

Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarships Administrative Rules

Summary

The Research Training Program (RTP) is a Commonwealth government scheme established to support both domestic and international students undertaking Research Doctorate and Research Masters degrees.

The Research Training Program (RTP) provides three modes of funding support for students. Students will receive one or more of these benefits:

- RTP tuition fee offset;
- RTP stipend for general living costs;
- RTP allowances related to the ancillary cost of research degrees.
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1. Research Training Program (RTP) Tuition Fee Offset

1.1 RTP Tuition Fee Offset

The Research Training Program (RTP) Fee Offset is provided to the University to offset tuition fees of a HDR student that would otherwise have been paid by the student. The fee offset represents the estimated cost of providing research training to students. These costs include:

- HDR supervisor costs such as salary and on-costs
- HDR research projects costs such as lab equipment, field trips, access to external equipment and facilities
- HDR industry placements and commercialisation skills training costs
- travel, accommodation and conference costs related to a HDR
- HDR course development.

1.2 Eligibility for RTP Tuition Fee Offset

Student eligibility requirements for a RTP Tuition Fee Offset:

- must be a domestic* student; or
- an international student; and
- enrolled in an accredited HDR course of study at Flinders University; and
- must not be in receipt of an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth, designed to offset HDR tuition fees.

Refer to the [HDR study information](#) for further details.

* Australian citizens; or permanent residents of Australia; or New Zealand citizens.

1.3 Periods of support

Doctoral students

- a minimum of three years and up to a maximum of four years at a *full-time student load*, at the discretion of the University. For part-time students, a minimum of six years and up to a maximum of eight years at the discretion of the University.

Masters by Research students

- a minimum of one year and up to a maximum of two years at a *full-time student load* at the discretion of the University. For part-time students a minimum of two years and up to a maximum of four years at the discretion of the University.

All HDR students' period of support for the RTP Fee Offset will incorporate any periods of leave approved by the University for the RTP Stipend, refer to Clause 7: sick leave longer than 10 days; maternity leave; and parenting leave. Any periods of intermission/suspension approved by the University do not contribute to the period of support. The period of support is calculated from the course of study commencement date.

1.3.1 Periods of entitlement will be affected if students:

- Do not apply for variations to candidature in a timely manner
- Transfer higher degree by research studies from another institution to Flinders University, in which case the period of enrolment at the first institution will be deducted from the maximum period of RTP Fee Offset entitlement at Flinders University.
- Apply to transfer from Flinders University to another institution, in which case Flinders University will provide an HDR student with information about their RTP Scholarship entitlements consumed at Flinders University if that is required for enrolment at another university.
- Downgrade candidature from a Doctorate by research to an appropriate Masters by Research degree, in which case the maximum period of entitlement will be two years or the period of enrolment prior to the downgrade of candidature, whichever is greater.
- Cease to be an enrolled student without requesting a period of intermission/suspension.
- Do not resume study at the conclusion of a period of intermission/suspension or do not make arrangements to extend that period of intermission/suspension.
- Do not maintain satisfactory progress.

1.3.2 Research Training Program (RTP) Tuition Fee Offset will be terminated if students:

- Cease to be an enrolled student without requesting a period of intermission/suspension.
- Do not resume study at the conclusion of a period of intermission/suspension or do not make arrangements to extend that period of intermission/suspension.
- Do not maintain satisfactory progress.

1.4 RTP Fee Offset selection and offer

- All commencing domestic HDR students who meet the criteria for the periods of support listed at Clause 1.3 above will receive a RTP Fee Offset.
- Commencing international HDR students who are awarded an Australian Government RTP Scholarship (International) and meet the criteria for the periods of support listed at Clause 1.3 above will receive a RTP Fee Offset.
- From 1 January 2017, all continuing former Research Training Scheme (RTS) domestic students who meet the criteria for the periods of support listed at Clause 1.3 above will receive a RTP Fee Offset for a period necessary to provide at least equivalent support to that which the student would have received under the RTS based on course of study commencement dates (not the commencement of the RTP Scholarship).
- From 1 January 2017, all international students in receipt of an Australian Government RTP Scholarship or a Flinders International Postgraduate Research Scholarship who meet the criteria for the periods of support listed at Clause 1.3 above will receive a RTP Fee Offset for a period necessary to provide at least equivalent support to that which the student would have received under the International Postgraduate Research Scholarships tuition sponsorship, based on course of study commencement dates (not the commencement of the RTP Scholarship).

