

Procedure: Research training program (RTP) scholarships

Purpose

To detail the standards, processes and conditions for Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) scholarship support.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Australian National University [Research Awards Rule](#) and the [Research Training Program \(RTP\) Scholarships policy](#).

Procedure

Support and benefits

1. RTP scholarships are available for eligible HDR programs.
2. RTP Fee Offset scholarships are applied to students' tuition fees, removing liability for these fees, and are exempt from Australian income tax.
3. RTP Stipend scholarships are paid to students to assist with their living costs while studying. Full-time RTP Stipend scholarships are exempt from Australian income tax, while part-time RTP Stipend scholarships are taxable.
4. The RTP Stipend rate is effective from 1 January 2017 and will be updated annually. RTP Stipend amounts are published annually [online](#).
5. RTP Fee Offsets amounts (for both high-cost and low-cost degrees) are published [online](#).
6. Allowances are available to students who hold a RTP Stipend scholarship to assist with ancillary costs as outlined below in the *Allowances* section.

Selection and offers

Domestic Students

7. Domestic RTP Stipend scholarships are awarded through a competitive ranking process, to the top ranked candidates, subject to evidence they meet merit-based selection criteria, and subject to confirmation of a qualified supervisor, space and resources being available, in an area of research that is aligned with ANU research

strategy. More information about the principles that underpin the University's scholarships ranking process can be found [here](#).

8. To be considered for award of a RTP Stipend scholarship, students have normally achieved a minimum of H1 or H1 equivalent in their prior studies.

9. Domestic students automatically receive a RTP Fee Offset scholarship when admitted to an eligible HDR program at the University.

International Students

10. International RTP Stipend scholarships and RTP Fee Offset scholarships are awarded to top-ranked candidates through a competitive process, subject to evidence they meet merit-based selection criteria, and subject to confirmation of a qualified supervisor, space and resources being available, in an area of research that is aligned with ANU research strategy. Information about the principles that underpin the University's scholarships ranking process can be found [here](#).

11. To be considered for an RTP Stipend scholarship and/or International RTP Fee Offset scholarship, students have normally achieved a minimum of H1 or H1 equivalent in their prior studies.

Offers

12. RTP scholarship offers are made in writing and include advice about the types of assistance and support being offered, the conditions and period of support of the RTP scholarship, and the estimated annual value of Australian Government support provided for each type of RTP scholarship support.

13. Scholarship offers expire if the eligible HDR program is not commenced by the date specified in the letter of offer.

Students transferring from another institution

14. Before transferring to the ANU in an eligible HDR program, students changing institutions undertake actions in accordance with the ANU's admissions policies and the [Research Awards Rule](#). Students are required to declare all prior RTP scholarships (as detailed in the *Period of Support* section of this procedure) and those made available under the former Research Training Scheme including:

- a. Australian Postgraduate Award (APA);
- b. Research Training Scheme (RTS);
- c. International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (IPRS).

Continuing students (enrolled prior to 1 January 2017)

15. Students who were offered and have accepted support under the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines prior to 1 January 2017 are awarded support as follows:

- a. Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) recipients are transferred to an RTP Stipend scholarship;
- b. Research Training Scheme (RTS) recipients are transferred to an RTP Fee Offset scholarship;
- c. International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (IPRS) recipients are transferred to an RTP International Fee Offset scholarship.

Period of support

16. The typical RTP stipend scholarship period for a PhD student is three years. Extensions of up to six months may be granted if reasons for requiring additional stipend support fall within the criteria outlined in the Extension of Scholarship section. The maximum period of RTP stipend scholarship support for a PhD student may be available to some students undertaking an industry placement, internship, professional practice activity or an ANU flagship program, as well as to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander RTP stipend scholarship recipients.

