

UWA HDR Stipend and Allowance Scholarship Conditions

Introduction

The University of Western Australia (UWA) offers stipend and allowance scholarships to support both domestic and international candidates undertaking Higher Degrees by Research (HDR).

These conditions should be read in conjunction with the [Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarships Policy](#) and the relevant course rules as published in the [UWA Handbook](#).

The responsibilities of the Graduate Research School (GRS), Heads of School (HOS), Graduate Research Coordinators (GRC), Advisory Panels, Supervisors, and Candidates are defined in the [Graduate Research Training Policy](#).

All scholarship recipients are bound by these conditions and all relevant University rules.

Certain scholarships may include variations to these conditions, and these will be clearly communicated to the recipient.

Conditions

1. Eligibility

- 1.1 Stipend and allowance scholarships are awarded through a competitive and transparent selection process solely for educational purposes.
- 1.2 To receive a stipend scholarship, applicants must:
 - (i) meet entry requirements for the nominated course.
 - (ii) be eligible for full-time, internal enrolment unless otherwise approved by the University.
 - (iii) not receive income exceeding 75% of the stipend rate from other sources intended for general living costs. This excludes income not related to the course of study, e.g: after-hours work or course-related funds like research or travel allowances
- 1.3 Subject to clause 1.2 (iii) a stipend scholarship may be held concurrently with another UWA or externally funded scholarship, provided the terms of the concurrent scholarship permit.
- 1.4 Stipend and allowance scholarships are awarded to provide financial assistance for candidates enrolled at UWA and can not be transferred to another institution.

2. Benefits

- 2.1 The value, payment method, and schedule of each scholarship will be specified in the recipient's offer letter.
- 2.2 Stipend scholarships:
 - (i) are paid fortnightly into the recipient's nominated Australian bank account.
 - (ii) may be indexed annually by the Australian Government or the University.
 - (iii) may be tax-exempt if the recipient is enrolled full-time and the funds are deposited into an Australian bank account (recipients should seek independent tax advice).
 - (iv) do not cover the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF), Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), tuition fees, overseas fieldwork, English bridging courses, or relocation costs, except as outlined in Clause 5.

3. Part-time Scholarships

- 3.1 Part-time stipend scholarships may be approved if the recipient demonstrates:
- (i) significant, documented carer responsibility; or
 - (ii) a medical condition/disability limiting capacity for full-time study; and
 - (iii) is enrolled as a part-time candidate.
- 3.2 A change to part-time (50%) enrolment will result in a part-time (50%) stipend.
- 3.3 A candidate who is the recipient of a part-time stipend scholarship is subject to the same employment restriction as a full-time stipend scholarship recipient (see clause 19).
- 3.4 A candidate is not permitted to hold a stipend scholarship on a part-time basis if the reason for part-time enrolment is to undertake full-time or substantial part-time paid employment.
- 3.5 A part-time stipend scholarship is not exempt from income tax. The recipient of a part-time stipend scholarship:
- (i) must provide a Tax File Number Declaration to UWA Payroll;
 - (ii) must declare the income received to the Australian Taxation Office annually; and
 - (iii) is recommended to obtain independent financial advice.

4. Tenure

- 4.1 The tenure of each stipend or allowance scholarship is specified in the offer letter.
- 4.2 Unless otherwise stated the maximum term of a stipend scholarship is:
- (i) Research Doctorate: up to 3.5 years full-time equivalent.
 - (ii) Master by Research: up to 2 years full-time equivalent.
- 4.3 A stipend scholarship cannot commence before enrolment nor continue beyond thesis submission.
- 4.4 Tenure will be reduced by any prior study undertaken toward the enrolled course.
- 4.5 An extension of up to three months (FTE) may be available for candidates who have an agreement to undertake an internship signed within the first 18 months of candidature, and complete a 60-day research internship during candidature. Total stipend scholarship tenure must not exceed four years.

5. Allowances

- 5.1 Allowances covering expenses such as relocation, research, fieldwork, conferences, publishing, and travel will be detailed in the offer letter.
- 5.2 Allowances must be used during the period of candidature. An allowance will cease upon thesis submission or withdrawal/termination of candidature.
- 5.3 A Relocation Allowance may be available to candidates relocating from their usual residence in a remote intrastate location or another Australian state or territory to Perth. This Allowance:
- (i) must be applied for within one year of enrolment date,
 - (ii) is available for the candidate only and excludes dependents,
 - (iii) cannot be used for return travel to the place of origin,
 - (iv) is not available to candidates relocating from overseas, including those detouring via another Australian state or territory,
 - (v) is not available to candidates already in receipt of a similar award.