1.5 Continuity of Study after RTP Tuition Fee Offset period of support

HDR students who have exceeded their RTP Tuition Fee Offset entitlement will be charged the fee offset amount for the remaining period of their HDR. Tuition fees will be charged on a pro-rata basis determined by the period of enrolment.

2. Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend

2.1 RTP Stipend

The RTP is provided to the University to support the general living costs of HDR students through an annual stipend. The stipend is called an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship (AGRTPS).

The Australian Government RTP Scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic merit and research potential to enable suitably qualified applicants to undertake study towards a higher degree by research (Masters degrees by research or Doctoral degrees by research).

2.2 Periods of support

Doctoral students

- The Australian Government RTP Scholarships are tenable at Flinders University for up to three years for a Doctorate by research, subject to satisfactory progress. Periods of study already undertaken towards the degree will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.

An extension to the duration of an Australian Government RTP Scholarship for a Research Doctorate student of up to six months may be approved by the Scholarships Committee provided the student is making satisfactory progress and the grounds for the extension relate to the study and are beyond the control of the student.

Masters by Research students

- The Australian Government RTP Scholarships are tenable at Flinders University for up to two years for a Masters degree by research, subject to satisfactory progress. Periods of study already undertaken towards the degree will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.

Masters by Research students are not eligible for an extension.

The period of support will be extended by the length of time of approved intermission/suspension and/or sick leave (longer than 10 days and up to 60 working days with a certificate) and/or maternity leave and/or paternity leave. Annual leave does not extend the period of support. Sick leave under 10 days does not extend the period of support.

2.3 Eligibility for RTP Stipend

Student eligibility requirements for a RTP Stipend:

1. must be a domestic* student; **or**
2. must be an international student; **and**
3. must be enrolled in or will be commencing a Flinders HDR; **and**
4. must not receiving income from another source to support student's general living costs while undertaking their course of study if that income is greater than 75 per cent of the student's RTP Stipend rate. Income unrelated to the student's course of study or income received for the student's course of study but not for the purposes of supporting general living costs is not to be taken into account.

* *Australian citizens; or permanent residents of Australia; or New Zealand citizens.*

2.4 RTP Stipend rate

The Australian Government RTP Scholarship pays an indexed stipend of:

- \$27,082 pa (2018 rate) tax free for full-time study; or
- \$13,541 pa (2018 rate) taxable for part-time study.

3. Research Training Program (RTP) Allowances

3.1 RTP Allowances

The RTP Allowances cover costs related to the ancillary expenses of research degrees. These allowances include:

- Relocation Allowance for Australian Government RTP Scholarships holders only (maximum of \$1,485)
- Thesis Allowance (\$500 for all higher degrees by research)

- Single, couple and family cover for Australian Government RTP Scholarship (international) recipients for the duration of their award

3.2 Eligibility for RTP Allowances

3.2.1 Relocation Allowance for Australian Government RTP Scholarship holders only

A student who relocates to Adelaide from overseas or interstate in order to take up an award is eligible to apply for reimbursement of relocation and travel expenses. This allowance will be paid at the following rates:

<i>Relocation Allowance</i>	<i>Rates</i>
<i>Relocation expenses</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult 	\$505
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child 	\$255
<i>Travel Expenses</i>	Value of economy or student concession airfares
<i>Total maximum allowance</i>	\$1485

