

Swinburne Research

Conditions of Award
Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend
Scholarship



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SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY

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1 Introduction

This booklet is based on the [Higher Education Support \(Commonwealth Scholarships\) Guidelines 2025 - Federal Register of Legislation](#) and is intended as a short guide to entitlements and requirements for new Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarship students.

From time to time, changes are made to these Conditions of Award. In this event, a revised document will be made available to award holders, on the [RTP Stipend Scholarship page](#) of the Swinburne website.

This version of the Conditions of Award applies to RTP Stipend Scholarship offers issued from 1 January 2026.

2 Definitions

The terms used within the [Higher Education Support \(Commonwealth Scholarships\) Guidelines 2025 - Federal Register of Legislation](#) have the same meaning as in the [Higher Education Support Act 2003 - Federal Register of Legislation](#). The following terms are defined specifically for these Conditions of Award:

<i>The Act</i>	means the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i>
<i>AQF</i>	means the Australian Qualifications Framework
<i>Continuing Student</i>	means either: a student whose period of support under the Research Training Scheme, International Postgraduate Research Scholarships or Australian Postgraduate Awards would terminate on or after 1 January 2017 or a student who has received an offer of support by the University under the Research Training Scheme, International Postgraduate Research Scholarships or Australian Postgraduate Awards, and accepted this offer of support, and whose offer of support was scheduled to commence on or after 1 January 2017
<i>Course of study</i>	means an accredited HDR course leading to a Research Doctorate or a Research Masters
<i>Domestic Student</i>	means a student who is not an overseas student
<i>DOI</i>	means a unique digital label for a person, place or thing
<i>FOE</i>	means a Field of Education code specified in the <i>ASCED</i>
<i>Full-time student load</i>	means the student load undertaken by a student who is enrolled on a full-time basis in the University
<i>HDR</i>	means a Higher Degree by Research that is a Research Doctorate or a Research Masters course of study for which at least two-thirds of the student load for the course is required as research work
<i>HEP</i>	means a higher education provider as specified in section 16-15 of <i>the Act</i>
<i>ORCID</i>	means an Open Researcher and Contributor ID, which is a persistent identifier issued by the non-profit organisation named ORCID, for a person who conducts or contributes to research
<i>Overseas student</i>	means a person who is not an Australian citizen and is enrolled or proposes to become enrolled in a HDR course of study at Swinburne but does not include: a person entitled to stay in Australia, or to enter and stay in Australia, without any limitation as to time; or a New Zealand citizen; or a diplomatic or consular representative of New Zealand, a member of the staff of such a representative or the spouse, de facto partner (within the meaning of the Acts Interpretation Act 1901) or dependent relative of such a representative
<i>Part-time student load</i>	means the student load undertaken by a student who is enrolled on a part-time basis at the University
<i>Research Doctorate</i>	means a Level 10 Doctoral Degree (Research) or Doctoral Degree (Professional) qualification as described in the AQF

<i>Research Masters</i>	means a Level 9 Masters Degree (Research) qualification as described in the AQF
<i>RTP</i>	means the Research Training Program
<i>RTP Allowance</i>	means an RTP Scholarship that is awarded to a HDR student to assist with ancillary costs incurred by an HDR student in undertaking an HDR
<i>RTP Fees Offset</i>	means the RTP Scholarship that is equivalent to a HDR student's total fee liability for the relevant HDR course, and awarded to the student to extinguish the student's liability to pay course fees.
<i>RTP Scholarship</i>	means support that is awarded to a student by the University for the purposes of the RTP
<i>RTP Scholarship Suspension</i>	means a period of time during which a scholarship holder is not receiving RTP Scholarship support, which has been approved in accordance with the University's RTP Scholarship Policy.
<i>RTP Stipend</i>	means an RTP Scholarship that is awarded to a HDR student to assist the student with general living costs
<i>University</i>	means Swinburne University of Technology
<i>Working Days</i>	means Monday to Friday inclusive and including public holidays that occur on a Monday to Friday

3 Description of Scholarship

Research Training Program (RTP) Stipend Scholarships are awarded to students of exceptional research potential enrolled in an HDR course of study to assist with general living costs.

