International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS)
2015 Conditions of Award

1. INTRODUCTION

The IPRS was established by the Commonwealth government to maintain and develop international research linkages and specifically aims to:

a) attract top quality international postgraduate students to areas of research strength in the Australian higher education sector; and

b) support Australia’s research effort.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Academic requirements

To be eligible for an IPRS, an applicant must meet all of the following requirements:

(a) have completed at least four years of tertiary education study at a high level of achievement with a research component. For example, a:
   - four-year degree with honours;
   - three-year degree and an honours year;
   - three-year degree and one year of a masters preliminary or other qualifying programme; or
   - three-year degree and a postgraduate program with a research component;

(b) have obtained first class honours or equivalent results. In regards to equivalence the University may also consider previous study, relevant work experience, research publications, referee reports and other research experience;

(c) be accepted into a higher degree by research at the University for the first time with no previous enrolment;

(d) have their enrolment in the proposed higher degree programme accepted by the University before being ranked for an offer of an IPRS;

(e) be enrolled as a full-time student upon commencement of their award;

(f) be undertaking study in a subject area identified by the institution as one of its areas of research concentration;

(g) not hold a research qualification regarded by the University to be equivalent to an Australian research doctorate or, if undertaking master-by-research, not hold a research qualification regarded by the University to be equivalent or higher than an Australian master-by-research;

(h) not have held an AusAID scholarship within the two years prior to commencing the IPRS; and

(i) not be receiving a scholarship for which course tuition is a component under any other scholarship scheme to which the Australian Government makes a substantial contribution.
2.2 Citizenship and Visa Requirements
(a) Be considered an International student for the length of candidature, as defined by the Higher Education Support Act (2003).
(b) Meet International student visa requirements as specified by DIAC, including maintaining a standard Overseas Student Health Cover policy as approved by the Commonwealth government.
(c) International students holding a student visa must comply with the conditions of their visa.

2.3 Selection Process
The University is required to select eligible applications on the basis of academic merit and through a competitive selection process. Applications will be referred to the Research Training Standing Committee (RTSC) for assessment and applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application at the conclusion of the ranking process.

When considering first class honours equivalence (2.1(b) above), the University may:
(a) select applicants presenting other qualifications and/or highly relevant work experience as equating to first class honours, provided the IPRS guidelines are followed and justification for the rating is provided;
(b) assess other qualifications as equating to a first class honours degree, including advanced postgraduate diplomas and master-by- coursework degrees with at least a 25% research component; and
(c) take into account research publications and research performance.

2.4 Offer of an Award
When the University offers an award to a successful applicant, it will provide the conditions of award to the candidate along with the offer letter.

2.5 Off Campus Study
IPRS Scholarship holders are not precluded from undertaking a component of their course of study outside Australia; however, any proposed absence from the University must receive prior approval in line with student visa requirements.

3. TENURE
3.1 An IPRS is for three years at doctoral level and two years at master-by-research level.

The duration of an IPRS will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:
(a) towards the course of study prior to the commencement of the IPRS; and
(b) in case of suspension during the IPRS.

3.2 Extension of an IPRS
3.2.1 A doctoral candidate may apply for a maximum extension of up to six months subject to satisfactory progress, provided the grounds for extension are related to study and are beyond the control of the candidate.

3.2.2 No extensions are possible for master-by-research candidates.
3.3 Suspension of an IPRS
A candidate may apply to ACU for a suspension of their IPRS. The approval of suspension will be at the discretion of the University.

3.4 Conversion of Degree
3.4.1 Students may convert from a master-by-research degree to a doctoral degree or from a doctoral degree to a master-by-research degree and continue to receive their IPRS.
3.4.2 The maximum duration of a converted IPRS becomes that for the new research degree minus periods of study undertaken toward the related degree prior to the conversion.

4. STIPENDS AND ALLOWANCES
4.1 The value of an IPRS is equal to the estimated course cost as determined by the institution in accordance with regulations set by the Commonwealth government and the cost of a standard Overseas Student Health Cover policy as approved by the Commonwealth government, which covers the student and their spouse and dependants (if any) for the period of the IPRS.

4.2 Thesis Allowance
4.2.1 An allowance, to be determined by the University, will be paid upon presentation of original receipts to Graduate Research.
4.2.2 The thesis allowance must be claimed within one year of the submission of the thesis for an examination.
4.2.3 The amount paid will be up to the maximum rate applicable at the time of submission of the thesis.
4.2.4 The allowance is a contribution to the costs of production of the thesis (i.e. typing support, photocopying, and binding) and does not include costs such as purchase of computer equipment.
4.2.5 The thesis allowance is payable for costs associated with submission of a thesis, or the lodgement of bound copies of the thesis following approval, provided that the claim is made within one year of the resubmission date or lodgement date. The combined total of allowances for submission and final submission must not exceed the approved maximum amount.
4.2.6 In exceptional circumstances, students may apply for a waiver of the relevant time limit on claiming the thesis allowance with any decision remaining at the discretion of the University. Any waiver of the time limit must be approved by the RTSC, subject to it being satisfied that the exceptional circumstances were beyond the candidate's control and warrant an extension of the period in which a thesis allowance may be claimed.

