

# Higher Degree by Research Scholarship Policy

## Section 1 - Audience

(1) This policy applies to University of Newcastle (University) funded Higher Degree by Research (HDR) scholarship recipients, excluding Research Training Program scholarships covered under the Research Training Program Scholarship Policy.

## Section 2 - Executive Summary

(2) The University offers a wide range of scholarships to support PhD and Research Masters candidates with a proven capacity for research.

(3) This policy supports the University's commitment to recruiting and funding higher degrees by research through the provision of living allowance and tuition fee scholarships.

(4) This strategy aligns with the NeW Futures Strategic Plan 2016-2025.

(5) This policy provides a comprehensive referral point for University-funded HDR scholarships.

## Section 3 - Relaxation Clause

(6) To provide for exceptional circumstances arising in a particular case, the Dean of Graduate Research may relax any provision of this Policy, in consultation with the partner institution/donor/industry partner if applicable. In the context of this document, a partner institution is the other university (alongside UON) where a Dual Award or Jointly Awarded candidate will undertake part of their studies.

## Section 4 - Scholarship types

(7) Tuition fee scholarships (Tuition) may include:

- a. University of Newcastle International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (UNIPRS)
- b. Vietnam International Education Development (VIED) Tuition Fee Scholarship
- c. China Scholarship Council (CSC) Tuition Fee Top Up Scholarship
- d. Disability Support PhD Scholarships

(8) Stipend and allowances scholarships (Stipend) may include:

- a. UON Global Engagement Research Stipend and Allowances
- b. University of Newcastle Research Scholarship Central (UNRSC) Stipend and Allowances
- c. UNRSC50:50 Stipend and Allowances; a stipend funded equally by the Research and Innovation Division and a

Research Grant, School or Faculty

- d. UNRSC25:75 Stipend and Allowances; a stipend 25% funded by the Research and Innovation Division and 75% by a Research Grant, School or Faculty
- e. University of Newcastle Research Scholarship External (UNRSE) Stipend and Allowances
- f. Dual Award Doctoral Degree (DADD) and Jointly Awarded Doctoral Degree (JADD) Stipends and Allowances
- g. VIED Stipend and Allowances
- h. Athena SWAN Scholarships
- i. Business and Industry Scholarships
- j. Donor Funded Scholarships
- k. Disability Support PhD Scholarships

(9) The University may grant additional scholarships subject to availability.

## Section 5 - Eligibility

### Tuition

(10) Applicants to an approved Master Degree (Research) or Doctoral Degree (Research/Professional) at the University may apply for a scholarship where:

- a. the applicant is not already receiving a scholarship which includes course tuition; and
- b. for international applicants, the applicant is:
  - i. enrolled as a full-time candidate and is compliant with international student visa requirements as specified by Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP); and
  - ii. commencing a HDR on campus, and will remain enrolled on campus for the majority of the degree (also refer to Section 13 Attendance).

(11) Specific eligibility:

- a. UNIPRS: An applicant must be an international candidate. UNIPRS scholars must also be awarded a living allowance scholarship and subject to funding source, Oversea Student Health Cover (OSHC) and equivalent benefits to a UNRSC50:50. The living allowance scholarship may be in the form of a UNRSC50:50, UNRSC or UNRSE.
- b. CSC: Subject to availability of sponsor funding, an applicant must hold a living allowance scholarship awarded by the CSC, and be commencing a HDR program in an area of research concentration as identified by the CSC or the University, and have met the University's English proficiency requirements.
- c. VIED: Subject to availability of sponsor funding, an applicant must be a citizen of Vietnam, and nominated for scholarship by VIED. The scholar must remain an international candidate throughout their candidature at the University.
- d. Disability Support PhD Scholarship applicants must provide evidence of registration with UON AccessAbility by including:
  - i. copy of their Academic Integration Plan; or
  - ii. letter from AccessAbility outlining the impact of their condition/s on HDR study.