3.2.2 Thesis Allowance for all HDR students

All HDR students are eligible to apply for a thesis allowance to assist with thesis production costs. Students claiming a thesis allowance must produce original receipts showing the amount paid by the student, the date it was paid and the service for which the payment was made. **Claims for the thesis allowance must be lodged within one year of the final examined and University approved version of the thesis being uploaded to the Library depository.**

	<i>Rate</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Higher Degrees by Research 	\$500

4. Application, selection and offers for RTP Scholarships

From 1 January 2017, all continuing students who were supported by the previous International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS), who were in receipt of a Research Training Scheme (RTS) place, or Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) will be transitioned to an Australian Government RTP Scholarship without being disadvantaged. Support provided by the Australian Government RTP Scholarship will be, at least, equivalent to that provided under the previous Commonwealth Government funding.

4.1 RTP Stipend Application

Applications for the Australian Government RTP Scholarship (Domestic) will be called for in September of each year, with a closing date at the end of October.

Applications for the Australian Government RTP Scholarship (Domestic) and admission to candidature are submitted electronically. For information about how to apply refer to: flinders.edu.au/scholarships-system/index.cfm/scholarships/display/a215d.

Applications for the Australian Government RTP Scholarship (International) will be called for in June of each year, with a closing date in August.

Applications for the Australian Government RTP Scholarship (International) and admission to candidature are submitted electronically. For information about how to apply refer to: flinders.edu.au/scholarships-system/index.cfm/scholarships/display/a731e2.

4.2 RTP Stipend Selection

Selection of award holders will be undertaken by the Scholarships Committee on the basis of academic merit and research potential. Applications will be ranked according to the University's *Guidelines for Ranking Postgraduate Research Scholarship Applications* refer to:

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- Domestic: flinders.edu.au/scholarships-system/index.cfm/scholarships/display/a215d
 - International: flinders.edu.au/scholarships-system/index.cfm/scholarships/display/a731e2.

The award of a RTP Stipend is a competitive process based on academic merit and the University will give priority to students undertaking a doctoral degree for the first time. The University reserves the right not to offer a scholarship to an applicant who is ineligible or not sufficiently competitive.

In addition, the following factors will be considered during the selection process and an AGRTPS will not be awarded to a student who:

- is in receipt of an award which directly duplicates the purpose of the AGRTPS. Holders of a Flinders University Research Scholarship (FURS) will not be considered for the award of an AGRTPS to continue study in the degree for which the FURS is held;
- is on paid study leave;
- holds a fractional academic appointment;
- holds a Research Doctorate or equivalent, or holds a Research Masters or equivalent and is seeking an AGRTPS to undertake a Research Masters degree;
- has previously held an AGRTPS;
- an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA), or a Flinders University Research Scholarship (FURS) unless it was terminated within the first six months of the earlier award, as per Clause 2.3 of above.

4.3 RTP Stipend Offer

Award holders will be asked to nominate a commencement date, which is not later than 31 March in the year in which the scholarship was awarded.

In exceptional circumstances, award holders may apply to the Scholarships Committee for permission to commence their award after 31 March, but must commence no later than 30 June.

All Australian Government RTP Scholarship awardees must formally accept their stipend offer. Award holders must be enrolled to commence the award, and must remain enrolled whilst they hold an Australian Government RTP Scholarship. For Conditions of Award refer to:

- Domestic: flinders.edu.au/scholarships-system/index.cfm/scholarships/display/a215d
- International: flinders.edu.au/scholarships-system/index.cfm/scholarships/display/a731e2.

For information about RTP Fee Offsets for all Award holders refer to Clause 1.4 above.

5. Supervision and Facilities provisions

5.1 Supervision

All HDR students will be provided with supervision and facilities in accordance with University policy and procedures relating to these matters. Refer to the [HDR Policy](#) and [HDR Supervisor Policy](#) and [Charter for HDR Students and Supervisor Responsibilities](#).

5.2 Facilities Provisions

It is the responsibility of the Principal Supervisor and College to ensure that there are adequate research facilities for admitted HDR students. All HDR students should consult the [Statement of Minimum Resources for HDR Students](#).
Hyperlink to relevant forms.