6. Acceptance, deferral and commencement

- 6.1 Scholarship recipients must accept their offer by the deadline specified in the offer letter.
- 6.2 Acceptance must include a declaration agreeing to the Conditions outlined in this document.
- 6.3 Recipients must commence their HDR course on the date specified in the offer letter, unless:
 - (i) exceptional circumstances prevent commencement; and
 - (ii) deferred commencement is approved.
- 6.4 Failure to commence by relevant date may result in withdrawal of the scholarship.
- 6.5 A transfer of scholarship and enrolment to another UWA enrolling school requires approval from the GRS.

7. Residence

- 7.1 Scholarship recipients are expected to enrol as internal candidates.
- 7.2 Applicants who apply for external enrolment and are based in another Australian state, are not generally eligible for consideration for a stipend scholarship. Exceptional circumstances may be considered and approved by the GRS upon recommendation from the School.
- 7.3 International residents enrolled as an external candidate will not be approved for the award of a stipend scholarship.

8. Criteria for the continuation of a scholarship

- 8.1 The continuation of a stipend scholarship is subject to the recipient:
 - (i) remaining enrolled unless an approved suspension is in place;
 - (ii) meeting milestone submission deadlines; and
 - (iii) making satisfactory academic progress in accordance with course rules.
- 8.2 The University may suspend a stipend scholarship if any of these conditions are breached.

9. Candidates undertaking work as part of their HDR course

- 9.1 A stipend scholarship recipient may undertake an activity such as a research fellowship, industry placement or internship as part of their HDR program.
- 9.2 If stipend payments are suspended during such activities, the GRS will exclude the suspension period as part of the scholarship duration.

10. Conversion between Master by Research and Research Doctorate courses

- 10.1 If a stipend scholarship recipient converts between a Master by Research and a Research Doctorate, the maximum scholarship duration is adjusted to that of the new course, minus any time already undertaken in the previous HDR course.
- 10.2 In the case of conversion from a Research Doctorate to a Master by Research, if the stipend scholarship recipient has already received support equal to or exceeding the standard Master duration, the stipend will cease, with no repayment required for any excess received.

11. Change to 'Field of Research' or research topic

- 11.1 A stipend scholarship recipient wishing to change their Field of Research must obtain approval from the GRS and, if applicable, the external funding body.
- 11.2 A change in Field of Research does not affect entitlement to any tuition fee offset scholarship.

12. Overpayment or underpayment of scholarship

- 12.1 Scholarship recipients must repay any overpaid scholarship funds to the University upon request, regardless of the reason for the overpayment.
- 12.2 The University will rectify any underpayment of scholarship funds as soon as practicably possible upon receiving written notification.

13. Suspension of stipend scholarship

- 13.1 Suspension of candidature also results in stipend suspension.
- 13.2 Stipend scholarships may be suspended for up to 12 months.
- 13.3 A suspension is generally approved only for full teaching periods, except in exceptional circumstances that are beyond the candidate's control (excluding employment commitments).
- 13.4 Suspension of the stipend only—while remaining enrolled—may be approved for activities such as industry placements, internships, exchange programs or compassionate and compelling circumstances.
- 13.5 During approved suspension of candidature, scholarship recipients:
 - (i) are not enrolled in load-bearing units,
 - (ii) do not consume stipend or tuition fee offset tenure, and
 - (iii) are not covered by University insurance, even if undertaking course-related activities.
- 13.6 Suspension must be applied for in advance. Retrospective suspension applications will be considered in exceptional circumstances. A retrospective application must be submitted within two weeks of returning to study, with supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate).
- 13.7 Failure to resume study or extend the suspension within the period allowed by clause 13.6 will result in scholarship termination.
- 13.8 Recipients must request resumption of stipend payments upon returning to study. The University is not obligated to backdate payments if a request is delayed without good cause.

