

Higher Degree by Research Scholarships Policy - Research Training Program Funded Scholarships

Section 1 - Purpose

- (1) On behalf of the Commonwealth Government, and in accordance with the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017, Charles Sturt University (the University) is a provider of Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarships.
- (2) This document outlines the policy relating to scholarships funded under the RTP, as they apply at Charles Sturt University, particularly clarifying the University's position where discretion is afforded in the legislation. In the event of an inconsistency between this document and the prevailing legislation, the legislation takes precedence.
- (3) RTP-funded Scholarships are awarded to candidates of exceptional research potential undertaking a Higher Degree by Research (Masters by Research degree, Doctor of Philosophy or Research Professional Doctorate).

Section 2 - Glossary

- (4) Higher Degree by Research - means programs containing a research component which is 66 per cent or more of the whole program. They include the Doctoral Degrees (Doctor of Philosophy, Research Professional Doctorates) and Masters by Research.
- (5) Doctoral degree - qualifies individuals who apply a substantial body of knowledge to research, investigate and develop new knowledge in one or more fields of investigation or Scholarship. Candidates for the award of a Doctoral degree must demonstrate through presentation of the work in a thesis advanced theoretical and methodological knowledge and that the research makes an original and significant contribution to knowledge or understanding.
- (6) Master by Research - means a program that qualifies individuals who apply an advanced body of knowledge in a range of contexts for research and scholarship and as a pathway for further learning. Masters by Research outputs must demonstrate a distinct contribution to knowledge of the subject. A Master by Research candidate is required to undertake research on an approved topic, the results of which should result in a distinct contribution to knowledge of the subject. Candidates for the award of a Master by Research degree must demonstrate through presentation of the work in a thesis an appropriate theoretical and methodological knowledge.

Section 3 - Policy

Scholarship Types

- (7) The University utilises Research Training Program funding to provide the following Higher Degree Research (HDR) Scholarships:
- a. Australian Research Training Program (ARTP) Scholarship;
 - b. Australian Research Training Program Part-Time (ARTP-Part-Time) Scholarship; and

c. Australian Research Training Program International (ARTP-International) Scholarship.

(8) The University may also offer ARTP Scholarships for applicants whose research area is relevant to the key research objectives of one of the University Research Centres. These Scholarships offer the same entitlements and conditions as an ARTP Scholarship but may be advertised externally as University Research Centre Scholarships.

(9) Scholarships may be comprised of one or more of the following components:

- a. stipend (or living allowance);
- b. tuition fee exempt place;
- c. operating funding for research costs (sometimes referred to as a resource or maintenance allowance); and
- d. relocation allowance.

Eligibility Criteria

(10) To be eligible for the HDR Scholarships listed above, applicants must be enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research course; or applying for the same at the University. To take up an offer of Scholarship, the applicant must have had their enrolment into the proposed Higher Degree by Research (HRD) program accepted by the University. Recipients must remain enrolled to receive the Scholarship entitlements.

(11) Candidates must not be receiving an equivalent award or Scholarship from the Commonwealth designed to offset HDR fees.

(12) Applicants for the ARTP Scholarship and ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship must be Australian or New Zealand citizens or Australian permanent residents. Applicants for the ARTP-International Scholarship must be overseas students under the definition in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003](#).

(13) Recipients of the ARTP and ARTP-International Scholarships will normally be required to enrol on a full time basis. Recipients of the ARTP-Part-Time Scholarships will normally be required to enrol on a part time basis. (refer to clauses 36-40 for process related to variations of enrolment).

(14) Recipients of the ARTP and ARTP-International Scholarships:

- a. must not be receiving an equivalent award, Scholarship or salary providing a benefit greater than 75 per cent of the ARTP stipend rate to undertake the HDR (income earned from sources unrelated to the course of study is not subject to this 75 per cent requirement); and
- b. may, with the approval of the Supervisory Team and the Head of School, undertake up to a total of 50 hours paid employment per month, provided that such employment does not interfere with the progress of the study program. Employment means paid work undertaken within the University as well as paid work undertaken external to the University. Any paid employment beyond the above mentioned figure must have approval from the Director, Research. Contravention of this condition regarding paid employment will result in the Scholarship being cancelled. (The University cannot require a candidate to undertake employment within the University).

