

**IMPORTANT: Please ensure you retain this copy of the conditions of award and continue to refer to them throughout your candidature.**

## **Conditions of Award 2024**

### **Research Training Program Scholarship (RTP Stipend)**

The Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship (RTP Stipend) is funded by the [Commonwealth Government Department of Education and Training](#). RTP Stipend is awarded to students of exceptional research potential undertaking a Higher Degree Research (HDR) in Australia to assist with students' general living costs.

The duration of a full-time RTP stipend is three years and six months for a doctoral candidate and two years for a Master by Research candidate. The University has the expectation that, with an appropriately scoped project and consistent effort, the Stipend recipients will complete their work and submit theses for examination within this time frame. In accepting the Stipend, the recipient undertakes work towards this goal. The University may approve a part-time RTP Stipend in accordance with section 9 of these conditions.

#### **1. ELIGIBILITY**

1.1. To be eligible for an RTP Stipend, a student must:

- (a) be enrolled in an accredited HDR course of study at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS); and
- (b) meet the admissions criteria for research doctorate degrees or Master by Research studies as outlined in [UTS Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#); and
- (c) not be receiving an equivalent award, stipend or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the RTP Scholarship stipend rate to undertake the HDR course of study. Income earned from sources unrelated to the HDR course of study is not subject to the 75% rule.

#### **2. SELECTION POLICY**

2.1. The RTP Stipend is awarded based on a competitive process using the scoring system determining:

- (a) the academic merit of the applicant; and
- (b) research potential and relevant experience of the applicant; and
- (c) publications record of the applicant; and
- (d) relevance of the proposed research to the University's research strengths.

#### **3. ACCEPTANCE**

- 3.1. Scholarship recipients should indicate the acceptance of their RTP Stipend by the prescribed deadline in their offer letters. The RTP Stipend Offer will lapse if the scholarship recipient does not accept by the prescribed date and the stipend will be withdrawn.

#### **4. COMMENCEMENT**

- 4.1. Newly commencing students must enrol and commence their HDR course of study during the official enrolment period for the session in which the stipend offer is made. The University may grant delayed commencement of the stipend award to the following session of the same year where, due to exceptional circumstances, an awardee is not able to commence by the offered session.
- 4.2. Currently enrolled students may only commence their stipend award from the first day of the session of the RTP Stipend offer letter, but not before the first day.
- 4.3. The RTP Stipend award cannot be deferred to a later year.

#### **5. DURATION**

- 5.1 The duration of a full-time RTP Stipend is for three (3) years and six (6) months for doctoral studies and two (2) years for Master by Research studies. The duration of a part-time award is seven (7) years for doctoral studies and four (4) years for Master by Research studies (see section 9). The first date of enrolment is usually the commencement date for the scholarship, except where the student is already enrolled at the time of award.
- 5.2 RTP Stipend duration will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken towards the degree prior to commencement of the RTP Stipend at UTS.
- 5.3 The duration of an RTP Stipend will be increased by any periods of paid leave approved by the University (see section 7).
- 5.4 If a part-time RTP Stipend is converted to a full-time RTP Stipend, at the point of conversion the period of the time that the student was in receipt of the part-time RTP Stipend immediately prior to the conversion will be halved to determine the duration of the RTP Stipend remaining as a full-time award immediately after conversion.
- 5.5 If a full-time RTP Stipend is converted to a part-time RTP Stipend, at the point of conversion the period of the time that the student was in receipt of the full-time RTP Stipend immediately prior to the conversion will be doubled to determine the duration of the RTP Stipend remaining as a part-time award immediately after conversion.
- 5.6 No extensions are possible.

#### **6. RTP STIPEND VALUE AND ALLOWANCES**

- 6.1. The annual stipends are:
  - (a) \$37,000 (currently tax-free) for full-time study mode; and

(b) \$18,500 (currently taxable) for part-time study mode.

The annual stipend rates will match [base RTP stipend rate](#) after its full-time base rate exceeds \$37,000 pa and will be indexed thereafter.

- 6.2. Payments are made in equal fortnightly instalments directly to a nominated account in the RTP Stipend recipient's name with an active Australian Authorised Deposit-taking Institution through the University's payment system. Part-time stipends may be adjusted to withhold tax.
- 6.3. Under Section 23(z) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936 (as amended), full-time RTP Stipends are presently exempt from taxation. It is the responsibility of the RTP Stipend recipient to assess the tax liability of their RTP Stipend. The University cannot provide advice regarding taxation. Please refer to the Australian Tax Office Website for further information: <http://www.ato.gov.au>.

