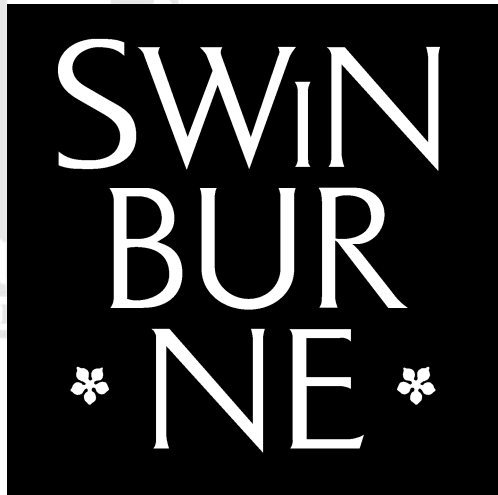


Swinburne Research

Conditions of Award Australian Postgraduate Award (APA)



SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY

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1 Introduction

This guide is based on the Department of Industry (DI) Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines and is intended as a short guide to entitlements and requirements for new Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) students. From time to time, changes are made to the guidelines. In this event, a revised document will be made available to award holders, on the Graduate Studies web page.

The full guidelines can be found on the web at

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/RESEARCH/RESEARCHBLOCKGRANTS/Pages/AustralianPostgraduateAwards.aspx>

2 How to apply

To apply for an APA, complete the *Application for Admission to Higher Degrees by Research Candidature and Scholarship* form available on the web at

<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/research/research-degrees/application-process/> and select the box for APA under the section on scholarships. The referee report form is to be sent to two referees. The referees can return the completed referee report to the appropriate faculty research administrator (as per the last page on the form).

3 Definitions

The terms used within the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines have the same meaning as in the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA). The following terms are defined specifically for these Guidelines:

<i>Administering Provider</i>	is the higher education provider that is administering the scholarship on behalf of the Commonwealth Government
<i>APA</i>	means an Australian Postgraduate Award as outlined in these Guidelines
<i>Date of commencement</i>	is usually the date of first enrolment except where a student is already enrolled at the time of award
<i>Deferral</i>	in respect of a scholarship, means a period of time during which a scholarship holder is not receiving scholarship payments
<i>DI</i>	means Department of Industry
<i>DIAC</i>	means the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship. See http://www.immi.gov.au/
<i>HDR</i>	means a Higher Degree by Research that is a Research Doctorate or a Research Masters
<i>HESA</i>	means the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i>
<i>International Student</i>	means an overseas student as defined in <i>the Act</i> and who is an <i>IPRS</i> holder commencing from 1 January 2011
<i>IPRS</i>	means an International Postgraduate Research Scholarship
<i>Research Doctorate</i>	has the meaning given in the Australian Qualifications Framework. See http://www.aqf.edu.au/doctor.htm
<i>RTS</i>	Commonwealth Government's Research Training Scheme
<i>University</i>	means Higher Education Provider, in most cases in this guide, Swinburne University of Technology (Swinburne).

4 Description of Scholarship

Australian Postgraduate Awards (APAs) are awarded to students of exceptional research potential undertaking a research doctorate. The scholarships are provided to assist with general living costs.

5 Duration of an APA

The duration of a full-time APA is **three years** for a student undertaking Research Doctorate studies. Awards are not available to Masters candidates. 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).

The duration of an APA will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:

- towards the degree prior to the commencement of the APA;
- during suspension of the APA; and/or
- previously, while receiving an Australian postgraduate coursework award.

The duration of an APA will be increased by any periods of leave of absence, paid maternity leave, additional sick leave and parenting leave approved by the University.

Swinburne University may also approve an extension to the duration of an APA for a Research Doctorate student of up to six months subject to satisfactory academic progress. For more information about scholarship extensions, please consult the Application for Scholarship Extension Guidelines, online at <http://www.swinburne.edu.au/intranet/research/higher-degrees/forms/>

To calculate the remaining period of scholarship after conversion of an APA from part-time to full-time the period of time already expended is halved.

