

**AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM STIPEND SCHOLARSHIP 2017  
CONDITIONS OF AWARD**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The Australian Catholic University, henceforth 'ACU' or 'the University', operates a postgraduate award scheme to support persons of exceptional research promise to undertake a higher degree by research.
- 1.2. The Research Training Program Stipend Scholarship, henceforth 'the Award', is subject to the conditions outlined in this document.
- 1.3. The Award is administered by Graduate Research.

**2. ELIGIBILITY**

**2.1. Academic Requirements**

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

- i. have completed at least four years of tertiary education study at a high level of achievement. For example, a:
    - a. four-year undergraduate degree;
    - b. three-year undergraduate degree and an honours year;
    - c. three-year undergraduate degree and one year of a higher degree;
    - d. three-year undergraduate degree and one year of a master preliminary or other qualifying programme; or
    - e. three-year undergraduate degree and a postgraduate diploma;
  - ii. have obtained first class honours or equivalent results—refer section 2.4 below;
  - iii. be undertaking a higher degree at ACU; and
  - iv. be enrolled as a full-time research candidate upon commencement of his or her Award or, in exceptional circumstances, be granted approval by the University for a part-time Award—refer section 2.6 below.
- 2.2. An applicant is **ineligible** for the Award if he or she is currently receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the research higher degree, providing a benefit greater than 75% of the base stipend rate.

**2.3. Citizenship Requirements**

To be eligible for the Award, an applicant must be an Australian Citizen, a New Zealand citizen or an Australian Permanent Resident at the closing date of applications.

**2.4. Selection Process**

ACU will select eligible applications on the basis of academic merit and may take into account particular areas of research strength and the capability of the University to provide high-quality support when ranking individual applicants.

When considering first class honours equivalence (2.1ii. above), the University may:

- 2.4.1. select applicants presenting other qualifications and/or highly relevant work experience as equating to first class honours, provided justification for the rating is provided;

- 2.4.2. assess other qualifications as equating to a first class honours degree, including advanced postgraduate diplomas, master-by-coursework and research degrees, and some master qualifying programmes;
- 2.4.3. take note of the strength of referee reports;
- 2.4.4. take into account research publications and their academic standing; and
- 2.4.5. in exceptional circumstances, consider a second class honours (2A), plus quality publications and/or relevant work experience, to be equivalent to first class honours, provided this is verified and approved by the ranking committee.

There are no age restrictions relating to the Award.

### 2.5. Offer of an Award

When ACU offers an Award to a successful applicant, it will advise the potential Award holder of the conditions and benefits to which he or she is entitled, and the rules and responsibilities that come with the Award.

### 2.6. Eligibility for Part-Time Awards

ACU may approve a part-time Award for a candidate in exceptional circumstances. The University must be satisfied that the exceptional circumstances relate to significant caring commitments, or a medical condition or disability which limits the research candidate's capacity to undertake full-time study. Part-time Awards are not available to applicants seeking to undertake paid employment on a full-time or on a substantial part-time basis, nor are they available to international research candidates.

Note: Substantial part-time work is regarded as being more than ACU would permit its full-time Award holders to undertake without interfering with their study programme. This is normally eight hours in a working week, which is defined as the period between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

## 3. TENURE

### 3.1. Full-Time Awards

- 3.1.1. The Award will normally be held full-time for three years for research doctoral degree studies.
- 3.1.2. Periods of study already undertaken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the Award or undertaken during suspension of the Award, or undertaken during the tenure of a previous Australian postgraduate award, will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.

### 3.2. Part-Time Awards

- 3.2.1. The tenure for part-time Awards is six years for research doctoral degree studies.
- 3.2.2. A part-time award holder is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time Award holder and extensions are possible for part-time doctoral candidates.
- 3.2.3. Award holders approved to study part-time may revert to full-time study at any time with the permission of the University.
- 3.2.4. Stipends for part-time Awards are not tax exempt. The part-time rate is adjusted for taxation so that part-time Award holders receive half the amount paid to full-time Award holders.

### 3.3. Extension of an Award

- 3.3.1. A doctoral candidate may apply for a maximum extension of up to six months subject to satisfactory academic progress, provided the grounds for extension are related to study and are beyond the control of the candidate. Work commitments will not be accepted as grounds for an extension of the duration of the Award.

### 3.4. Suspension of the Award

- 3.4.1. The Award holder may apply to the University for a suspension of the Award for up to 12 months. The approval of suspensions is at the discretion of the University.
- 3.4.2. In exceptional cases, candidates may apply for suspensions beyond 12 months, although ACU may set limits on any suspensions beyond 12 months. Any suspensions beyond 12 months must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, subject to him or her being satisfied that the exceptional circumstances are beyond the research candidate's control and warrant a further suspension of the Award.
- 3.4.3. Periods of study undertaken towards the degree during suspension of the Award must be deducted from the maximum period of its tenure.

### 3.5. Eligibility for Concurrent Awards, Scholarships or Salaries

The Award holder may receive a concurrent award, scholarship or salary to undertake his or her research higher degree if:

- 3.5.1. the concurrent award, scholarship or salary provides a benefit of less than 75% of the base rate of the Award; or
- 3.5.2. the Award is suspended for the period of the concurrent award, scholarship or salary and the period of study undertaken towards the research higher degree during suspension of the Award is deducted from the maximum period of its tenure.

Income earned from sources unrelated to the course of study is not subject to the 75% rule.

## 4. ANNUAL STIPEND AND THESIS ALLOWANCE

### 4.1. Annual Stipends and Outside Work

4.1.1. The Award holder is 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 Australian Government awards or any other source; and
- c. receive income derived from part-time work undertaken within the guidelines set by the University.