17. Periods of Support and Extensions for RTP stipend and Fee Offset scholarships are detailed in tables 1 to 4 below.

Table 1: Domestic RTP Stipend

Program	PhD		MPhil	
	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Typical period of award	3 years	6 years	1 years	2 years
Minimum Single Extension	4 weeks	8 weeks	4 weeks	8 weeks
Maximum Extension *	6 months	12 months	6 months	12 months
Week blocks for extensions	4 weeks	8 weeks	4 weeks	8 weeks

Note: For circumstances outlined under **Period of Support, a further six months extension may be granted.*

Table 2: Domestic RTP Fee Offset

Program	PhD		MPhil	
Study Intensity	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time
Period of support	4 years	8 years	2 years	4 years

18. Domestic students who have an approved extension beyond the maximum RTP fee offset scholarship period may be awarded an ANU Fee Offset scholarship for the duration of the approved extension.

Table 3: International RTP Stipend

Program	PhD	MPhil
Study Intensity	Full Time	Full Time
Typical period of award	3 years	1years
Minimum Single Extension	4 weeks	4 weeks
Maximum Extension *	6 months	6 months
Week blocks for extensions	4 weeks	4 weeks

*Note: For circumstances outlined under **Period of Support**, a further six months extension may be granted.

Table 4: International RTP Fee Offset

Program	PhD	MPhil
Study Intensity	Full Time	Full Time

Minimum period	3 years	1years
Minimum Single Extension	4 weeks	4 weeks
Maximum Extension *	6 months	6 months
Week blocks for extensions	4 weeks	4 weeks

Note: For circumstances outlined under **Period of Support, a further six months extension may be granted.*

19. Where international students in receipt of Fee Offset scholarships exceed the maximum period (including appropriate extensions), they become liable to be charged tuition fees. Tuition fees are published online (refer to the Support and benefits section).

20. Periods of study already undertaken for an incomplete Doctor of Philosophy, Master of Philosophy or Professional Doctorate degree at any institution in the last three years prior to the date of commencement at ANU, are deducted from the duration of the scholarship, except where the student is not continuing with their original project and supervisor and no credit is provided for the study.

Extension of Scholarship

21. Students apply for an extension of scholarship by completing the relevant section of the Manage My Degree - HDR form in ISIS. Extensions of scholarship are considered on the following grounds:

- a. research has been delayed by circumstances beyond the student's control;
- b. the circumstances are related to the research and is not of a personal nature;
- c. the application is submitted at least three months before the expiry of the scholarship.

22. Doctor of Psychology (Clinical) students are not eligible for an extension of scholarship.

Ongoing student eligibility requirements

23. Domestic RTP Stipend scholarship students must remain enrolled full-time unless approved to continue receiving their scholarship after changing their study intensity:

- a. students complete an Application for Change of Intensity in Research Program by completing the relevant section of the Manage My Degree - HDR form in ISIS;

- b. the application is endorsed by the Chair of Panel;
- c. the application is approved by the Delegated Authority.

24. Part-time domestic RTP Stipend scholarships are approved and paid on a pro-rata basis where circumstances preclude a student from undertaking a full-time study load for part or all of the eligible HDR program. These circumstances are:

- a. caring commitments; or
- b. medical grounds; or
- c. disability; or
- d. other circumstances which limit the student’s capacity to undertake full-time study.

25. International RTP stipend students cannot transfer to part-time enrolment.

Supervision and facility provisions

26. Supervision and facility provisions are outlined in the

- a. Research Awards Rule (parts 5-7);
- b. Higher degree by research – supervision policy and procedure;
- c. Higher degree by research – University, candidate, and supervisor responsibilities guideline; and
- d. Minimum allocation of resources for research students guideline.

Allowances

27. Allowance amounts are determined annually by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) no later than 31 March for the following year and published online.