### Stipend

(12) Applicants to an approved Master Degree (Research) or Doctoral Degree (Research/Professional) at the University may apply for a scholarship where:

- a. they are enrolling as a full-time candidate or have approval to undertake part-time study;
- b. they are not receiving an equivalent award, scholarship or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the Stipend base rate to undertake the proposed program (income earned from sources unrelated to the program of study is not subject to the 75% rule);
- c. they will be enrolled on campus and will remain enrolled on campus for the majority of the degree (also refer to Section 19 Research activities at other institutions); and
- d. for international applicants, they are enrolling as a full-time candidate and are compliant with international student visa requirements as specified by DIBP.

(13) Specific eligibility:

- a. Donor Funded and Business and Industry: The applicant may be nominated for a scholarship by, or in consultation with, the Donor/Industry partner. The scholar must also remain enrolled on campus or at the Business and Industry Partner's facilities for the majority of the degree.
- b. VIED: Subject to availability of sponsor funding, an applicant must be a citizen of Vietnam, and nominated for scholarship by VIED. The scholar must remain an international candidate throughout their candidature at the University.
- c. DADD and JADD: Subject to an executed Candidate Agreement between UON and the partner institution, which sets out the arrangements agreed upon by both institutions and the individual doctoral candidate undertaking a JADD or DADD.
- d. Athena SWAN: This is a gender equity scholarship with targeted opportunities only for women. The applicant must be female.
- e. Disability Support PhD Scholarship applicants must provide evidence of registration with UON AccessAbility by including:
  - i. a copy of their Academic Integration Plan; or
  - ii. a letter from AccessAbility outlining the impact of their condition/s on HDR study.

## Section 6 - Periods of support

### Tuition

(14) A full-time scholarship may be held for two years to support a full-time Master Degree (Research), or four years for a full-time Doctoral Degree (Research/Professional).

(15) If a scholarship is awarded to a scholar already undertaking a HDR program, the period of support will be reduced acknowledging the scholar's prior tenure.

### Stipend

(16) A full-time scholarship may be held for two years to support a full-time Master Degree (Research) or three and a half years for a full-time Doctoral Degree (Research/Professional).

(17) Disability Support PhD Scholarship: Four years for a full-time Doctoral Degree (Research/Professional).

## Section 7 - Rate

### Stipend

(18) The rate applicable to each scholarship round is available on the Graduate Research website.

## Section 8 - Relocation Allowance

### Stipend - domestic scholars

(19) Scholars from within Australia who relocate to within 50kms of their campus of study will be eligible for a relocation reimbursement of up to \$1,500. Claimable expenses upon production of tax invoices/receipts include:

- a. Travel to within 50kms of their campus of study equivalent to the economy or student airfare, for the scholar, spouse and dependents;
- b. Removalist expenses; and
- c. A pre-determined per kilometre allowance if travelling by car, up to the equivalent economy/student airfare costs.

(20) Scholars cannot claim for accommodation, meal costs, or direct petrol costs.

### Stipend - international scholars

(21) International scholars receive a relocation allowance of \$1,500 to relocate to within 50kms of their campus of study from an overseas country to take up their scholarship.

## Section 9 - Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

### Stipend

(22) OSHC is provided to Stipend international scholars for the duration of their student visa. The scholar must advise UON Graduate Research of the departure date from Australia following thesis submission or award of degree. OSHC will cease at the award of your degree, or if a scholar withdraws or is terminated from their program of study.

(23) DADD and JADD: OSHC will be ceased at the time of final departure from Australia or at award of degree, whichever is earlier.

## Section 10 - Applications, Selection Process and Offers

### Applications

(24) The Application process is available on the Graduate Research website.

### Selection

(25) VIED and CSC: The Committee or its nominee(s) undertake selection on the recommendation of the funding body and relevant School, and in accordance with the agreed disciplines listed in the Memorandum of Understanding.

(26) DADD and JADD: The award of a centrally funded scholarship is at Dean of Graduate Research's discretion.

(27) Athena Swan: Selection is undertaken by the Athena SWAN scholarship Selection Committee, which may include the Dean of Graduate Research, the Faculty Assistant Dean Research and Training (ADRT), and the prospective supervisor.

(28) Business and Industry: Selection is undertaken by the Business and Industry Scholarship Selection Committee,

which may include the Dean of Graduate Research, the Faculty ADRT, the prospective supervisor, and a representative from the industry partner.

