

# THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP CENTRAL (UNRSC)



## 2011 SCHOLARSHIP CONDITIONS

### 1.0 DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 In these conditions, unless the context or subject matter otherwise indicates or requires:
- "UNRSC" means a University of Newcastle Postgraduate Research Scholarship, centrally funded;
  - "Committee" means the Research Training Sub Committee of the Research Committee;
  - "Pro Vice-Chancellor" means the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of enrolment of the scholar;
  - "program" means the course of study undertaken by the scholar;
  - "scholar" means the recipient of the scholarship;
  - "scholarship" means the UNRSC awarded to the scholar;
  - "University" means the University of Newcastle.
- 1.2 The Dean of Graduate Studies makes determinations on behalf of the University in respect of most research scholarship matters.

### 2.0 ELIGIBILITY

A UNRSC is available to a scholar who will be undertaking an approved research Masters or Doctoral (PhD) degree at the University and who:

- 2.1. has completed a Bachelor Degree with First Class Honours or equivalent. (In determining an equivalent level of academic attainment, consideration may be given to previous study, relevant work experience, research publications and other research experience);
- 2.2. is enrolling as a full-time student or has approval from the Dean, Graduate Studies to undertake part-time study, refer also to Section 5.3;
- 2.3. is not receiving an equivalent award, scholarship or salary providing a benefit greater than 75% of the UNRSC stipend rate to undertake the proposed program. Income earned from sources unrelated to the program of study is not subject to the 75% rule;
- 2.4. has not already completed a degree at the same level as the proposed candidature or at a higher level;
- 2.5. has not held a research scholarship previously, for this level of award, unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits;
- 2.6. has not completed more than two full-time equivalent semesters towards a research Masters if applying for a scholarship to support a Masters program, or more than four full-time equivalent semesters towards a PhD if applying for a scholarship to support a PhD program, at the commencement of the year of the award of scholarship;
- 2.7. Must be commencing a research higher degree on campus and remain enrolled on campus for the majority of the degree. Also refer to Section 10 of these conditions.

### 3.0 SELECTION

- 3.1. Selection shall be undertaken by the Committee, or its nominee(s).

- 3.2. Selection shall be on the basis of academic merit in accordance with guidelines approved by the DVC Research.

#### 4.0 COMMENCEMENT

- 4.1. A scholarship may not be deferred to a subsequent year.
- 4.2. The candidate shall normally take up the scholarship in semester one in the year for which it is granted.
- 4.3. The scholar may apply for defer commencement to Semester 2, but must commence by the agreed date which would normally be prior to census date (31 August) in the year for which the scholarship is granted.
- 4.4. If the scholar has not enrolled and commenced the scholarship by the agreed date in clause 4.3, the scholarship will be forfeited.

#### 5.0 TENURE

- 5.1. A full-time scholarship may be held for two years to support a full-time Masters program or three years for a full-time PhD program.
- 5.2. Periods of study already undertaken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the award will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.
- 5.3. A part-time scholarship may be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies where the applicant is able to demonstrate heavy carer commitments or a medical condition such as:
  - 5.3.1 Carer responsibilities for a pre-school child; or
  - 5.3.2 Carer responsibilities for school-aged children as a sole parent with limited access to outside support; or
  - 5.3.3 Carer responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent; or
  - 5.3.4 A medical condition, which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification).
- 5.4. A part-time scholar is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time award holder and therefore received approximately half of the benefits for each year of study for up to four years for a Masters program of six years for a PhD.
- 5.5. If a part-time scholarship is converted to full-time then the period of time that the scholar is regarded as having been in receipt of the part-time scholarship immediately prior to the conversion will be halved. For the purpose of determining the duration the scholar is regarded as having been in receipt of a full-time scholarship immediately after conversion.
- 5.6. If a full-time scholarship is converted to part-time then the period of time that the scholar is regarded as having been in receipt of the full-time scholarship immediately prior to the conversion will be doubled. For the purpose of determining the duration the scholar is regarded as having been in receipt of a part-time scholarship immediately after conversion.
- 5.7. **Conversion of program:**
  - 5.7.1. A **Masters** scholar may upgrade to a PhD during the tenure of the scholarship, if upgrade of candidature is approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee. The award duration then becomes three years.
  - 5.7.2. A PhD scholar may convert to a Masters during the tenure of the scholarship, if conversion of candidature is approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee. The maximum award duration then becomes two years.