6. Intermission/Suspension

6.1 Intermission/Suspension for RTP Stipend holders

- Award holders who wish to intermit or suspend their studies must apply in writing to the Scholarships Committee. Except in the case of illness, applications must be made at least three weeks in advance of the proposed period of intermission/suspension. The Scholarships Committee may approve a period or periods totalling up to 12 months. In exceptional circumstances (circumstances beyond the student's control), the Scholarships Committee may approve periods of intermission/suspension up to 24 months in total. Award holders must apply separately to the relevant College HDR Committee for intermission/suspension of their candidature.

- The Scholarships Committee will not approve intermission/suspension of scholarships in the first six months of scholarship tenure except in exceptional circumstances.
- Award holders must notify Student Finance Services at least three weeks prior to resuming study following a period of intermission/suspension.
- Award holders who suspend their studies without the approval of the Scholarships Committee will be required to repay any award payments to which they were not entitled.

6.2 Intermission/suspension for RTP Fee Offset students

All HDR students on a RTP Fee Offset must abide by the [HDR Policy](#) and [HDR Admissions and Enrolment Procedures](#), section 6 with respect to intermission/suspension. Also refer to Clause 1.3 Periods of Support above.

7. Leave for RTP Stipend holders

(Part-time students entitlements are calculated on a pro-rata basis.)

- Award holders are entitled to receive up to 20 working days' paid recreation leave for each year of scholarship tenure, in addition to all public holidays. Recreation leave may be accrued over the tenure of the award, but will be forfeited when the award is terminated. Annual leave does not extend the period of support of the RTP Stipend.
- Award holders are entitled to receive up to 10 working days' of paid sick leave per year. Sick leave may be accrued over the tenure of the award, but will be forfeited when the award is terminated. Sick leave under 10 working days does not extend the period of support of the RTP Stipend.
- Award holders are entitled to receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of 60 working days' during the duration of the RTP Stipend for periods of illness where the student has insufficient sick leave entitlements available under paragraph 1, provided that a medical certificate has been provided by the student to the University. Sick leave longer than 10 working days and up to 60 working days with a certificate does extend the period of support of the RTP Stipend.
- Sick leave entitlements (including additional sick leave) for award holders may also be used to cover leave for students with family caring responsibilities, subject to the usual practice of the University that includes providing supporting evidence for carer's leave.
- Award holders who have completed 12 months of their RTP Stipend are entitled to a maximum of 60 working days' paid maternity leave during the duration of the RTP Stipend, which is in addition to the normal tenure of the award. This will be subject to the usual practice of the University; paid leave may also be approved if the student has adopted a child. Maternity leave extends the period of support of the RTP Stipend.
- Award holders who are partners of women giving birth while receiving a RTP Stipend, and who have completed 12 months of their RTP Stipend, may be entitled to a period of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth or adoption, subject to the usual practice of the University that includes providing supporting evidence. Parenting leave extends the period of support of the RTP Stipend.

8. Employment

8.1 RTP Stipend holders

Award holders may undertake a strictly limited amount of part-time paid employment, provided it does not interfere with their study program. Students are normally only permitted to work up to 8 hours in any one week. A part-time student is subject to the same restrictions on employment as a full-time student. Employment will be monitored by a student's supervisor. Award holders must apply to the Scholarships Committee for approval to undertake more than 8 hours work a week. Part-time scholarships are not available to applicants seeking to undertake paid employment.

The assessment of hours for award holders who undertake part-time teaching will be defined in accordance with the awards and rates of pay for part-time teaching at Flinders University as follows:

- an initial tutorial involves a total time of three hours, normally requiring one hour each of preparation, contact and marking time;
- a repeat tutorial is designated as two hours.