5. TRANSFER OF AN IPRS TO ANOTHER INSTITUTION
5.1 If a student in receipt of an IPRS transfers to another institution, the scholarship may be transferred with the student in exceptional circumstances only.
5.2 The student may continue to receive an IPRS only if the former institution supports the student’s transfer and the new institution agrees to continue the IPRS.

5.3 The new institution must ensure that it receives information from the former institution on any IPRS duration consumed by the student.

5.4 Change of institution does not constitute sufficient grounds for a subsequent extension of the IPRS.

6. LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS

Leave arrangements for international students will be subject to the conditions of student visas as outlined by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. In general a student will be entitled to:

6.1 Recreation Leave
6.1.1 IPRS holders will receive up to 20 days paid recreation leave each year of the award calculated on a pro-rata basis within the period of the award.

6.1.2 Recreation leave may be accrued but must be taken during the tenure of the award. Payment in lieu of taking annual recreation leave is not permitted.

6.1.3 IPRS holders will forfeit any unused leave remaining when an award is terminated or completed.

6.2 Sick Leave
6.2.1 IPRS holders may receive up to 10 days sick leave each year of the award and this may be accrued over the tenure of the award.

Research Candidates who experience periods of extended illness, i.e. greater than two weeks, may suspend their award and candidature. Any suspension and absence will be reported by the University and may result in the termination of a student visa. Candidates should seek advice from the ACU International Office.

6.3 Maternity Leave
6.3.1 Once APA holders have completed 12 months of their award, they are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks paid maternity leave during the tenure of the award.

6.3.2 Periods of paid maternity leave are in addition to the normal duration of the APA.

6.3.3 APA holders who have not completed 12 months of their award may access unpaid maternity leave through the suspension provisions.

6.4 Parenting Leave
6.4.1 APA holders, who are partners of women giving birth and who have completed 12 months of their award, may be entitled to a period of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth, subject to the usual practice of the institution in relation to students on similar awards.

6.4.2 Periods of paid parenting leave are in addition to the normal duration of the APA.
6.4.3 APA holders who have not completed 12 months of their award may access unpaid parenting leave through the suspension provisions.

7. ACADEMIC PROGRESS

IPRS holders must submit regular progress reports as and when required by the institution. The University is required to terminate the awards of candidates who fail to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

8. EMPLOYMENT: PART-TIME WORK

8.1 IPRS holders are permitted to:
(a) obtain funds for fieldwork, equipment or other expenses not covered by the award;
(b) obtain funding for overseas travel costs from other Commonwealth government awards or any other source; and
(c) receive income derived from part-time work undertaken within the guidelines set by the University. (See Section 8.2 below.)

8.2 IPRS holders may undertake a strictly limited amount of part-time work subject to conditions determined by the University and consistent with the conditions of the student visa. Part-time work shall not exceed an average of eight hours in a working week, which is defined as the period between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

8.3 Such part-time employment must not interfere with an IPRS holder’s research programme or academic progress.

8.4 Holders of a part-time award are subject to the same restriction on employment as full-time award holders.

9. POSTGRADUATE STUDENT OBLIGATIONS

9.1 All postgraduate students are obliged to be familiar with and abide by relevant State and Commonwealth Privacy Legislation. Section 14 of the Commonwealth Privacy Act 1998 contains the Information Privacy Principles.

9.2 All postgraduate students are also obliged to be familiar with and abide by:
(a) the University Regulations governing their candidature;
(b) the University’s Code of Conduct of Research;
(c) the University’s Intellectual Property Policy;
(d) the National Health and Medical Research Council codes on human and animal experimentation;
(e) the Australian Government’s Recombinant DNA Monitoring Committee guidelines for research; and
(f) Commonwealth and State regulations and guidelines governing research involving ionizing radiation, and access to and handling of hazardous or restricted substances.
Newly enrolling candidates must apply for the relevant ethics/safety approval as soon as they have developed their research proposal (including: research design, methodology and research instrument).

Currently enrolled candidates accepting an IPRS must provide a copy of the approval from the Research Projects Ethics Committee and a copy of the annual renewal if the approval was granted more than 12 months previously.

9.3 Candidates should also be fully aware of their obligations regarding contact with their supervisors, and the need to submit written material and academic progress reports as and when required. They shall also be diligent in pursuing their research and in completing their candidature as soon as possible.

10. TERMINATION OF AN AWARD

An institution must terminate an IPRS:

(a) if the student ceases to meet eligibility criteria, other than during a period in which the IPRS has been suspended;

(b) once the maximum duration of the IPRS has been reached;

(c) on completion of the course of study;

(d) if the institution determines that:

- the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence; or
- the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress; or
- the student has committed serious misconduct including, but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information.

11. APPEAL PROCEDURES

11.1 Students may appeal to the RTSC for the resolution of any disputes that may arise concerning the award.

11.2 Appeals will only be heard on claims of procedural deficiencies in the assessment process and in accordance with the appeals process outlined in the Research and Professional Degree Regulations.