(15) The University may elect to include additional eligibility criteria when advertising RTP-funded Scholarships, consistent with Section 1.6.20.5 of the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017.

Scholarship Benefits

(16) Candidates in receipt of an ARTP, ARTP-Part-Time or ARTP-International may be entitled to one or more of the following:

- a. Tuition and Other Fees:

- i. candidates are responsible for miscellaneous charges but may be exempt from tuition fees;
- b. Operating Funding:
 - i. the University may allocate an allowance per session of enrolment to assist with the reimbursement of costs associated with the candidate's research; and
- c. Relocation Allowance:
 - i. a candidate who relocates to a campus of the University to take up the Scholarship may receive a relocation allowance for the following:
 - economy airfare from the place of residence to campus of study for themselves, spouse (x1) and dependents (x2) and removal expenses to a maximum rate to be determined by the University.

(17) Candidates in receipt of an ARTP Scholarship or ARTP-International Scholarship may be entitled to receive a stipend:

- a. the full-time stipend annual rate will be set within the base and maximum stipend rates set as advised by the Commonwealth; or
- b. if a part-time candidature is approved for ARTP or ARTP-International recipients, the stipend is payable at a reduced rate and without the benefit of the tax free status.

(18) Candidates in receipt of an ARTP-International may be entitled to Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC).

Leave Entitlements

(19) The expectation of Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates is that they will be actively studying in their program for 48 weeks of the year.

(20) ARTP Scholarship, ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship and ARTP-International Scholarship recipients are entitled to:

- a. Annual Leave
 - i. 20 working days per year. This may be accrued but unused leave will be forfeited when the Scholarship is terminated, i.e. leave cannot be taken at the end of tenure to extend the Scholarship.
- b. Personal Leave
 - i. 10 working days per year. This may be accrued but unused leave will be forfeited when the Scholarship ceases. Absences of three days or greater must be supported by a medical certificate. This may be used to cover leave for candidates with family caring responsibilities. This personal leave does not extend the tenure of the Scholarship.

(21) ARTP and ARTP-International recipients are also entitled to:

- a. Additional Personal Leave
 - i. Candidates are entitled to receive additional paid Personal leave of up to a total of 12 weeks during the duration of the Scholarship for periods lasting longer than 10 days for which a medical certificate has been provided. This may be used to cover leave for candidates with family caring responsibilities. Where additional personal leave is accessed the tenure of the Scholarship will be extended by an equivalent period.
- b. Maternity Leave
 - i. Candidates who have completed 12 months of their Scholarship are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks paid maternity leave during the duration of the ARTP. Paid leave may also be approved if the candidate is adopting a child. Where paid maternity leave is accessed the tenure of the Scholarship will be extended by an equivalent period.

c. Parental Leave

- i. Candidates who have completed 12 months of their Scholarship may be entitled to 10 days paid parental leave if:
- they are adopting a child.
 - they are the partner of the woman giving birth; or
 - This leave does not extend the tenure of the Scholarship.

d. Special Leave

- i. Special leave may be approved as paid leave up to a maximum of five days in any calendar year for situations that are not covered by other forms of leave. This leave does not accrue.
- ii. With prior approval, special leave is available to Scholarship holders to cover the following family related circumstances:
- Life threatening illness, serious injury or death of Family or Household member;
 - Blood donation;
 - Cultural or Religious Obligation;
 - Natural Disaster/Emergency Service Volunteer;
 - Attendance at compulsory interviews prior to adoption of a child; or
 - Situations of domestic violence (if the 10 days personal leave entitlement has been exhausted).
- iii. Special leave does not extend the tenure of the Scholarship.

Leave of Absence

(22) All Scholarship recipients must abide by the [Higher Degree by Research Policy - Enrolment and Progress](#) with respect to leave of absence.

(23) All leave of absences must be notified to the Research Office for recording purposes.

(24) Scholarship holders must notify the Research Office at least three weeks prior to resuming study following a period of leave of absence.