To calculate the remaining period of scholarship after conversion of an APA from full-time to part-time the period of time already expended is doubled.

6 Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for an APA, a student must:

- have completed a Bachelor Degree with First Class Honours, or be regarded by the University as having an equivalent level of attainment in accordance with these Guidelines; and
- be undertaking a Research Doctorate; and
- be enrolled as a full-time student, unless the University has approved a part-time APA for the student under these Guidelines; and
- be an Australian citizen, New Zealand citizen or Australian permanent resident, or be an international student as defined in these guidelines; and
- must not hold a Research Doctorate or an equivalent research qualification; and
- must not previously have held a Commonwealth Government-funded postgraduate research scholarship (excluding an IPRS) unless it was terminated within six months of the scholarship's payments commencing; and
- must not be receiving an equivalent award, scholarship (excluding an IPRS) or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the APA stipend rate, to undertake the HDR. Income from sources unrelated to the course of study is permitted but must be within the confines of Research Training Statement of Practice section 3.3.3 'Employment Commitments'. This does not apply to recipients of a JRE Engineering Cadetship.

6.1 Equivalent Attainment to Bachelor with First Class Honours

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.

6.2 Approval of a Part-time APA

The University may only approve a part-time APA for a student if the student is undertaking a JRE Engineering Cadetship as specified in the Attachment to the Joint Research Engagement Conditions of Grant, or 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 APA, 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 APA may revert to full-time study at any time with the permission of the University.

7 Ongoing Eligibility

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

8 Payments to Students

Each year, the University must pay each student the full value of their APA stipend unless that student has commenced late or suspended their APA. Where a student is not enrolled over the full period of the year, because of a late commencement 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.

8.1 Value of Scholarships and Indexation Arrangements

The value of an APA stipend over the full year in 2015:

- **\$26,288**

Students may also be eligible for a relocation allowance at the commencement of the scholarship and a thesis allowance at the conclusion of the scholarship up to the approved maximum amount for each allowance. Goods and Services Tax amounts specified in the receipts provided are reimbursed.

8.2 Relocation allowance

The APA provides students with an allowance toward the cost of relocating themselves, their spouse and dependants to a new place of residence within Australia where this is necessary to enable the student to undertake their HDR.

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, you will need to present original receipts to Swinburne Research.

Only costs for air travel, travel by car or removal expenses to the new place of residence are allowable.

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 bona fide de facto relationship with, the student.

An adult dependent 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:

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

8.3 Thesis allowance

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

Swinburne University will make reimbursement payments to students for eligible claims for thesis allowance up to the approved maximum amount specified in these Guidelines.

An eligible claim for thesis allowance is a claim made by a student for the costs of producing a Doctoral thesis. The claim may include the cost of printing, binding and proofreading. These costs may include costs associated with the re-submission of a thesis, or the lodgement of hard bound copies of the thesis following approval.

A claim for thesis allowance is not an eligible claim unless the student has produced complete receipts for the claim and made the claim within one year of submission of the thesis and no more than two years after termination of the APA. The amount paid will be up to the maximum rate applicable at the time of submission of the thesis. The allowance is a contribution to the costs of production of the thesis and does not include costs such as purchase of computer equipment.

If a student is required to resubmit the thesis for re-examination, he/she may claim the thesis preparation allowance for costs associated with the resubmission. The claim must be made within six months of the resubmission date and within 2 years of the termination of the award.

The combined total of allowance for submission and resubmission must not exceed the maximum amounts specified above.

8.4 Indexation

The APA stipend for full-time students and each of the maximum amounts for relocation expenses will be indexed for subsequent years in accordance with Division 198 of Part 5-6 of the HESA as in force from time to time.

The maximum value of thesis allowance will remain unchanged in subsequent years.