(29) All other Stipend and Tuition scholarships: The Selection process applicable to each scholarship round is available on the Graduate Research website.

## **Offers**

(30) Successful applicants will receive an offer via email to the email address stipulated on their application form or existing UON email account.

## **Section 11 - Commencement**

(31) The scholar must be enrolled in a HDR and commence the scholarship no later than the date specified in the scholarship offer. The offer will be forfeited if this condition is not met, unless deferral has been approved.

## **Section 12 - Supervision and facilities**

(32) The University's Code of Practice for Higher Degree by Research Candidature Policy applies in relation to HDR supervision and facilities.

## **Section 13 - Attendance**

### **Full Time**

(33) A scholar must undertake an approved Master Degree (Research) or Doctoral Degree (Research/Professional) at the University upon commencement of the scholarship and enrol as a full-time candidate, unless the Dean of Graduate Research has approved part-time study.

### **Part Time**

(34) The Dean of Graduate Research may approve a part-time Stipend scholarship to a domestic candidate where the applicant is able to demonstrate:

- a. Carer responsibilities for a pre-school aged child;
- b. Carer responsibilities for school-aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support;
- c. Carer responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent; or
- d. A medical condition that limits their capacity to undertake full-time study, supported by medical certification.

(35) The Australian Government ESOS Act specifies that international candidates with a Student Visa cannot study on a part-time basis in Australia and therefore will not be awarded a scholarship on a part-time basis.

(36) The Dean of Graduate Research may approve part-time study under exceptional circumstances for scholars studying outside Australia.

(37) Business and Industry: Approval to undertake part time study is required from the Business and Industry Partner.

(38) DADD and JADD: Approval to undertake part time study is required from both UON and the partner institution.

# Section 14 - Leave

(39) All types of leave must be discussed with, and approved by, the relevant supervisor.

- a. Business and Industry: Approval for leave is also required from the Business and Industry Partner.
- b. DADD and JADD: Approval for leave is required from both UON and the partner institution.

## Stipend

### Annual Leave

(40) Scholars are entitled to up to 20 working days paid annual leave each year calculated on a pro-rata basis within the period of the scholarship. This may be accrued over the tenure of the scholarship.

### Sick Leave

(41) stipend scholars are entitled to up to 10 working days paid sick leave each year calculated on a pro-rata basis within the period of the scholarship. This may be accrued over the tenure of the scholarship.

(42) Sick leave entitlements may also be used by scholars with family responsibilities, to care for sick children or relatives.

(43) For periods of illness lasting longer than 10 working days and where there is medical certification confirming the illness, scholars may receive up to a total of 60 working days paid sick leave in addition to the normal duration of the scholarship, depending on the source of scholarship funding.

(44) Applications for sick leave exceeding the 10 working days' provision must be accompanied by medical certification, and submitted to UON Graduate Research prior to the scholarship expiry date.

### Parental Leave

(45) Stipend scholars who are primary carers may receive up to 60 working days paid parental leave for childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the scholarship, depending on the source of scholarship funding.

(46) Periods of paid parental leave are in addition to the normal duration of the scholarship.

(47) All applications for parental leave must be accompanied by medical/adoption certification, and submitted within the tenure of the scholarship.

(48) Paid parental leave is not available within the first 12 months of the scholarship.

(49) Unpaid parental leave may be applied for as Leave of Absence under this policy.

### Partner Leave

(50) Stipend scholars who are partners may receive up to 10 working days paid partner leave for a childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the scholarship, depending on the source of scholarship funding. For the purposes of this clause "partner" means the partner of the primary carer, which includes a spouse or de facto, including a same sex partner.

(51) Paid partner leave must be taken during the three-week period prior to the expected birth or placement of the child, or up to six months after the actual birth or placement of the child.

(52) Periods of paid partner leave are in addition to the normal duration of the scholarship.

(53) All applications for parental leave must be accompanied by medical/adoption certification and submitted within the tenure of the scholarship.

(54) Paid partner leave is not available within the first 12 months of a scholarship.

### **Unused Leave**

(55) Any unused leave will be forfeited when the scholarship is completed or terminated.