(25) Scholarship holders who suspend their studies without approval required in the [Higher Degree by Research Policy - Enrolment and Progress](#) will be required to repay any Scholarship payments to which they were not entitled.

Scholarship Duration

(26) The duration of an ARTP Scholarship and ARTP-International Scholarship is three years for a candidate undertaking Research Doctorate studies unless an extension is approved as per clause 30, and two years for a candidate undertaking Research Masters studies subject to satisfactory progress.

(27) The duration of an ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship is six years for Research Doctorate studies and four years for Research Masters studies.

(28) The duration of an ARTP Scholarship, ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship and ARTP-International Scholarship will be reduced by any periods of HDR study undertaken:

- a. towards the degree prior to the commencement of the Scholarship; or
- b. towards the degree during suspension of the Scholarship (unless the study was undertaken as part of an Commonwealth Government financially supported international postgraduate research Scholarship or Scholarship).

(29) The duration of an ARTP Scholarship and ARTP-International Scholarship will only be increased by any periods of

approved paid maternity leave and/or additional sick leave.

(30) The University may also approve an extension to the duration of an ARTP Scholarship, ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship and ARTP-International Scholarship for a Research Doctorate candidate of up to six months provided the candidate is making satisfactory progress and the grounds for the extension relate to the study and are beyond the control of the candidate. The University cannot approve an extension to the duration of an ARTP Scholarship, ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship and ARTP-International Scholarship for a Research Masters student.

(31) HDR candidates who have exceeded their Scholarship entitlement may be permitted to continue on a fee-paying basis for the remaining period of their HDR candidature. Enrolment must be maintained until a thesis is submitted for examination, unless a candidate withdraws or has their candidature terminated.

Commencement of Scholarship

(32) Scholarships must be taken up within 11 Months of the Offer of Scholarship being accepted.

(33) The Offer of Scholarship will be withdrawn if not taken up by the date specified in the Offer of Scholarship.

Termination of Scholarship

(34) A Scholarship will be terminated:

- a. If the candidate ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified above, other than during a period in which the Scholarship has been suspended or during a period of leave.
- b. When the candidate ceases to be:
 - i. a full-time student and approval has not been obtained from the Director-Research to hold the Scholarship on a part-time basis (ARTP Scholarship and ARTP-International Scholarship recipients); or
 - ii. a part-time student and approval has not been obtained from the Director-Research to hold the Scholarship on a full-time basis (ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship recipients).
- c. When the candidate completes the course of study, unless completing a Research Masters degree and converting to a Research Doctorate degree, in accordance with the conversion clause below.
- d. When the candidate submits their thesis for examination.
- e. If Charles Sturt University determines that:
 - i. the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence in accordance with the offer of the Scholarship; or
 - ii. the candidate has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress; or
 - iii. the candidate has committed serious misconduct, including, but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information in their Scholarship application or subsequently.
- f. If the candidate does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension, or does not make arrangements to extend that period of suspension.

(35) If a Scholarship is terminated, it cannot be re-activated unless the termination occurred in error.

Variations to the Scholarship

ARTP or ARTP-International Scholarships - variation to part-time basis

(36) The Director, Research may approve a part-time ARTP Scholarship or ARTP-International Scholarship for a candidate in exceptional circumstances.

(37) Exceptional circumstances relate to significant caring commitments of a dependent or a medical condition, disability or other circumstances which limit the student's capacity to undertake full-time study.

(38) A candidate who has an ARTP Scholarship or ARTP-International Scholarship and has moved to part-time may revert to full-time study with the approval of the Director Research.

ARTP-Part-time Scholarship - variation to full-time basis

(39) The Director, Research may approve the candidate to transfer to fulltime study without a stipend.

Research Overseas

(40) To be eligible to conduct research overseas whilst in receipt of an ARTP Scholarship, ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship or ARTP-International Scholarship the following conditions must be met and approved by the Director, Research:

- a. the Principal Supervisor and the Sub Dean, Graduate Studies certify that it is necessary for a candidate to conduct their research or fieldwork overseas in order to complete the research program;
- b. adequate supervision of the HDR candidate must be maintained;
- c. the candidate shall give a written undertaking to return to Australia immediately following the completion of the overseas research or fieldwork, to complete the HDR;
- d. the Scholarship holder will not normally be allowed to undertake approved study overseas in the first six months of Scholarship tenure. Candidature undertaken prior to accepting the Scholarship will be taken into account in determining the earliest date on which the candidate may depart; and
- e. the candidate shall maintain their current enrolment mode (full-time/part-time) at Charles Sturt University whilst conducting their research or fieldwork overseas.

