in this policy.
- All individuals identified in the scope of this policy are responsible for ensuring full compliance with the principles set out in this policy, and its *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions* where relevant.

### **Policy**

1. In this policy, the following words have the following meanings:

- 1.1. "Continuing Student" means a Murdoch University graduate research degree candidate whose period of support under the Research Training Scheme (RTS), International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS), or Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) would terminate on or after 1 January 2017; or a candidate who has received from the University an offer of support under the RTS, IPRS, or APA, and accepted this offer of support, and whose offer of support was scheduled to commence on or after 1 January 2017.
- 1.2. "Dean" means the Head of the Graduate Research Office, by whatever name known.
- 1.3. "Domestic candidate" means an Australian citizen or Permanent Resident or a New Zealand citizen enrolled or seeking to be enrolled in a graduate research degree as outlined in the handbook
- 1.4. "Overseas candidate" means a candidate who is on an overseas student visa enrolled or seeking to be enrolled in a graduate research degree as *outlined in the handbook*

### **Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarships**

2. Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarships for graduate research degrees comprise one or more of the following components:
  - 2.1. RTP Fees Offset which covers the cost of the tuition fees otherwise payable by the candidate;
  - 2.2. RTP Stipend which is paid directly to the candidate for general living costs while enrolled as a candidate; and/or
  - 2.3. RTP Allowances which are to assist with ancillary costs, as outlined in the *RTP Full Scholarships Conditions*.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

3. To be eligible for an RTP Scholarship, domestic and overseas candidates must be enrolled in a graduate research degree *as outlined in the handbook* and meet the criteria set out in this document.
4. RTP Full Scholarships, comprising all three components of the RTP Scholarship outlined in Clause 2, are awarded to candidates who meet the additional eligibility criteria set out in the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions*.
5. To be eligible for an RTP Fees Offset, subject to Clause 17, a candidate must not be receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Australian Government designed to offset fees.
6. To be eligible for an RTP Stipend, subject to Clauses 4 and 18, a candidate must not be receiving income from another source to support the candidate's general living costs while undertaking their graduate research degree, if that income is greater than 75 per cent of the candidate's RTP Stipend.
  - 6.1. Income unrelated to the candidate's graduate research degree or income received for the candidate's graduate research degree which is not for the purpose of supporting general living costs is not taken into account.

### **Period of Support**

7. The period of support for an RTP Fees Offset is as set out for the relevant enrolment period in the [Graduate Research Degrees Regulations](#), subject to any specific course durations stated in the handbook.
8. The period of support for an RTP Full Scholarship is set out in the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions*.
9. The period of support is calculated from the enrolment commencement date, minus any enrolment period undertaken prior to the commencement of the RTP Scholarship.
10. Candidates who have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions may have their period of support extended by up to six (6) months, subject to the availability of RTP funds. The following apply to COVID-19 extensions:
  - 10.1. Eligibility is limited to candidates that were either enrolled in a graduate research degree as at 1 March 2020, or prior to 1 March 2020 and on approved Leave of Absence as at 1 March 2020.
  - 10.2. Candidates must be otherwise making satisfactory progress and the grounds for the extension must be accompanied by evidence to support that the candidate's graduate research degree has been adversely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions
  - 10.3. All extensions must be approved in writing, stating the period of the extension, by no later than 31 December 2022.
  - 10.4. The maximum period of six months applies to either full-time or part-time candidates.

### **RTP Stipend Rates and Conditions**

11. The *Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017* detail the base and maximum rates for RTP Stipends, and methodology for indexation in subsequent years.
12. The RTP Stipend rates are documented in the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions* each year.
13. The RTP Stipend paid leave entitlements are outlined in the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions*.

### **Employment**

14. RTP Scholarship recipients undertaking employment outside the graduate research degree must refer to the provisions stated as follows:
  - 14.1. RTP Fees Offset: [Graduate Research Degrees Regulations](#); or
  - 14.2. RTP Stipend: *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions*.

### **Application Process**

15. The application, selection, and offer processes for awarding RTP Scholarships are outlined in the *Graduate Research Degree Procedure* and are also available on the [Future Research Students - Admissions and Scholarship](#) website.
16. RTP Scholarship recipients must read and comply with the relevant Murdoch University regulations, policies and procedures.
17. RTP Fees Offset

- 17.1. Domestic candidates are automatically assessed for eligibility at the point of application for admission into a graduate research degree. There is no separate application process.
- 17.2. Overseas candidates are required to apply, when the round opens, via the [Future Research Students - Admissions and Scholarship](#) website. This is a competitive selection process.
- 18. RTP Stipend
  - 18.1. Both domestic and overseas candidates meeting the eligibility criteria as set out in the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions* are required to apply for an RTP stipend, when the round opens, via the Graduate Research Office. This is a competitive selection process.

### **Arrangements for Continuing Students**

- 19. Domestic candidates supported or offered support under the former [Research Training Scheme \(RTS\)](#) will be offered the RTP Fees Offset for a period necessary to provide at least equivalent support to that which the candidate would have received under the RTS.
- 20. Overseas candidates supported or offered support under the [International Postgraduate Research Scholarships \(IPRS\)](#) will be offered the RTP Fees Offset and RTP Allowance for a period necessary to provide at least equivalent support to that which the candidate would have received under the IPRS.
- 21. Candidates supported or offered support under the former [Australian Postgraduate Awards \(APA\)](#) will be offered the RTP Stipend and RTP Allowance for a period necessary to provide at least equivalent support to that which the candidate would have received under the APA.
- 22. Periods of support for Continuing Students are based on the enrolment commencement dates (not the commencement of the RTP Scholarship).