#### 6.4. Relocation Allowance

- 6.4.1. The University may pay a RTP Stipend recipient a relocation allowance for the cost of relocating to Sydney only from a permanent residence from within Australia to take up the RTP Stipend at the University.
- 6.4.2. This covers travel & removal expenses for themselves, their spouse and dependants up to the maximum rate applicable in addition to the annual stipend. The relocation allowance limits are:
- (a) up to \$505 per eligible adult; and
  - (b) up to \$255 per eligible child; and
  - (c) up to a maximum total value of \$1,520
- 6.4.3. Where travel is by air, an eligible student will be reimbursed for travel cost equivalent to the cheapest economy or student airfare for a one-way trip from within Australia to Sydney, as calculated on the date of their relocation allowance claim form (excludes domestic flights as a transiting leg of a journey from overseas). Proof of purchase and boarding passes must be provided.
- 6.4.4. Where travel is by car, an eligible student will be reimbursed for travel cost of a "per kilometre" allowance for one direct trip, as per the University's motor vehicle kilometre reimbursement claim procedure (excludes travel from the Sydney airport by taxi, ride share companies and hire cars). The total travel cost must not exceed the cheapest equivalent airfare (excluding accommodation and meal cost). Fuel receipts may be used as evidence of travel.
- 6.4.5. Removal expenses are only for moving personal items to Sydney. Original tax receipts with the supplier's ABN and receipts must be provided.
- 6.4.6. A completed Stipend allowance form must be submitted to Graduate Research School detailing the expenses with the relevant original tax invoice and receipts attached, and evidence of travel. Claims must be made within six (6) months of commencement of the RTP Stipend.

6.4.7. Relocation allowances are not payable for travel undertaken after completion of studies, or termination of RTP Stipend.

## 6.5. Thesis Allowance

6.5.1. The University may pay a thesis allowance up to the maximum rate applicable at the time of submission of the thesis in addition to the annual stipend subject to the RTP Stipend recipient satisfying the below conditions. The allowance is a contribution to the cost of production of the thesis (e.g. editing, proofreading costs) and does not include costs such as the purchase of computer equipment or postage. The thesis allowances limit are:

- (a) up to \$420 for a master by research thesis; and
- (b) up to \$840 for a doctoral thesis.

6.5.2. The allowance must be claimed within one year of re/submission date of the thesis, or lodgement date and within two years of termination of the RTP Stipend. The combined total of allowances for submission and re-submission cannot exceed the approved maximum rate applicable at the time of submission of the thesis.

6.5.3. The application form for the thesis allowance is available from the UTS webpage. Original tax receipts with the supplier's ABN associated with the submission and re-submission of a thesis or the lodgement of the bound copies must be attached.

## 7. SCHOLARSHIP LEAVE

### 7.1. Annual Leave and Sick Leave

Students are entitled to receive up to **20** working days (4 weeks) paid annual leave and **10** working days paid sick leave for each year of the RTP Stipend. These leave entitlements may be accrued over the life of the RTP Stipend but will be forfeited when the RTP Stipend is terminated. Leave periods for these purposes are not added to the duration of the RTP Stipend as students continue to be paid during the period of leave.

Periods of annual leave and sick leave (of 10 days or less) will not result in a suspension of enrolment and therefore will be included for the purpose of calculating candidature and RTPS Scholarship end dates.

### 7.2. Leave of Absence

During [Leave of Absence](#), the scholarship payments will be stopped for the equivalent number of calendar days to the period of leave. At the time that the Leave of Absence is approved, RTPS payments will be stopped for the full period of leave and the scholarship end date will be extended by the same number of days as the approved period of leave. Scholarship recipients will be advised, via email, of the date when the scholarship will be stopped and when it will be restarted.

### 7.3. Paid Leave of Absence

In the case of approved Paid Leave of Absence, the scholarship payments will be stopped during the Leave of Absence for part of the leave that is not paid.

If the Leave of Absence is paid, RTPS payments will continue during the period of leave (or for part of the leave period) and the scholarship end date will be extended by the same number of days as the approved period of leave.

Paid Leave of Absence can only be sought in the following circumstances:

#### 7.3.1. Sick Leave

RTP Stipend recipients are entitled to receive **additional paid sick leave** of up to a total of twelve (12) weeks during the duration of the RTP Stipend for periods of illness, where a leave of absence request must be accompanied with medical certificates; if a medical certificate is not available a statutory declaration is required.