(41) The candidate may apply for permission to allow the Scholarship to be tenable overseas for up to 18 months in exceptional circumstances.

Research at Other Organisations

(42) Charles Sturt University may approve a candidate to conduct research at organisations outside the higher education system. An application should be made well in advance to the Research Committee through the relevant Head of School and the Faculty Sub-Dean, Graduate Studies who is required to certify that the proposed arrangement will afford adequate support, supervision, training and research freedom for the candidate.

Industry Placements/Internships

(43) All HDR candidates must consult with their supervisor, the Faculty Sub-Dean, Graduate Studies, and the Research Office with respect to optional industry placements, research internships, and professional practice activities.

Suspensions

(44) Candidates may apply to the Research Office for a suspension of their Scholarship entitlements.

(45) Suspension may be granted for ARTP Scholarship and ARTP-International Scholarship recipients:

- a. to enable the candidate to pursue a period of paid employment in excess of the allowable 50 hours per month;
or
- b. in conjunction with a period of leave of absence from candidature, excluding annual or personal leave.

(46) Suspension may be granted for ARTP-Part-Time Scholarship recipients in conjunction with a period of leave of absence from candidature, excluding annual or sick leave.

(47) During an approved suspension the candidate will not be entitled to any benefits from the Scholarship. Failure to resume studies after a period of suspension will result in the Scholarship being terminated.

(48) If study has continued during the period of suspension, the period of study will be deducted from the maximum tenure of the Scholarship.

Transfer to another Higher Education Provider

(49) Candidates who transfer to another provider will have their Scholarship terminated at Charles Sturt University. Candidates may continue to receive their Scholarship only if their new provider agrees to Scholarship continuation and subject to the new provider having sufficient RTP grant funding available.

Transfer from another Higher Education Provider

(50) Candidates holding a current RTP-funded Scholarship from another institution can be considered for transfer to Charles Sturt University and take up one of the Scholarships offered by the University.

(51) Applications for transfer will be considered by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research, Development and Industry), who will make a determination based on:

- a. whether Charles Sturt University has sufficient RTP funding available;
- b. the qualifications of the candidate and the status of their candidature; and
- c. advice from the relevant Faculty Sub-Dean, Graduate Studies and/or Research Centre Director on the suitability of the candidate for transfer.

(52) Where candidates are approved for transfer, the University will require information from the previous institution on the Scholarship benefits the candidate has received and the duration of the award already consumed.

Conversion of Degrees

(53) Candidates may convert from a Research Masters degree to a Research Doctorate degree or from a Research Doctorate degree to a Research Masters degree, and continue to receive their Scholarship.

(54) A candidate in a Research Masters degree may continue to receive their Scholarship for a Research Doctorate degree provided there is no interval of non-enrolment between their enrolment in the Research Masters and the commencement of the Research Doctorate degree, or that such an interval is covered by suspension of the Scholarship.

(55) The maximum duration of a converted Scholarship becomes that for the new research degree minus periods of previous candidature towards the related degree prior to the conversion.

Other Information

Continuing Research Training Scheme and International Postgraduate Research Scholarship candidates

(56) All continuing former Research Training Scheme Scholarship (RTS) domestic recipients will receive stipend, fee support and operating funding for a period necessary to provide at least equivalent support to that which the candidate would have received under the RTS based Scholarships on course of study commencement dates (not the commencement of the RTP Scholarship).

(57) All continuing former International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (IPRS) and Charles Sturt University International Tuition Payment Scholarship (ITP) recipients will receive stipend, fee support and operating funding for a period necessary to provide at least equivalent support to that which the candidate would have received under IPRS and ITP Scholarships based on course of study commencement dates (not the commencement of the RTP Scholarship).