### **Supervision and facilities provisions**

- 23. The provisions for supervision and minimum resources for RTP Scholarship recipients are outlined in the [Graduate Research Degrees Regulations](#).

### **Variations to Candidature**

- 24. Variations that impact on the candidate's field of education are subject to the provisions outlined in the [Graduate Research Degrees Regulations](#), and candidates must advise the Graduate Research Office in writing of any such change.
- 25. Candidates from other institutions may apply to transfer their candidature to Murdoch University, subject to any previously completed milestones and the residual period of support meeting the enrolment period outlined in the *Graduate Research Degrees Regulations*.
  - 25.1. Transfer to Murdoch University will not normally be allowed for candidates who have completed more than two (2) years EFTSL of a Doctoral Degree or six (6) months EFTSL of a Masters Degree.
  - 25.2. The period of enrolment at the previous institution will be deducted from the usual enrolment period, as *stated in the Handbook*, at Murdoch University.

26. Candidates may apply to change their enrolment from full-time to part-time (and vice versa), subject to the *Graduate Research Degrees Regulations*.
  - 26.1. Candidates requesting a change from full-time to part-time candidature, who hold an RTP Stipend, may be required to relinquish the stipend.
27. A Masters Degree candidate may transfer to a Doctoral Degree, in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degree Regulations*.
28. A Doctoral Degree candidate may transfer to a Masters Degree, in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degree Regulations*.
29. Candidates in receipt of RTP Stipends with approved transfers in Clause 27 and 28 will have their RTP Stipend adjusted in accordance with the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions*.

### **Leave Entitlements and Employment**

30. RTP Fees Offset recipients must refer to the [\*Graduate Research Degrees Regulations\*](#) for leave entitlements and employment conditions.
31. RTP Stipend recipients must refer to the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions* for leave entitlements and employment conditions.

### **Industry placements, research internships, professional practice activities**

32. RTP Scholarship recipients may undertake industry placements, internships, and professional practice activities of up to six (6) months' duration as part of their graduate research degree if written approval is obtained from the Dean, or if this is stated in the letter of offer (or an amended offer, issued after enrolment).
33. The RTP Stipend may be available for the duration of industry placements, research internships or professional practice activities, up to the maximum period of RTP support, if:
  - 33.1. the candidate holds an RTP Stipend;
  - 33.2. there is no other income associated with these activities;
  - 33.3. the maximum enrolment period has not been reached;
  - 33.4. the RTP Stipend period of support has not been fully consumed; and
  - 33.5. the thesis examination process has not been finalised.
34. RTP Stipend recipients undertaking an industry placement, internship, or professional practice will not receive additional payments once the period of support, as outlined in the *RTP Full Scholarship Conditions*, is consumed.

### **Termination of RTP Scholarship**

35. An RTP Scholarship will be terminated if one or more of the following criteria apply to a candidate who:
  - 35.1. ceased to meet the eligibility criteria, other than during an approved period of leave;
  - 35.2. submitted their thesis for examination;
  - 35.3. reached the maximum period of support of the RTP Scholarship as set out in Clauses 7 and 8;

- 35.4. failed to participate in a formal progress review, with no response to reasonable requests to do so.
- 35.5. had candidature terminated in accordance with the *Graduate Research Degrees Regulations*;
- 35.6. took a Leave of Absence without approval, with no response to attempts at communication by Murdoch University;
- 35.7. failed to return from a period of leave;
- 35.8. failed to re-enrol following a period of Leave of Absence, with no response to attempts at communication by Murdoch University;
- 35.9. withdrew from the graduate research degree; and/or
- 35.10. committed serious misconduct, including the provision of false or misleading information in relation to the RTP Scholarship.

### **Acknowledging the Commonwealth's support**

- 36. Candidates, Supervisors, and any other relevant third party, must acknowledge the RTP Scholarship in any research outputs, both during and after completion of the graduate research degree, by mention of an “Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship” statement in a prominent place and in an appropriate form.
- 37. Research outputs that require acknowledgement include but are not limited to books, book chapters, journal articles, conference proceedings, newsletters or other published literary or artistic works which relate to the candidate’s research program.

### **Grievance and Review**

- 38. A candidate seeking to raise a complaint about an RTP Scholarship administrative issue may do so in accordance with the [Graduate Research Degrees Dispute Resolution Procedure](#).
- 39. The Department of Education and Training has released a [Fact Sheet](#) to assist candidates, including RTP Scholarship recipients, who have a grievance with the University.

### **Non-Compliance:**

- Non-compliance with this policy and associated documents may deem the candidate responsible for repaying to Murdoch University any RTP Stipend or RTP Allowances paid.

## **Governance**

<b>Approval Authority</b>	Academic Council
<b>Owner</b>	President Academic Council

<b>Legislation mandating compliance</b>	
<b>Category</b>	Primarily academic
<b>Related University Legislation and Policy Documents</b>	<i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> <i>Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017</i>
<b>Date effective</b>	30/12/2022
<b>Review date</b>	30/12/2025

## Revision History

<b>Approved/Amended</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Resolution No. (if applicable)</b>
Administrative amendment	08/08/2023	
Approved	30/12/2022	AC/131/2022
Approved	06/10/2021	AC/81/2021
Recommended to AC	23/09/2021	RC/04/2021

*Please refer to the electronic copy in the Policy and Procedure Manager to ensure you are referring to the latest version.*