Tuition fees for recipients of an RTP Stipend Scholarship will be covered through an [RTP Fees-Offset \(Domestic\) Scholarship](#) (domestic students), or a [Tuition Fee Scholarship](#) (international students).

4 Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for an RTP Stipend Scholarship, a student must be a domestic student or an overseas student enrolled in an accredited HDR course of study at Swinburne University.

In relation to [RTP Fees-Offset \(Domestic\) Scholarship](#), the student must not be receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth designed to offset HDR fees.

5 Application, Selection and Offer Processes

RTP Stipend Scholarships are awarded as a result of a competitive selection process as determined by the University in accordance with the [Higher Education Support \(Commonwealth Scholarships\) Guidelines 2025 - Federal Register of Legislation](#).

As part of this process, the University has the right to give priority to different types of students and therefore may use selection criteria to preference applications as part of the competitive selection process. For example, selection criteria could include giving preference to:

- students undertaking a Research Doctorate
- domestic students
- current students who have not completed more than 2 years of their HDR course of study
- students who hold a Bachelor Degree with first class Honours (or equivalent)*
- students not receiving another Swinburne managed stipend scholarship that is greater than 75 per cent of the RTP stipend rate
- students engaging in a particular discipline area
- Indigenous students
- students undertaking an HDR course of study for the first time
- students with a full-time study load

*If a student does not hold a Bachelor degree with first class honours, then the University may determine that the student has demonstrated an equivalent level of academic attainment. The University may consider previous study, relevant work experience, research publications, referees' reports and other research experience.

RTP Stipend Scholarships are typically made available in biannual scholarship rounds. When scholarship rounds are open, information about the application process and specific selection criteria for the round, is made available on the [RTP Stipend Scholarship page](#) of the Swinburne website.

It should be noted that the University is not currently opening RTP Stipend Scholarship applications to Research Masters candidates.

The competitive assessment process may take into the account the following:

- candidature and scholarship eligibility requirements
- advertised selection criteria for the round
- quality and alignment of the research proposal with Swinburne [Research Strategy and Ecosystem](#)
- previous academic achievement
- referee reports
- research and publication experience relative to opportunity
- relevant work experience
- quality of the supervisory team

Successful RTP Stipend Scholarship applicants will receive a scholarship offer letter, detailing the conditions of their award, from Swinburne Research. All RTP Stipend Scholarship offers are conditional on meeting the requirements for candidature at Swinburne.

Unsuccessful RTP Stipend applicants will receive email notification of the outcome.

6 Duration

The duration of a full-time RTP Stipend Scholarship is **three years** for a student undertaking a Research Doctorate at a full-time student load or for **six years** at a part-time student load. The date of first enrolment is usually the commencement date for the scholarship, except where the student is already enrolled at the time of award. Contact Swinburne Research for further information (see contact details at the end of this document).

The duration of an RTP Stipend Scholarship will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken at an Australian university towards the degree prior to the commencement of the RTP Stipend Scholarship.

The duration of an RTP Stipend Scholarship will be increased by the length of any periods of leave of absence specified in section 8.2 **(b)** to **(e)** and section 8.3 of these Conditions of Award and approved by the University.

Any periods of suspension approved by the University do not contribute to the period of support.

Swinburne University may also approve an extension to the duration of an RTP Stipend Scholarship for a Research Doctorate student of up to six months subject to satisfactory academic progress. For more information about scholarship extensions, please consult the [Research Training Statement of Practice – Candidature Handbook](#).

7 Changes to Enrolment

7.1 Field of Education (FOE) change

A change to the student's FOE will have no impact on the RTP Stipend Scholarship.

7.2 Transferring to or from another HEP

Students who transfer from Swinburne University to another university may continue to receive their RTP Stipend Scholarship only if the university the student transfers to (the new provider) agrees to its continuation and subject to the new provider having sufficient RTP Stipend Scholarship grant amounts of its own available to fund the student.

Students may transfer from another university to Swinburne with an RTP Stipend Scholarship only if Swinburne University agrees to its continuation and subject to Swinburne University having sufficient RTP Stipend Scholarship grant amounts available.

Swinburne University must ensure it has received information from the former provider on any RTP Stipend Scholarship payment a transferring student has received and the duration of the RTP Stipend Scholarship already consumed.