Provision of False or Misleading Information

(58) Charles Sturt University advises candidates that giving false or misleading information is a serious offence. Candidates are required to provide full and complete information and may risk cancellation or reduction of their Scholarship at any time during their candidature if they do not do so.

(59) If Charles Sturt University knows or has reason to believe that a candidate in receipt of an Scholarship has provided false or misleading information to the University in relation to the Scholarship, during or after the application process or at any time during candidature, the University is required to immediately:

- a. re-assess the candidate's entitlement to the Scholarship; and
- b. notify the relevant Commonwealth Government department of the suspected offence and provide a copy of the student's application and any other relevant information requested by that department.

Supervision, Facilities and Support

(60) All HDR candidates will be provided with supervision in accordance with the [Higher Degree by Research Policy - Enrolment and Progress](#).

(61) Consistent with the University [Admissions Policy](#), the particular resources and facilities to be provided to a candidate shall be discussed and agreed with the candidate at the time of admission to the program and confirmed when the research proposal is approved. Recipients of RTP-funded Scholarships will also receive the benefits outlined in the Scholarship Benefits section above.

Candidate Obligations

(62) Candidates shall diligently and to the best of their ability apply themselves to the successful completion of their degree.

(63) Candidates shall have regular and frequent consultations with their supervisory team that can be initiated by either the candidate or the supervisors as per the [Higher Degree by Research Candidates Policy - Academic Communication](#).

(64) Wherever relevant the candidate must seek and abide by appropriate regulatory approvals, including but not limited to those applying to Ethics, Biosafety and Quarantine concerns. These approvals may be granted by the University, any relevant Australian governmental regulatory authorities, any host organisation and governmental regulatory authority of a country or countries in which research is being undertaken. In addition candidates must seek information and abide by the Codes, Policies, Guidelines and rulings of any of these authorities.

(65) Candidates must participate fully in the six-monthly Progress Report process administered by the Research Office.

(66) Candidates are to abide by all academic and administrative policies of Charles Sturt University.

Acknowledgement of RTP Scholarship

(67) Recipients of RTP Scholarships, their supervisors and any other party who publishes or produces materials such as books, articles, theses, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to the research project carried out by the recipient of the RTP Scholarship are expected to acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution.

(68) 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".

Right of Appeal

(69) Candidates shall have the right to appeal against decisions made in relation to the tenure of the Scholarship. Such mechanisms are in place and candidates should consult with their Supervisor, Head of School or Faculty Sub-Dean Graduate Studies in the first instance.

Amendments

(70) The University reserves the right to amend this policy and the conditions of award of RTP-funded Scholarships. Candidates will be notified of any changes to their conditions of award.

Section 4 - Procedures

Application and Selection Process

(71) The University is responsible for the application, selection and offer processes and must make information about the processes, policies and conditions of Scholarship readily and publicly available.

(72) The University will administer competitive selection rounds on dates as determined and advertised by Charles Sturt University. To be considered applicants must have submitted the following by the due date:

- a. a complete and correct application; and
- b. supporting documentation to substantiate their application.

Assessment of Applications

(73) Preliminary assessment and ranking of Scholarship applications is completed within the relevant Faculty and/or Research Centre. Applications are assessed against three key areas:

- a. Academic merit as an indicator of capacity makes up around of the assessment. This assessment considers the nature and level of the applicant's highest, relevant qualification as well as the grade point average (GPA) achieved in that program;
- b. Evidence of an applicant's research achievements and relevant professional experience can contribute up to around of the assessment. This includes such aspects as peer-reviewed research outputs, high esteem academic awards and prizes, relevant research or professional experience; and
- c. Alignment with strategic research priorities contributes up to around of the assessment. This includes demonstrated alignment in skills through previous academic study and/or employment; having made contact with potential supervisors and identification/description of a preliminary research proposal.

(74) Advice from these assessment processes is integrated and provided to the Higher Degree by Research Scholarships Committee.

(75) The recommendations of the Higher Degree by Research Scholarships Committee are then submitted to Presiding Officer of the Research Committee for endorsement/approval.

(76) Applicants will normally be notified of outcomes within two months of the application closing date.

Section 5 - Guidelines

(77) Nil.

Status and Details

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