9 Suspensions during leave of absence

Students may apply to Swinburne University to suspend a scholarship during a period of leave of absence for up to 12 months (full-time equivalent). In exceptional circumstances, students may apply for suspensions beyond 12 months. The approval of all suspensions will be at the discretion of Swinburne University.

10 Leave Entitlements

As per section 4.1 of the Research Training Statement of Practice (see http://www.swinburne.edu.au/media/intranet/research/docs/grad-studies-pdfs/HDR-Statement-of-Practice_v1.2_March-2015.pdf) students will receive up to 4 weeks annual leave per annum. Stipend scholarship students will also receive up to 10 working days paid sick leave for each year of the scholarship. This sick leave entitlement may be accrued over the life of the APA but will be forfeited when the APA is terminated.

Students may apply for Leave of Absence as per section 3.1.3 of the Research Training Statement of Practice (see http://www.swinburne.edu.au/media/intranet/research/docs/grad-studies-pdfs/HDR-Statement-of-Practice_v1.2_March-2015.pdf).

The Leave of Absence application form can be downloaded by clicking on the candidature tab at this link <http://www.swinburne.edu.au/intranet/research/higher-degrees/forms/>. **International students should read the Leave of Absence form very carefully to assess whether they are eligible to apply for Leave of Absence.**

Unpaid Leave of Absence

Unless otherwise indicated on the Leave of Absence application form, leave will be processed as Unpaid Leave of Absence. During Unpaid 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 Unpaid Leave of Absence is approved, scholarship recipients will be advised, via email, of the date when the scholarship will be stopped and when it will be restarted.

Paid Leave of Absence

In the case of approved Paid Leave of Absence, the scholarship payments will not be stopped during the Leave of Absence (or may only be stopped for a part of the leave). If Paid Leave of Absence is sought, the student **must** clearly indicate this on the Leave of Absence application and provide relevant supporting documentation, such as a medical certificate.

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

- *Sick Leave*

Students may receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of 12 weeks (full-time equivalent) during their scholarship for periods of illness **lasting longer than ten days** and for which a medical certificate has been provided.

Sick leave entitlements may be used to cover leave for students with family caring responsibilities, subject to the usual practice of the University.

- *Maternity Leave*

Students who have completed at least 12 months of their scholarship are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks (full-time equivalent) paid maternity leave over the duration of the scholarship.

Students who are partners of women giving birth, and who have completed at least 12 months of their scholarship, may be entitled to a period of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth or adoption, subject to the usual practice of the University.

Leave of Absence and the effect on the Scholarship End Date

When a Leave of Absence is taken, the end date of the scholarship is extended in the following way(s):

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

- If the Leave of Absence is **unpaid**, the payments will be stopped for the full period of leave, AND the duration of the stipend scholarship will be extended (the scholarship end date will be extended) by the same number of days as the approved period of leave.

11 Work

APAs are awarded for full time study. As such, the employment commitments of candidates must not exceed a total of 8 hours per week. Students may only undertake work with the approval of the University. Swinburne University may not approve a student undertaking work unless it is satisfied that the work will not interfere with the student's capacity to complete their study within the normal timeframe. Work commitments cannot be accepted as grounds for an extension of the duration of the APA.

12 Change of Degrees

APAs are for study at doctoral level only and cannot be converted.

13 Transfer of an APA

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

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

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

14 Termination of an APA

An APA must be terminated:

- if the student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in these Guidelines other than during a period in which the APA has been suspended; 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 the offer of the APA; or
- if the University determines that a student is guilty of serious academic misconduct; or
- when the student ceases to be a full-time student and when approval has not been obtained from the University to hold the APA on a part-time basis; or
- on submission of thesis for examination; or
- once the maximum duration of the APA 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.

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

15 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.

16 Contact details

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

Phone: 9214 5547

Email: HDRscholarships@swin.edu.au

Website: <http://www.swinburne.edu.au/research/funding-grants/scholarships/>

Location: Level 1, SPS Building
24 Wakefield Street
Hawthorn campus