Where a student transfers from a HEP from another HEP and has accessed leave entitlements under sections 8.1 and 8.2 of these Conditions of Award during the same calendar year at their previous HEP, the receiving HEP may subtract the amount of leave accessed by the student at the previous HEP from the leave entitlements that the HEP must provide the student under section 8.1 and 8.2 for that calendar year.

7.3 Amendment to study load

RTP Stipend Scholarship holders must study on a full-time basis unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The University may approve the award of a part-time RTP Stipend Scholarship for a student in exceptional circumstances.

The exceptional circumstances must relate to significant caring commitments or a medical condition, such as:

- caring responsibilities for a pre-school child; or
- caring responsibilities for school-aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support; or
- caring responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent; or
- a medical condition, the existence of which is supported by medical certification, and which limits the student's capacity to undertake full-time study.

In determining exceptional circumstances when approving a part-time RTP Stipend Scholarship, the University may not determine that a student is in exceptional circumstances unless it is satisfied that the student's personal or family circumstances are such that it would be unreasonable to expect the student to study on a full-time basis.

A student who has been approved for a part-time RTP Stipend Scholarship may revert to full-time study at any time with the permission of the University.

To calculate the remaining period of scholarship after conversion of an RTP Stipend Scholarship from part-time to full-time the period of time remaining on the RTP Stipend Scholarship is halved.

To calculate the remaining period of scholarship after conversion of an RTP Stipend Scholarship from full-time to part-time the period of time remaining on the RTP Stipend Scholarship is doubled.

7.4 Candidature conversion

Applications from Research Masters candidates are not currently being considered for RTP Stipend Scholarships. Offers will be made to candidates enrolled in Research Doctoral studies only, with no provision to convert to Research Masters.

8 Leave Entitlements

8.1 Annual leave

Students undertaking a full-time study load while in receipt of an RTP Stipend Scholarship, are entitled to receive 20 working days paid annual leave each year after 2025. This leave entitlement will accrue over the life of the RTP Stipend Scholarship but will be forfeited when the RTP Stipend Scholarship is terminated.

Periods of annual leave will not result in a suspension of enrolment and therefore will not be included for the purpose of calculating candidature and RTP Stipend Scholarship end dates.

8.2 Paid Leave of Absence

(a) 10 Working Days Paid Sick Leave

Students undertaking a full-time study load while in receipt of an RTP Stipend Scholarship, are entitled to receive 10 working days of paid sick leave each year after 2025. This leave entitlement will accrue over the life of the RTP Stipend Scholarship but will be forfeited when the RTP Stipend Scholarship is terminated.

Periods of sick leave (a) must be exhausted first before sick leave (b) is available and will not result in a suspension of enrolment and therefore will not be included for the purpose of calculating candidature and RTP Stipend Scholarship end dates.

(b) 60 Working Days Paid Sick Leave

Students who, while in receipt of an RTP Stipend Scholarship, have exhausted their sick leave entitlement (a) are entitled to receive 60 working days of paid sick leave over the life of the RTP Stipend Scholarship.

Periods of sick leave (b) will result in a suspension of enrolment and therefore will be included for the purpose of calculating candidature and RTP Stipend Scholarship end dates.

Sick leave entitlements (a) and (b):

- Must be for a minimum of 10 working days for each leave application
- Must be accompanied by a medical certificate
- May be used to cover leave for students with family caring responsibilities, subject to the usual practice of the University.

(c) Paid Parental Leave: Primary Carer

Students who have completed 12 months of study while in receipt of an RTP Stipend Scholarship, are entitled to 100 working days paid parental leave for each child the student will be the primary carer of, on the birth or adoption of the child.

(d) Paid Parental Leave: Secondary Carer

Students who have completed 12 months of study while in receipt of an RTP Stipend Scholarship, are entitled to 20 working days paid parental leave for each child, if the student is the partner of the primary carer, on the birth or adoption of the child.

Parental leave entitlements (c) and (d):

- Must be for an unbroken period
- Must be accompanied by a medical certificate
- Will result in a suspension of enrolment and therefore will be included for the purpose of calculating candidature and RTP Stipend Scholarship end dates.