28. A summary of RTP support and benefits are detailed in the table below:

Type of Support or Benefit	RTP Stipend		RTP Fee Offset	
	Domestic	International	Domestic	International
Stipend	√	√		
Tuition Fee Offset			√	√
Overseas Student Health Cover		√		

Relocation Allowance	√	√		
Dependent Child Allowance		√		
Thesis Allowance	√	√		

Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

29. International RTP Stipend scholarship students on a student visa are eligible for an OSHC Allowance.
30. The allowance covers OSHC for the student and their immediate family.
31. A one-off payment is made automatically to the University's preferred OSHC provider for the OSHC period stipulated by the University in a student's electronic Confirmation of Enrolment.
32. Students do not apply for the allowance, it is approved based on:
 - a. eligibility for an award of a RTP stipend as detailed in this procedure and related policy; and
 - b. residency.

Relocation Allowance

33. A Relocation Allowance may be claimed as a one-off payment to domestic and international RTP Stipend scholarship students, to assist with ancillary costs (including those in respect of the student's spouse, de facto partner, and dependent children) while undertaking an eligible HDR program. Where a claim for a one-off travel contribution is in respect of a student's spouse, de facto partner, and dependent children, they must accompany the student to Canberra (or join the student in Canberra within 12 months of the student commencing their program).
34. Students who are resident elsewhere in Australia or who are permanently resident outside Australia at the time of application are eligible to receive the following one-off contribution, capped at a maximum of \$1,000 for Domestic students, or \$2,500 for International students, towards the costs of moving to Canberra to take up their eligible HDR program.

Dependent Child Allowance

35. International RTP Stipend scholarship students may receive an allowance in respect of a dependent child or children, where they accompany the student to Canberra.

36. A dependent child is a child under the age of 16 wholly dependent on the student or, if aged between 16 and 24, who is a full-time student and wholly dependent on the student.
37. A student who pays maintenance in respect of a child or children may be paid the dependent child allowance, or the amount of the maintenance payable, whichever is less.
38. The dependent child allowance is up to \$3,000 per annum for each dependent child (to a maximum of \$9,000 per annum) and is paid at the same time as RTP Stipend payments.
39. Students advise the Manager, Student Administration and Records within 20 working days if a child ceases to be dependent on the student or if the student ceases to be an international student.
40. Students apply for the allowance by completing an International Student Dependent Child Allowance Claim Form, submitted to the Graduate Research Office by email to HDR.administration@anu.edu.au.

Thesis Allowance

41. Allowances are paid to domestic and international students on an RTP Stipend scholarship to assist with ancillary costs while undertaking an eligible HDR program.
42. Students receive a one-off allowance of up to \$500 for printing and other services associated with the production of their thesis. The allowance must be claimed within 12 months of submission of the thesis.
43. Students apply for the allowance by submitting original tax invoice/receipts to the Graduate Research Office in person or by email to hdr.examinations@anu.edu.au.

Suspension of RTP Stipends while active in program

44. RTP Stipend scholarship students apply to have their stipend scholarship suspended whilst continuing their eligible HDR program where they are in receipt of another scholarship (unless the study was undertaken overseas as part of a Commonwealth Government financially supported international postgraduate research scholarship or award).
45. Students elect to suspend their RTP stipend by:
- a. advising their Chair of Panel and the Graduate Research Office in writing, including the reasons for the scholarship suspension and duration;
 - b. The Chair of Panel approves the suspension.
46. The University may suspend a stipend where a recipient has:
- a. an outstanding debt with the University including fees; or

- b. where the Delegated Authority has determined there are outstanding HDR milestone/s in accordance with the Higher degree by research – candidature progression procedure.

47. A stipend is suspended within five working days after the University has advised the recipient in writing that the milestones, debt and/or fees are outstanding.

48. Where an RTP stipend is suspended, the recipient forfeits any payments for the period of time that their scholarship is suspended.

49. The scholarship duration will not be extended for any periods of suspension of scholarship approved by the University.

Overpayments and defaults

50. In cases of overpayment or outstanding financial debts to the University, service restrictions are applied to students.