## 6.0 TRANSFER OF AWARD OR PROGRAM

- 6.1. In exceptional circumstances, a scholarship may be transferred to another program of study subject to:
  - 6.1.1. the scholar receiving formal approval for entry to that program by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee;
  - 6.1.2. the Dean of Graduate Studies' approval of the transfer of the scholarship to the new program.
- 6.2. A scholarship may not be transferred to another university.

## 7.0 SUSPENSION

- 7.1. After twelve months, a scholarship may be suspended for a period of up to twelve months upon receipt of written notification by the Office of Graduate Studies.
- 7.2. Any further suspension will only be granted where the scholar can demonstrate exceptional circumstances beyond their control and if approved by the Dean, Graduate Studies. The maximum period of any further extension will be twelve months.
- 7.3. Periods of approved suspension will not be deducted from the overall scholarship tenure if the scholar takes approved leave of absence from candidature for the duration of the suspension. Where a scholar does not take such approved leave of absence from candidature, the suspended period shall be deducted from the scholarship tenure.
- 7.4. The Dean of Graduate Studies may suspend a scholarship if he or she believes on reasonable grounds that the scholar's study is affected by circumstances which prevent the scholar from pursuing the program.
- 7.5. The Dean of Graduate Studies will not suspend a scholarship without inviting the scholar to show cause why the scholarship should not be suspended.
- 7.6. Any leave of absence from candidature on a semester basis must be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee.
- 7.7. Periods of study undertaken towards the degree during suspension of the award will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.

## 8.0 EMPLOYMENT

- 8.1. The scholar shall not be required to undertake paid employment as a condition of award of the scholarship.
- 8.2. Scholars may, however, undertake a limited amount of part time paid employment up to a maximum of eight hours per week (Monday to Friday between 9:00am and 5:00pm) provided it does not interfere with their studies. Scholars should also note clause 2.3 above.

## 9.0 LEAVE

- 9.1. Scholars are entitled to up to twenty days paid recreation leave each year calculated on a pro-rata basis within the period of the scholarship. This may be accrued over the tenure of the scholarship. Any unused leave remaining when the scholarship is terminated or completed will be forfeited.
- 9.2. Scholars are entitled to up to ten days paid sick leave each year calculated on a pro-rata basis within the period of the scholarship. This may be accrued over the tenure of the scholarship.
  - 9.2.1. For medically substantiated periods of illness lasting longer than ten days, scholars may receive up to a total of twelve weeks paid sick leave which are *additional* to the normal duration of the award.
  - 9.2.2. Sick leave entitlements may also be used to cover scholars with family responsibilities caring for sick children or relatives.

- 9.2.3. All applications for sick leave must be accompanied by medical certification.
- 9.3. Scholars may receive up to twelve weeks paid maternity leave for a childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the award. Paid maternity leave may not be taken within the first twelve months of an award; however unpaid maternity leave may be accessed through the suspension provisions. Periods of paid maternity leave are in addition to the normal duration of the award. All applications for maternity leave must be accompanied by medical certification.
- 9.4. Scholars who are partners of women giving birth may receive up to two weeks paid parental leave for a childbirth or adoption occurring within the tenure of the award. Paid parental leave may not be taken within the first twelve months of an award; however unpaid parental leave may be accessed through the suspension provisions. Paid parental leave must be taken during the period three weeks prior to the expected birth or placement of the child, and up to six months after the actual birth or placement of the child. Periods of paid parental leave are in addition to the normal duration of the award. All applications for parental leave must be accompanied by medical certification.
- 9.5. If approval has been given to hold a part-time scholarship, leave provisions apply for the same period of time as a full-time scholar.