Medical certificates are not limited to a specified list of medical professionals, and can therefore be provided by a range of health professionals such as registered physiotherapists, doctors, maternal and child health care nurses and occupational therapists. It is allowable for individual higher education providers to determine what is acceptable for required documentation of medical certificates.

Additional sick leave entitlements may also be used to cover family leave or family caring responsibilities after exhausting their recreation and sick leave entitlements.

#### 7.3.2. Maternity and Parenting Leave

RTP Stipend recipients who have completed twelve (12) months of their RTP Stipend are entitled to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks of paid **maternity leave** during the duration of the RTP Stipend. This period of leave is added to the duration of the RTP Stipend. Unpaid maternity leave may be accessed through the scholarship leave provision.

RTP Stipend recipients who are partners of women giving birth within the duration of their RTP Stipend award, and who have completed twelve (12) months of their RTP Stipend are entitled to four (4) weeks of paid **parenting leave**, which may be taken at any time in the three-month period following the birth of a child or adoption date. This period of leave is added to the duration of the RTP Stipend. Unpaid parenting leave may be accessed through the scholarship leave provision.

Periods of leave do not attract leave loading. Stipend leave application forms for additional paid sick leave, maternity and parenting leave are accessible from the UTS webpage. Completed forms must be submitted to the Graduate Research School along with relevant certified supporting documents.

## 8. ONGOING ELIGIBILITY

8.1. The University monitors RTP Stipend recipient's ongoing eligibility and progress to ensure that each student continues to meet the eligibility requirements set out in section 1 and maintain satisfactory progress. Except in special circumstances as determined by the Higher Degree by Research Board, throughout the term of the RTP Stipend a student shall:

- (a) diligently pursue a course of study in the University as a candidate for the degree enrolled in; and
- (b) maintain satisfactory progress of candidature as evidenced in the annual Review of Progress and Candidature Assessment in with the guidelines approved by the Higher Degree Research Board from time to time as per [UTS Student Rules 11.13](#); and
- (c) comply with the [UTS Student Rules Section 11](#) and regulations of the University concerning postgraduate students.

## **9. RTP STIPENDS FOR PART-TIME STUDY**

- 9.1. The University may approve a part-time RTP Stipend if:
  - (a) the student is a domestic student; and
  - (b) the student has reasons acceptable to the University that preclude a full-time study for part or all of the course of study.
- 9.2. A RTP Stipend may not be held part-time for employment reasons.
- 9.3. For the purpose of 9.1, the University must be satisfied that the reasons relate to caring commitments, a medical condition, a disability or other circumstance which limits the student's capacity to undertake full-time study.
- 9.4. Application for the part-time RTP Stipend requires a written request to the Dean of the Graduate Research School with the support of the principal supervisor and the Responsible Academic Officer (RAO). A separate application form for part-time enrolment for the candidature is from the UTS webpage.
- 9.5. Students holding a RTP Stipend on a part-time basis are required to change to full-time if a change to their circumstances means that they no longer qualify to hold their RTP Stipend on a part-time basis.
- 9.6. The University will subject part-time RTP Stipend recipients to the same restrictions on employment as full-time RTP Stipend recipients.
- 9.7. A part-time RTP Stipend recipient is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time RTP Stipend recipient.
- 9.8. Part-time RTP Stipend recipients may revert to full-time study at any time with the permission of the Faculty. A separate application form for full-time enrolment for the candidature is from the UTS webpage.
- 9.9. Part-time RTP Stipend is taxable by the Australian Government. As the University does not provide advice regarding taxation matters, it is the responsibility of the individual student to seek their own independent professional advice prior to submitting their tax return.

## **10. CONVERSION OF DEGREES**

- 10.1. 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 RTP Stipend.
- 10.2. The maximum duration of a converted RTP Stipend becomes that for the new research degree minus periods of study undertaken towards the related degree prior to the conversion.