### **Leave Entitlements for Part-time Scholars**

(56) A part-time Stipend scholar is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time scholar and therefore receives approximately half of the leave entitlements listed above (where applicable) for each year of study.

## **Section 15 - Leave of Absence**

(57) Periods of approved leave of absence will not be deducted from the overall scholarship tenure.

### **Tuition**

(58) After 12 months' full time equivalent, a scholar may apply to the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) for a leave of absence of scholarship for a period of up to 12 months during the tenure of the scholarship.

(59) For Doctoral Degree (Research/Professional) scholars only: any leave of absence applications exceeding 12 months during the tenure of the scholarship can only be approved by the Dean of Graduate Research where the scholar can demonstrate exceptional circumstances beyond the scholar's control. The maximum period of any further extension will be 12 months.

### **Stipend**

(60) After 12 months' full time equivalent, a scholar may apply to the Dean of Graduate Research for a leave of absence of scholarship for a period of up to 12 months during the tenure of the scholarship.

(61) The Dean of Graduate Research will only approve any further leave of absence where the scholar can demonstrate exceptional circumstances beyond the scholar's control. The maximum period of any further extension will be 12 months.

(62) Business and Industry: Approval for leave of absence must also be sought from the Business and Industry partner.

(63) DADD and JADD: Approval for leave is required from both the University and the partner Institution.

(64) Donor Funded: The Donor, via UON Graduate Research, must be notified of any leave of absence.

### **International Scholars**

(65) Leave of absence from scholarship may only be approved where the scholar can demonstrate exceptional circumstances beyond the scholar's control. The University is required to report to the DIBP in all such cases.

## **Section 16 - Employment**

### **Stipend**

(66) Scholars must not undertake paid employment of more than eight hours per week within the hours of 9:00am to

5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

(67) Scholars are not required to undertake paid employment as a condition of the scholarship.

(68) Business and Industry: Scholars may undertake a limited amount of part time paid employment. The number of hours per week the scholar is permitted to work is at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Research, in consultation with the Business and Industry Partner.

## **International Scholars**

(69) A scholar with a student visa may not undertake employment that is inconsistent with the conditions of their visa.

# **Section 17 - Enrolment variations**

## **Transfer of Program Within the University**

(70) A scholarship may be transferred to another program of study subject to:

- a. the scholar receiving formal approval for entry to that program by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (or nominee);
- b. the Dean of Graduate Research's approval of the transfer; and
- c. if transferring to another School or Faculty, the funding being available in that School or Faculty.
- d. CSC, VIED, Business and Industry, Donor Funded and DADD and JADD: Approval from the sponsor, Industry partner, Donor or partner institution is also required.

## **Variation of Study Load**

(71) The Dean of Graduate Research may approve a request to alter a scholar's study load on application.

(72) Applications are considered on a case by case basis.

(73) Where the variation of study load is approved, the remaining period of scholarship will be extended, or reduced on a pro rata basis.

## **Conversion of program**

(74) DADD and JADD and Business and Industry: Scholars must gain partner institution or Industry partner approval prior to applying for conversion.

(75) If the Pro Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) approves a conversion of candidature:

## **Tuition**

(76) A Master Degree (Research) scholar may upgrade to a Doctoral Degree (Research) program during the tenure of the scholarship. The Tuition scholarship duration then becomes four years.

(77) A Doctoral Degree (Research) scholar may convert to a Master Degree (Research) program during the tenure of the scholarship. The maximum Tuition scholarship duration then becomes two years, including any previous tenure.

## **Stipend**

(78) A Master Degree (Research) scholar may upgrade to a Doctoral Degree (Research) program during the tenure of the scholarship. The stipend and allowances duration then becomes three and a half years.



(79) A Doctoral Degree (Research) scholar may convert to a Master Degree (Research) program during the tenure of the scholarship. The maximum stipend and allowances duration then becomes two years, including any previous tenure.

## **Section 18 - Temporary cessation of stipend payments**

### **Stipend**

(80) Where a scholar does not comply with clauses 12(a), (b) and (c) or 66:

- a. Stipend payments will be forfeited; and
- b. The periods of study undertaken towards the degree during this time will be deducted from the maximum period of scholarship tenure.