### 4.2. Annual Stipend

In 2017, the Award carries a pro-rata stipend at the rate of \$31,682 per annum (tax exempt) for full-time doctoral Awardees. The Award will not be reduced during its tenure.

Where a research candidate is not enrolled over the full period of the year, because of a late commencement or periods of suspension, ACU will provide the proportion of the annual stipend for the period in which study is undertaken for that year.

#### 4.3. Thesis Allowance

- 4.3.1. An allowance, to be determined by the University at the start of each year, will be paid upon presentation of original receipts to Graduate Research.
- 4.3.2. The thesis allowance must be claimed within three months of the submission of the thesis.
- 4.3.3. The amount paid will be up to the maximum rate applicable at the time of submission of the thesis.
- 4.3.4. The allowance is a contribution to the costs of production of the thesis (i.e. photocopying/printing and binding) and does not include costs such as purchase of computer equipment.
- 4.3.5. The thesis allowance is payable for costs associated with resubmission of a thesis, provided that the claim is made within three months of the resubmission date. The combined total of allowances for submission and resubmission must not exceed the allowance set at 4.3.1 above.

### 5. LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS

#### 5.1. Recreation Leave

- 5.1.1. The Award holder will receive up to 20 working days' paid recreation leave each year of the Award calculated on a pro-rata basis within the period of the Award.
- 5.1.2. 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.
- 5.1.3. The Award holder will forfeit any unused recreation leave when an Award is terminated or completed.

#### 5.2. Sick Leave

- 5.2.1. The Award holder may receive up to 10 working days' sick leave each year of the Award and this may be accrued over the tenure of the Award.
- 5.2.2. The Award holder may also receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of 12 weeks during his or her Award for medically substantiated periods of illness lasting longer than 10 working days. Where a holder of the Award takes a period of additional sick leave, the tenure of the Award will be extended by that period.
- 5.2.3. Sick leave entitlements may also be extended to cover the Award holder with family responsibilities caring for sick children or relatives, subject to the usual practice of the University.

#### 5.3. Maternity Leave

- 5.3.1. Once the Award holder has completed 12 months of his or her Award, he or she is entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks paid maternity leave during the tenure of the Award.
- 5.3.2. Periods of paid maternity leave are in addition to the normal duration of the Award.
- 5.3.3. An Award holder who has not completed 12 months of his or her Award may access unpaid maternity leave through the suspension provisions.

#### 5.4. Parenting Leave

- 5.4.1. An Award holder, who is the partner of a woman giving birth and who has completed 12 months of his or her Award, may be entitled to a period of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth, subject to the usual practice of the University.
- 5.4.2. Periods of paid parenting leave are in addition to the normal duration of the Award.
- 5.4.3. An Award holder who has not completed 12 months of his or her Award may access unpaid parenting leave through the suspension provisions.

### 6. TRANSFER OF AN AWARD BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS

The Award cannot be transferred to another institution.

### 7. EMPLOYMENT: PART-TIME WORK

- 7.1. The Award holder may undertake a strictly limited amount of part-time work subject to conditions determined by the University. Part-time work will not normally exceed eight hours in a working week, which is defined as the period between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.
- 7.2. Such part-time employment must not interfere with the Award holder's research programme or academic progress.
- 7.3. Holders of a part-time Award are subject to the same restriction on employment as full-time Award holders.

### 8. RESEARCH CANDIDATE OBLIGATIONS

8.1. A research candidate is 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*.

8.2. A research candidate is also obliged to be familiar with and abide by:

- a. the University Regulations governing his or her candidature;
- b. Faculty expectations and codes/policies;
- c. the University's Code of Conduct for Research;
- d. the University's Intellectual Property Policy;
- e. the National Health and Medical Research Council codes on human and animal experimentation;
- f. the Commonwealth Government's Recombinant DNA Monitoring Committee guidelines for research; and
- g. Commonwealth and State regulations and guidelines governing research involving ionizing radiation, and access to and handling of hazardous or restricted substances.

A newly enrolling research candidate must apply for the relevant ethics/safety approval as soon as he or she has been confirmed as an ACU candidate.

A currently enrolled research candidate accepting an Award must provide a copy of the approval from the relevant Ethics Committee and a copy of the annual renewal if the approval was granted more than 12 months previously.

8.3. A research candidate should also be fully aware of his or her obligations regarding contact with supervisors, and the need to submit written material and academic progress reports as and when

required. A research candidate shall also be diligent in pursuing his or her research and in completing his or her candidature as soon as possible.

## **9. TERMINATION OF AWARD**

9.1. ACU will terminate the Award:

- a. if, in the opinion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of the Award;
- b. if, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research determines that a research candidate is guilty of serious academic misconduct;
- c. when the candidate ceases to be a full-time candidate and when approval has not been obtained to hold the Award on a part-time basis;
- d. on completion of the course, or the death, incapacity, resignation or withdrawal of the candidate;
- e. the Award holder does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension, or does not make arrangements to extend that period of suspension;
- f. if the Award holder fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress;
- g. if the Award holder accepts another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake his or her research higher degree providing a greater than 75% of the base stipend rate; and/or
- h. if the Award holder is found to have provided false or misleading information in his or her application for the Award.

9.2. If the Award is terminated, it cannot be reactivated unless the termination occurred in error.

## **10. APPEAL PROCEDURES**

10.1 A research candidate may appeal to the Manager, Graduate Research for the resolution of any disputes that may arise concerning the Award.

10.2 Appeals will only be heard on claims of procedural deficiencies.