51. Service restrictions include temporarily withholding students' access to:

- a. enrol or re-enrol in a program or course;
- b. a transcript of academic record;
- c. results of any assessment in a course or program;
- d. receiving a degree, diploma, certificate or other Award of the University.

Paid leave entitlements for RTP Stipends

52. Paid leave entitlements included for RTP Stipend students are detailed below:

Paid recreation leave

53. Students are entitled to a maximum of 20 working days paid recreation leave for each year of the RTP Stipend.

54. Leave entitlements may be accrued over the life of the RTP Stipend but are forfeited when the RTP Stipend is terminated.

55. Students apply for paid recreational leave by notifying their Chair of Panel in writing.

56. The Chair of Panel approves the leave.

57. Paid recreation leave does not extend the period of support for a scholarship.

Paid sick leave

58. Students are entitled to a maximum of 10 working days' paid sick leave for each year of the RTP Stipend.

59. Leave entitlements may be accrued over the life of the RTP Stipend but are forfeited when the RTP Stipend is terminated.

60. Students apply for paid sick leave by notifying their Chair of Panel in writing.
61. The Chair of Panel approves the leave.
62. Paid sick leave does not extend the period of support for a scholarship.

Additional paid leave

63. In addition to the maximum of 10 working days' paid sick leave for each year of the RTP Stipend, students are entitled to additional paid sick leave to a maximum of 60 working days for the duration of the RTP Stipend for periods of illness where the student has insufficient sick leave entitlements available, on provision of a medical certificate.

Medical certificates:

- a. are signed by a registered medical practitioner;
- b. provide the likely duration of the student's illness;
- c. certify that the student is unable to pursue the program because of the illness.

64. Sick leave entitlements may be used to cover leave for students with family caring responsibilities.

65. Students who have completed 12 months of their RTP Stipend are entitled to a maximum of 60 working days paid maternity leave for the duration of the RTP Stipend. This also applies if the student is the legal parent and primary care-giver of an adopted child:

- a. less than five years of age;
- b. not a step-child of the student; and
- c. has not previously lived continuously with the student for six months or more.

66. Students who are partners of women giving birth or one of two adoptive parents but not primary care-giver, while receiving an RTP Stipend and having completed 12 months of their RTP Stipend are entitled to a maximum of five working days paid leave for the duration of the RTP Stipend, on provision of a medical certificate confirming the date of birth or adoption.

67. Paid leave is aggregated and awarded only in one-week blocks for a full-time student and two-week blocks for a part-time student.

68. Additional paid leave extends the period of support for an RTP Stipend.

69. Students apply for additional paid leave by completing the relevant section of the Manage My Degree – HDR form in ISIS.

Unpaid leave entitlements for RTP Stipends

70. The University may approve unpaid program and scholarship leave of absence on personal grounds, which does not exceed a total period of twelve months during the tenure of the scholarship, after which the student may resume the scholarship. If the unpaid program leave of absence exceeds twelve months the student may not be eligible for resumption of the scholarship.

71. An application for program and scholarship leave of absence for more than twelve months will only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the recipient and must be approved by the Delegated Authority in the College.

72. Students apply for unpaid leave by completing the relevant section of the Manage My Degree – HDR form in ISIS.

Employment outside the eligible HDR program

73. Students notify their Delegated Authority and Chair of Panel in writing of the extent of working arrangements they are undertaking alongside their eligible HDR program, upon commencement at ANU or within 20 working days of commencing employment arrangements.

Changes in a student's enrolment affecting RTP scholarships

74. RTP students undertake program actions in accordance with the [Higher degree by research – candidature procedure](#). This includes:

- a. field of education changes (degree transfer);
- b. change of intensity (full-time to part-time or vice versa); and
- c. change of program level (MPhil to PhD or vice versa).