(e) Paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave

Students undertaking a full-time study load while in receipt of an RTP Stipend Scholarship, are entitled to 10 working days paid family and domestic violence leave each year after 2025. This leave entitlement will not be accrued over the life of the RTP Stipend Scholarship.

Family and domestic leave entitlement (e):

- Must be for a minimum of 10 working days for each leave application
- Must be accompanied by a statutory declaration or other supporting documents
- Will result in a suspension of enrolment and therefore will be included for the purpose of calculating candidature and RTP Stipend Scholarship end dates.

For the avoidance of doubt, all leave entitlements referred to in section 8.1 and 8.2 are forfeited when the RTP Stipend Scholarship is terminated.

8.3 Unpaid Leave of Absence

Students who are taking leave of absence longer than the periods stipulated in section 8.2 of these Conditions of Award will only receive RTP Stipend Scholarship payments as per their leave entitlements stipulated in section 8.2. The RTP Stipend Scholarship payments will be stopped for the remaining period of the leave. This period of unpaid leave will result in a suspension of enrolment and therefore will be included for the purpose of calculating candidature and RTP Stipend Scholarship end dates.

8.4 Applying for Leave of Absence

All applications for annual leave and leave of absence must be submitted via the [Candidature and Progress Portal](#) (CAPP).

Students must submit leave applications prior to the start date of leave.

If there are compassionate and compelling situations that prevent the students from submitting the application prior to the start date of leave, retrospective approval is limited to 31 days after the start date of leave for domestic and international students. Exceptions can be made in the rare cases where the student is incapacitated and unable to put in the request.

International students should read the Leave of Absence form in CAPP very carefully to assess whether they are eligible to apply for Leave of Absence. They also have additional ESOS compliance requirements and should refer to section 8.2.1.1 of the [Research Training Statement of Practice – Candidature Handbook](#).

8.5 Suspensions during Leave of Absence

Students may apply to Swinburne University to suspend the RTP Stipend Scholarship during a period of leave of absence for a maximum of 6 months at any one time; the total leave of absence that may be granted over the duration of candidature is 12 calendar months. The approval of all suspensions will be at the discretion of Swinburne University.

An application for leave of absence from candidature must have been approved before the RTP Stipend Scholarship can be suspended.

Periods of study undertaken towards the degree during suspension of the award will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.

9 Value and Payments

9.1 Value and Indexation Arrangements

The value of an RTP Stipend Scholarship over the full year in 2026 is **\$35,500**.

If a student selected to receive an RTP Stipend Scholarship is approved by the University to undertake an HDR on a part-time student load basis, the student's part-time RTP Stipend rate will be 50 per cent of the student's full-time RTP Stipend rate.

The RTP stipend will be indexed for subsequent years in accordance with Part 5-6 of the Act.

9.2 RTP Stipend Scholarship Allowance (Relocation)

The RTP Stipend Scholarship provides students with an allowance toward the cost of relocating themselves, their spouse and dependents, from overseas/interstate/regional Victoria to Melbourne, to enable the student to undertake their research degree.

The maximum relocation allowance which may be received by a student is calculated by allowing:

- \$505** for each eligible adult, and
- \$255** for each eligible child.

The absolute maximum value of relocation expenses that a student may receive is **\$1,455** (if also claiming for accompanying family members, please refer to eligibility criteria for accompanying family members stated below).

To make a claim for relocation, a student will need to present original receipts to Swinburne Research.

Students must submit claim for relocation reimbursement for themselves within 6 months of the commencement of their research degree. Students must submit claim for relocation reimbursement for their spouse and children within 12 months of the commencement of their research degree.

Only costs for air travel, travel by car or removal expenses are claimable. Expenses for the cost of any accommodation or meals obtained during the course of travel cannot be reimbursed through relocation allowance.

For the purposes of relocation allowance an eligible adult is either a spouse or adult dependant.

- A spouse is a person who is married to or in a de facto relationship with the student.
- An adult dependant is a person for whom the student or their spouse has substantial caring responsibilities.

An eligible child is a natural or adopted child of the student or their spouse, who is:

- younger than 18 years of age; or
- younger than 25 years of age and undertaking full-time study.