14. Annual recreation leave

- 14.1 Stipend scholarship holders are entitled to up to 20 working days of recreation leave per year (pro-rata for part-time enrolment), subject to the following conditions:
 - (i) Leave is not permitted within the first six months of candidature or before submission of the research proposal.
 - (ii) All project milestones must be met or scheduled to be met before leave commences.
 - (iii) Leave within Australia requires approval from the Coordinating Supervisor.
 - (iv) Leave outside Australia requires approval from the Coordinating Supervisor, GRC, and GRS.
 - (v) Leave may be accrued year to year, subject to the project's completion plan and supervisor approval.
 - (vi) Leave must be taken during the scholarship tenure and does not extend its duration.
 - (vii) Leave is not paid out after the cessation of candidature.

15. Paid professional development leave

- 15.1 Paid professional development leave refers to employment relevant to a HDR candidate's project, such as work as a lab demonstrator, tutor, field trip assistant, or support for academic events like conferences.
- 15.2 Scholarship holders may be granted up to 20 working days of paid professional development leave per year.

- 15.3 Leave must be taken in a single block and does not accumulate across years of candidature.
- 15.4 This leave does not extend the scholarship duration.
- 15.5 Candidates remain enrolled during the leave period.
- 15.6 Approval must be obtained from supervisors, the GRC, and the GRS before taking leave.
- 15.7 Leave is generally not approved within the first six months of the scholarship or before submission of the Research Proposal.
- 15.8 Approval is contingent on submission of the Research Proposal and any due milestone reports.

16. Sick leave

- 16.1 Scholarship holders are entitled to up to 10 working days of paid sick leave per year. This leave is included within the standard stipend duration.
- 16.2 Up to 60 working days (12 weeks) of extended paid sick leave may be granted in addition to the standard stipend duration.
- 16.3 Extended sick leave applies to medically substantiated illnesses lasting more than two weeks.
- 16.4 Sick leave beyond 12 weeks must be managed through the suspension provisions outlined in Clause 13.

17. Parental, partner and adoption leave

17.1 Primary carer leave

A scholarship recipient may be eligible for up to 60 working days of paid primary carer leave, to be taken within the first 12 months following the birth of a child, provided that the scholarship recipient:

- (i) has completed at least 12 months of their scholarship;
- (ii) has either given birth or is the partner of someone who has given birth; and
- (iii) has provided satisfactory evidence to the University confirming their status as the primary carer.

17.2 Adoption leave

A scholarship recipient may be eligible for up to 60 working days of paid adoption leave, to be taken within the first 12 months following the adoption placement, provided that the scholarship recipient:

- (i) has completed at least 12 months of their scholarship;
- (ii) has become the legal parent and primary carer of an adopted child under five years of age;
- (iii) is not the child's step-parent; and
- (iv) has not previously lived with the child for six months or more; and
- (v) has provided satisfactory evidence to the University confirming their status as the primary carer.

17.3 Partner leave

A scholarship recipient may be eligible for up to 10 working days of paid partner leave, to be taken within the first three months following a child's birth or adoption placement, provided the scholarship recipient:

- (i) has completed at least 12 months of their scholarship;
- (ii) is the partner of the primary carer.

If the scholarship holder later becomes the primary carer during the primary stipend period, they may access up to 60 working days of primary carer or adoption leave

17.4 Primary carer leave and Adoption leave is in addition to the standard stipend duration.

17.5 Unpaid parental leave may be accessed during the first year of the scholarship under the suspension provisions in Clause 13.

17.6 Partner leave cannot overlap with primary carer or adoption leave

18. Overseas research leave

18.1 A scholarship recipient may be granted approval to undertake research-related travel overseas away from their primary campus. This may include:

- (i) attending and presenting at conferences; and
- (ii) conducting fieldwork, data collection, or research directly related to the successful completion of their project.

18.2 This leave is generally not approved:

- (i) within the first six months of the scholarship; or
- (ii) prior to submission of the Research Proposal and any required milestones.

18.3 Fieldwork or research undertaken overseas must be essential to the successful completion of the recipient's course.

18.4 Approval will only be granted if:

- (i) the intended destination is not listed as "Do not travel" by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT); and
- (ii) adequate supervisory arrangements are confirmed for the duration of the leave.

18.5 Scholarship recipients must remain enrolled and maintain regular contact with their supervisor throughout the period of overseas research leave.