## 11. PAID EMPLOYMENT

- 11.1. Full-time RTP Stipend recipients are required to work on their research project and complete their thesis within the allocated period and are only permitted to undertake a limited amount of paid employment which must not interfere with their study and progress.
- 11.2. HDR students are expected to devote a minimum of 35 hours per week for full-time study and 17.5 hours per week for part time study. Students engaging in other activities such as paid employment must not compromise the average weekly amount of time they devote to their research project. RTP Stipend recipients must seek approval of the RAO in their Faculty or Institute prior to engaging in part-time work in excess of 8 hours per week.
- 11.3. The RAO's decision will take the principal supervisor/s' recommendation into consideration. Details of paid employment or other activities, which temporarily interfere with the capacity to devote the required minimum hours per week to the research project, must be recorded in the student's review of progress.

## 12. TRANSFER OF AWARDS BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS (RTP STIPEND ONLY)

- 12.1. Current RTP Stipend recipients who wish to transfer to another institution may continue to receive their RTP Stipend only if their new institution agrees to its continuation and is able to support the transferring student from its RTP Stipend grant amounts.
- 12.2. Current RTP Stipend recipients from another Australian university who wish to transfer their RTP Stipend to the University of Technology Sydney are required to apply in the annual RTP Stipend round of applications at this University. Their application will be considered and ranked with all other applications received in that round and in accordance with the University's selection policy specified in this document.
- 12.3. A transfer of the RTP Stipend will not in itself constitute grounds for an extension of the RTP Stipend duration.

## 13. TERMINATION OF AWARD

- 13.1. RTP Scholarships will be immediately terminated in the event of an unsatisfactory progress (as outlined in [UTS Student Rules 11.14](#)) and/or discontinuation of candidature following candidature assessment (as outlined in [UTS Student Rules 11.23 to 11.25](#)) or suspension due to student misconduct ([UTS Student Rules Section 16](#)).
- 13.2. The RTP Stipend will terminate:

- (a) if the student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in section 1 other than during a period in which the RTP Stipend has been suspended with approval or during a period of leave in accordance with section 7; or
- (b) when the RTP Stipend recipient ceases to be a full-time student and approval has not been obtained from the University to hold the RTP Stipend on a part-time basis; or
- (c) upon submission of the thesis for examination or when the RTP Stipend expires, whichever is the earlier; or
- (d) if the student submits a request to relinquish their stipend; or
- (e) if, after due enquiry, the University determines that:
  - i. University the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance to the offer of the RTP Stipend; or
  - ii. the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress; or
  - iii. the student has been discontinued; or
  - iv. the student has committed serious misconduct, including, but not limited to, the provision of false or misleading information as outlined in section 15.1.

13.3. If the RTP Stipend is terminated, it cannot be re-activated unless the termination occurred in error.

## 14. STIPEND OVERPAYMENT

14.1. A RTP Stipend recipient is required to repay any RTP Stipend overpayment within thirty calendar days of being requested to do so by the University. RTP Stipend overpayments are viewed as financial obligations by the University and failure to repay may result in sanctions being placed on your candidature as per [UTS Student Rules Section 4.4](#) of the Student and Related Rules at UTS.

## 15. OTHER INFORMATION

### 15.1. Provision of False or Misleading Information

If the University knows or has reason to believe that a student in receipt of a RTP Stipend has provided false or misleading information to the University in relation to that RTP Stipend, the University will immediately:

- (a) re-assess the student's entitlement to the RTP Stipend; and
- (b) take action in accordance with the Student Misconduct and Appeals rules ([UTS Student Rules Section 16](#)).

### 15.2. Insurance

15.2.1. Research students should be aware that the University only provides a minimal level of automatic insurance cover for personal accidents for enrolled students, and only whilst



the student is on campus. Where a student's research involves high-risk activities or the student research is located off-campus, he/she should contact the Faculty Research Office to request approval so that the activity is covered by insurance.

- 15.2.2. Research students conducting fieldwork or conference presentations interstate or overseas will have insurance cover only if the activity is approved UTS business. Please contact the Faculty Research Office for approval.

## **16. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

- 16.1. There is a legislative requirement that you acknowledge the support in any published materials related to your HDR. This relates to any time, both during and after completion of your HDR. Materials include items such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to your HDR project. The acknowledgement must include the mention of your support through an "Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship". We suggest that you use the statement "This research is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship".

## **17. NOTIFICATION OF COMMONWEALTH HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SUPPORT NUMBER (CHESSN)**

- 17.1. To be eligible for an RTP scholarship the University is required to issue you a CHESSN and report this number to the Department of Education and Training. If you already have a CHESSN from previous study, the number will remain the same. If not the University will seek a number on your behalf and will notify you of this number prior to the research census date found in the [UTS: Handbook](#).