9.3 RTP Stipend Scholarship Allowance (Thesis)

The RTP Stipend Scholarship provides students with an allowance toward the cost of proofreading or editing their doctoral thesis.

The maximum value of thesis allowance which may be received by a student is **\$840** for a doctoral thesis.

Students must submit the claim for thesis reimbursement by providing original receipts/invoices with the business name and Australian Business Number (ABN), within one year of submission of the thesis and no more than two years after termination of the RTP Stipend Scholarship.

9.4 Payment Process

Each year, the University must pay each student the full annual value of their RTP stipend unless that student has commenced late or suspended their RTP Stipend Scholarship. Where a student is not enrolled over the full period of the year, because of a late commencement, unpaid leave of absence or periods of deferral, the University must provide at least the proportion of the annual stipend for the period in which study is undertaken for that year.

The University must make fortnightly payments to students in respect of their annual stipend. Payments may only be made directly to the student's Australian bank account through the University payroll.

Payments commence on the date of enrolment or as specified in the scholarship offer letter and cannot be backdated.

10 Employment Commitments

Employment commitments for HDR Candidates are outlined in Section 8.3.3 of the [Research Training Statement of Practice – Candidature Handbook](#).

Employment commitments will not be accepted as grounds for lack of progress or extensions to scholarships or candidature.

If a student is seeking to take part in an internship or industry placement they should contact HDRscholarships@swin.edu.au for advice on how this could impact their enrolment and RTP Stipend Scholarship.

11 Satisfactory Progress

Swinburne University monitors students' ongoing eligibility to ensure that the students continue to meet the eligibility requirements set out in the Conditions of Award and University policies as they relate to HDR students. Continuation of the scholarship is dependent on the student maintaining satisfactory progress.

The award holder must submit regular progress reports as required by the University, in addition to progress reports required for candidature. The University has the right to terminate the awards of students who fail to maintain satisfactory progress.

12 Termination of an RTP Stipend Scholarship

An RTP Stipend Scholarship will be terminated:

- if the student ceases to meet the eligibility requirements specified in part 4 of these Conditions of Award, other than during a period in which a suspension has been approved; or
- if the student ceases to meet the selection criteria for which the award of the RTP Stipend Scholarship was based on; or
- if, in the opinion of the University, the program of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with these Conditions of Award and the offer of the RTP Stipend Scholarship; or
- if the University determines that a student is guilty of serious academic misconduct; or
- once the maximum duration of the RTP Stipend Scholarship has been reached; or
- if the student does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of deferral and has not arranged to extend that period of deferral; or
- if the student fails to maintain satisfactory progress, as determined by the University; or
- on submission of the thesis for examination; or
- on withdrawal from the course of study; or
- if the student's candidature in the course of study is terminated by the University. The grounds for termination of candidature are described in Chapter 9 of the [Research Training Regulations](#).

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

More information about Termination of Candidature is outlined in Chapter 9 of the [Research Training Regulations](#)

13 Supervision and Facilities

Swinburne University will endeavour to:

- ensure that adequate facilities and appropriate supervision are available for each student undertaking a Higher Degree by Research; and
- establish, make publicly available, and abide by, a code of supervisory practice for students undertaking a Higher Degree by Research.

14 Acknowledgement of an RTP Stipend Scholarship

The Commonwealth's contribution must be acknowledged when, at any time during or after completion of a HDR, the recipient of an RTP Stipend Scholarship, their supervisor or any other party, publishes or produces material (including books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works) which relate to the research project carried out by the recipient of the RTP Stipend Scholarship.

The Commonwealth's contribution must be acknowledged in a prominent place by including the following words:

"This research was supported by the Commonwealth through an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship [DOI: <https://doi.org/10.82133/C42F-K220>]."

If the student who has been awarded an RTP Stipend Scholarship has an ORCID, the student must acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution through the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship by including the RTP DOI in the student's ORCID record.

15 Contact details

Staff members in Swinburne Research are always happy to answer any questions you might have. They can be contacted on:

Phone: 9214 3859

Email: HDRscholarships@swin.edu.au

Website: [Research Training Program Stipend - RTPS \(swinburne.edu.au\)](https://swinburne.edu.au/research-training-program-stipend-rtps)