8.2 RTP Fee Offset holders

In order to complete a HDR within the RTP period of support (refer 1.2) it is reasonable to expect full-time HDR students to treat their studies as full-time work. Anything less than 30 hours per week on a regular basis over the life of the degree will impact on a timely completion. Paid employment can be undertaken around that commitment any time of the year. The expectation for part-time study is 50% of the full-time load.

9. Variations to Candidature

9.1 RTP Stipend holders

All HDR students in receipt of a RTP Stipend must abide by the Conditions of Award with respect to variations to conditions of candidature.

- Domestic students: flinders.edu.au/scholarships-system/index.cfm/scholarships/display/a215d
- International students flinders.edu.au/scholarships-system/index.cfm/scholarships/display/a731e2.

In addition, all HDR students in receipt of a RTP Stipend must abide by the [HDR Policy](#) and [HDR Admissions and Enrolment Procedures](#), section 6 with respect to variations to conditions of candidature, refer to Clause 9.2 below.

9.2 RTP Fee Offset holders

All HDR students on a RTP Fee Offset must abide by the [HDR Policy](#) and [HDR Admission and Enrolment Procedures](#), section 6 with respect to variations to conditions of candidature that include:

- absences of less than 9 weeks;
- intermission/suspension (refer also to clause 7 above);
- transfer of status between full-time and part-time and vice versa;
- transfer of status from internal to external and vice versa;
- Significant amendment to research topic, including field of research;
- Extension of candidature;
- Reduction of minimum total period of time-based research component of candidature;
- Writing up away from the University;
- Transfer between candidatures; and
- Temporary or permanent change of supervisor.

9.3 Transfers from another institution

When a student transfers from another institution, the University will not take over the payments of an Australian Government RTP Scholarship awarded by the former institution. The student will be required to apply for an Australian Government RTP Scholarship at Flinders University, and will be considered on the basis of the University selection criteria for all other RTP applicants. If the student transfers outside of a scholarship round, the University will investigate, on a case-by-case basis, whether there is funding from another source, e.g. University funds or privately-funded sources, to accommodate the transferring student. The expectation would be that the student apply for the Australian Government RTP Scholarship in the next available round.

Refer to 1.3.1 above with respect to how periods of RTP Fee Offset entitlement will be affected if students transfer to Flinders from another institution.

9.4 Transfers to another institution

When a student requests to transfer from Flinders University to another institution, Flinders University will provide the HDR student with information about their RTP Scholarship entitlements consumed at Flinders University if that is required for enrolment at another university.

10. Termination of Scholarship

The University must terminate a student's RTP Scholarship (either tuition fee offset, stipend or allowances) if one or more of the following criteria apply:

- If the student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in clauses 1.2 and 2.3 of these Administrative Rules, other than during a period in which an intermission/suspension has been approved; or
- If the student has reached the maximum duration of the scholarship;
- If the student fails to returned from an approved period of intermission;
- If the student has submitted for examination;
- If the student has committed serious misconduct, including the provision of false or misleading information;
- If the student takes unapproved leave, with no response to attempts of communication by the University
- On completion of the course of study;

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- If the University determines that the student has not made satisfactory progress in accordance with the [HDR Policy](#) and [HDR Progression Procedures](#), section 6.

11. Grievance and review procedures

All HDR students should consult the [Student Complaints Policy](#) and [Student Review and Appeal Policy](#). For information about the HDR student progress review procedures refer to the [HDR Policy](#) and [HDR Progression Procedures](#).

12. Optional industry placements, research internships, professional practice activities

All HDR students should consult with their supervisor with respect to optional industry placements, research internships and professional practice activities.

The RTP Stipend Holders will not have their scholarship extended by the duration of the placement, internship, or professional practice activity. Nor will the rate of the RTP Stipend change.

Also refer to the [Intellectual Property](#) Policy. Any optional industry placements, research internships, and/or formal cadetships will be *included* in the period of support for the RTP Fee Offset outlined in Clause 1.3 above and the period of support for the RTP Stipend outlined in Clause 2.2 above. Intermission *will not* be granted to undertake optional industry placements, research internships, and professional practice activities.