## **Section 19 - Research activities at other organisations**

### **Stipend**

(81) Scholars may be eligible to continue to receive scholarship benefits during periods of research at other organisations in Australia or overseas, if the research is essential for the completion of the scholar's program and after the first six months of the scholarship.

(82) Research at another organisation is subject to the approval of the scholar's principal supervisor, the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor (or nominee), and the Dean of Graduate Research.

(83) A period of research at another organisation should not exceed 12 months, unless a case for exceptional circumstances can be made.

(84) Business and Industry: The Business and Industry partner must also approve research at other institutions.

(85) JADD and DADD: This clause does not apply. Periods of research at another organisation are stipulated in the relevant Candidate Agreement.

## **Section 20 - Suspension of Scholarship**

### **Suspension**

(86) of scholarship payments may occur if:

- a. Scholars do not enrol in their program of study by the census date for each semester.
- b. The Dean of Graduate Research believes on reasonable grounds that the scholar's study is affected by circumstances that prevent the scholar from pursuing the program.

(87) Athena SWAN, Donor Funded and Business and Industry: Scholarship payments may be suspended if the required reports are not provided within the requested timeframes.

# Section 21 - Termination

## International scholars

(88) Scholarship benefits will be terminated if the scholar does not hold a valid student visa. It is the responsibility of international scholars to ensure they hold a valid student visa while in Australia.

## Tuition

(89) A scholarship will terminate:

- a. on the expiry of the period for which the scholarship was granted;
- b. upon submission of the thesis or creative component for examination;
- c. if the scholar ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in this policy;
- d. if candidature is terminated for any reason;
- e. upon the death or incapacity of the scholar; or
- f. if written resignation or withdrawal from enrolment is received from the scholar by UON Graduate Research.

(90) Once a scholarship is terminated, it cannot be re-activated unless re-enrolment is required.

## Stipend

(91) A scholarship will terminate:

- a. on the expiry of the period for which the scholarship was granted;
- b. 14 calendar days after the submission of the thesis or where applicable, creative component for examination;
- c. if the scholar ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in Section 7 of this policy, other than during a period in which the scholarship has been temporarily relinquished or during a period of approved leave;
- d. if the Research Training Sub-Committee finds the scholar has failed to observe any condition of the Rules Governing Higher Degrees by Research or the Code of Practice for Higher Degree by Research Candidature Policy, in which event any monies paid to the scholar subsequent to that breach shall immediately become repayable to the University;
- e. if the Research Training Sub-Committee finds the scholar has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress and the candidature is terminated;
- f. upon the death or incapacity of the scholar;
- g. if the scholar sends written resignation or withdrawal from enrolment to UON Graduate Research;
- h. if the scholar does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of Leave of Absence or does not obtain approval to extend that period of Leave of Absence;
- i. when the scholar ceases to be a full-time scholar and when approval has not been obtained to hold the scholarship on a part-time basis; or
- j. if the scholar fails to notify UON Graduate Research whilst in receipt of another benefit greater than 75% of the Stipend.

(92) Once a scholarship is terminated, it cannot be re-activated.

# Section 22 - Obligations

(93) The scholar accepts the award of the scholarship subject to the conditions described in this policy, and agrees to abide by the conditions and any subsequent variations.

(94) The scholar is required to conform to the rules and policies of the University governing their program.

(95) Athena SWAN: Scholars are required to provide reports to the Athena SWAN Self Assessment Team as requested.

(96) Donor Funded: Scholars are required to provide additional reports to UON Graduate Research as requested.

## **Section 23 - Appeal**

(97) Applicants and scholars may appeal in writing to the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) against decisions made by the Dean of Graduate Research or the Research Training Sub-Committee on the grounds of procedural deficiency.

(98) Written appeals can be submitted to UON Graduate Research within 20 working days of notification of a decision of the Dean of Graduate Research. The determination by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) is final.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	7th November 2017
<b>Review Date</b>	To Be Advised
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Academic Senate
<b>Approval Date</b>	7th November 2017
<b>Expiry Date</b>	6th March 2018
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Sherelle Charge Manager Operations - UON Graduate Research
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	