18.6 University travel insurance may not apply in countries experiencing war, civil unrest, or other high-risk conditions as determined by the University or DFAT.

18.7 Undertaking unapproved overseas travel may result in the suspension or termination of all scholarship entitlements.

19. Employment

19.1 Scholarship holders are not required to undertake employment during the scholarship tenure.

19.2 They may engage in up to eight hours of paid work per week between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday. The total number of hours worked over a 6-month period (January to June or July to December) should not exceed 208 hours.

19.3 Outside the times specified in clause 19.2, candidates may undertake employment at their discretion.

20. Termination

- 20.1 The University may terminate a stipend scholarship if the candidate:
- (i) does not abide by these Conditions;
 - (ii) dies or is otherwise incapable of undertaking candidature;
 - (iii) is found to have committed serious misconduct, including providing false or misleading information;
 - (iv) is considered by the School and GRS to be performing unsatisfactorily, with no viable alternative arrangements;
 - (v) breaches the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research or relevant University policies;
 - (vi) is not enrolled and actively working on their research project (refer 4.3); or,
 - (vii) fails to resume study or arrange an extension following an approved suspension.
- 20.2 A terminated scholarship cannot be reinstated unless the termination is determined to have occurred in error.

21. Acknowledgement

- 21.1 Scholarship recipients must acknowledge all forms of support received, including financial assistance, in their thesis and any publications or materials that are the product of research undertaken during candidature, in accordance with University guidelines.
- 21.2 The acknowledgement should include a statement that the research was conducted while the author was in receipt of a *[insert stipend scholarship name]* at The University of Western Australia.

22. Provision of false or misleading information

- 22.1 If the University becomes aware that an applicant or candidate has provided false or misleading information in relation to their scholarship, it may immediately reassess the candidate's entitlements and/or terminate the scholarship.

23. Complaints and appeals

- 23.1 Complaints should follow the process outlined in the University Policy on Public Complaints. Where possible, the complainant should attempt to resolve any concerns regarding the application outcome directly with the GRS (email: scholarship-grs@uwa.edu.au).
- 23.2 If unresolved, complaints may be escalated to the University's Integrity and Standards Unit. If still dissatisfied, the matter may be referred to the Ombudsman Western Australia.

24. Changes to conditions

- 24.1 Scholarship conditions are determined by the Australian Government and the University and may be amended from time to time.
- 24.2 Any changes will be published and communicated to recipients.

25. Advice

- 25.1 The University recommends that scholarship recipients seek independent taxation and legal advice regarding stipend scholarships, intellectual property, and any contractual obligations required by the University or external funding bodies.

26. Definitions

For the purposes of these conditions:

Allowance	A single payment awarded to cover allowable expenses.
Approved	Endorsed by the Board responsible for the candidate's course.
Board / BGRS	The Board of the Graduate Research School, including any delegated officers, committees, or bodies.
Candidate	A candidate enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research.
Domestic	An Australian citizen, an Australian permanent resident (holders of all categories of permanent residency visas, including humanitarian visas), or New Zealand citizen enrolled or seeking enrolment in an HDR course.
External Enrolment	HDR status permitting study from a location other than a designated UWA campus, subject to formal approval.
Full-time Candidate	A candidate engaged in research for at least 30 hours per week, typically available on campus from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.
Graduate Research Coordinators	Academics authorized to act on behalf of the Head of School in HDR matters.
HDR Course	A course where at least two-thirds of the study load is research, as defined in the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017. An accredited Higher Degree by Research program leading to a Research Doctorate or Research Masters.
Head of School	The appointed or acting head of a school.
Part-time Candidate	A candidate undertaking at least 15 hours of research per week, potentially more if also enrolled in coursework.
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy.
Remote Intrastate Locations	Areas within Western Australia isolated from major population and service centres.
Research Doctorate	AQF Level 10 Doctoral Degree (Research), as defined by TEQSA.
Research Masters	AQF Level 9 Master's Degree (Research), as defined by TEQSA.
RTP	Research Training Program, Australian Government funding for HDR candidates under the Higher Education Support Act 2003.
Stipend Scholarship	A fixed, regular payment with defined start and end dates.
Suspension	An approved period during which a candidate temporarily ceases enrolment and scholarship receipt.
The University / UWA	The University of Western Australia.
Working Days	Monday to Friday, inclusive.