Termination of RTP scholarship

75. RTP scholarships cease:

- a. at the conclusion of the duration of the scholarship; or
- b. on submission of the thesis for examination, excepting Industry placements (see Industry placements, internships, professional practice activities); or
- c. on the date on which the student withdraws or ceases to attend the University other than for approved absences; or
- d. if a student breaches the conditions of this procedure.

76. RTP scholarships may cease if a student is no longer meeting or has breached the requirements in the Research Awards Rule, Academic Misconduct Rule, Discipline Rule, as determined by the authority under those Rules.

77. Where an action is taken under a Rule, appeals against termination are as per those Rules.

Appeals

78. Students may appeal a decision made by the University with regards to offer of scholarship, allowances, suspension of scholarship, extension of scholarship, or termination of scholarship, where not covered under other Rules.

79. If an appeal is in respect of a scholarship awarded at the University level, the Dean, Higher Degree Research is the Review Officer. The relevant Review Officer for an appeal that relates to a decision within a College or independent Centre is the Associate Dean for the relevant College or Centre, or nominee.

80. Where the Review Officer was involved in the original decision, an alternative Review Officer will be nominated by the Associate Dean for the relevant College or independent Centre.

81. Students appeal to the Review Officer in writing, setting out the grounds of the appeal and including any evidence in support of the application, no more than 20 working days after they are given written notice of and a statement of reasons for the decision.

82. The Review Officer considers the appeal and advises the student in writing of the outcome, no more than 20 working days after receiving the appeal.

83. The Review Officer may:

- a. decide to take no action; or
- b. make any decision that could have been made by the original decision maker; or
- c. refer the matter back to the original decision maker to review the process used in making the decision.

84. A student may appeal the decision of a Review Officer only on procedural grounds as follows:

- a. to the Dean of the College (or the equivalent role in an independent Centre) in respect of a decision made by the Associate Dean or nominee within a College or Centre, or
- b. to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) in respect of a decision made by the Dean, Higher Degree Research.

85. The Dean of the College (or the equivalent role in an independent Centre) or the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) considers the appeal and advises the student in writing of the outcome no more than 20 working days after receiving the appeal.

86. The Dean of the College (or the equivalent role in an independent Centre) or the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) may:

- a. Confirm the Review Officer's decision; or
- b. Set aside the Review Officer's decision and refer the matter to the Review Officer to reconsider the original decision in light of the Dean of the College (or the equivalent role in an independent Centre) or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor's findings; or make a new decision.

87. The decision of the College Dean (or equivalent role in an independent Centre) or Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) is final.

Industry placements, research internships, professional practice activities

88. RTP students may undertake industry placements, internships, and professional practice activities of up to six months duration that are approved as part of their eligible HDR program. Approvals are made in writing and on an individual basis in the letter of offer (or an amended offer, issued after enrolment).

89. RTP Fee Offset scholarship students have their scholarship extended by the duration of the placement, internship, or professional practice activity up to the maximum period of RTP support.

90. RTP stipend scholarships may be available for the duration of industry placements, research internships and professional practice activities if:

- a. the student already holds an RTP stipend;
- b. there is no other income associated with these activities;
- c. the maximum duration of the academic program has not been reached; and
- d. the thesis examination process has not been finalised.

91. Students undertaking a placement, internship, or professional practice are not eligible to have their RTP stipend scholarship extended beyond the maximum period of RTP support.

Acknowledgement of RTP scholarship

92. The Commonwealth's contribution is acknowledged when, at any time during or after completion of an eligible HDR program, the RTP student, the student's supervisor or any other party, publishes or produces material such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to the research project carried out by the RTP student.

93. This requirement is met by including the statement "This research is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship" in any materials.

Related Links

[Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#)

[DET, 10 Oct 2016, Detailed Information on new arrangements for research block grants viewed 5 Nov 2016](#)

[DET, RTP – Frequently Asked Questions for students](#)

[DET, RTP – Frequently Asked Questions for university administrators](#)

[DET, Template Advice to a continuing APA and RTS Student](#)

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