## 10.0 RESEARCH AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS

- 10.1. Scholars may be eligible to receive scholarship benefits during periods of research at other institutions in Australia or overseas if the research is essential for the completion of the scholar's program. The period shall not exceed twelve months (or eighteen months for anthropology and other special cases), and is subject to the approval of the scholar's supervisor and the Dean of Graduate Studies.
- 10.2. Continuation of scholarship benefits is dependent upon approval by the Pro Vice-Chancellor or nominee for the period of off-campus study, and the scholar's continued enrolment in the program for which the award was granted at the University.
- 10.3. Approval of such continuation of scholarship benefits will not normally be given earlier than six months after commencement of the scholarship.

## 11.0 BENEFITS

- 11.1. The scholarship provides a living allowance of \$22,860 p.a. (2011 rate). Full-time living allowances are indexed annually and will be paid fortnightly through the University Payroll Office. Part-time stipends are taxable. The part-time living allowance is \$12,388 p.a. (2011 rate).
- 11.2. Relocation allowance is payable to scholars who have relocated to Newcastle to take up their scholarship award or on approved transfer. Upon production of original and valid tax invoices/receipts, scholars are eligible to claim for reimbursement of the following costs:
- Travel expenses to Newcastle, equivalent to the economy/student airfare, for scholar, spouse and dependents; and
  - Removal expenses of up to \$505 per adult (scholar and spouse) and \$255 per dependent.
  - The Relocation allowance does not cover return airfares or additional travel.
- 11.2.1 Scholars claiming for international airfares must also provide original air ticket(s), copy of passport(s) and copy of visa(s) for all claims.
- 11.2.2 The **maximum total amount payable for relocation allowance is \$1,520** (2011 rate).
- 11.3. A one off establishment allowance is payable to scholars who have submitted a relocation allowance claim. Eligible scholars will receive a lump sum establishment allowance of \$500 when a relocation claim is made and approved.
- 11.4. The scholarship shall provide payment of the cost of a standard Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) policy approved by the Commonwealth Government Department of Health and Ageing and which covers the scholar and their spouse and dependants (if any) for the period of the scholarship.
- 11.5. Thesis allowance is payable to scholars for costs associated with the production of their thesis. Upon production of original and valid tax invoices/receipts, scholars are eligible to claim for reimbursement of paper, printing, copying and binding costs.

- 11.5.1. Thesis allowance is a contribution to the costs of production of the thesis and does not include such costs as purchase of computer equipment, editing or proofreading.
- 11.5.2. Reimbursement can be claimed for costs associated with the production of soft bound thesis and/or hardbound thesis, and for production of thesis for resubmission, provided that the following conditions are met:
- Thesis allowance must be claimed within **one year of thesis submission and no more than two years after expiry of the scholarship award; and**
  - The combined maximum total of thesis allowance for submission and resubmission must not exceed the maximum amount specified below in 11.5.3.
- 11.5.3. **The maximum total amount payable for thesis allowance is \$500** (2011 rate).
- 11.6. For international students the scholarship shall provide payment of the cost of a standard Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) policy approved by the Commonwealth Government Department of Health and Ageing and which covers the scholar and their spouse and dependants (if any) for the period of the scholarship.

## 12.0 TERMINATION

- 12.1. The scholarship will be terminated if any of the following apply:
- 12.1.1. the scholar ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in Section 2.0 of these conditions, other than during a period in which the scholarship has been suspended or during a period of approved leave; or
  - 12.1.2. on the expiry of the period for which the scholarship was granted; or
  - 12.1.3. fourteen days after the submission of the first soft-bound copies of the thesis for examination; or
  - 12.1.4. if, in the opinion of the Committee, the scholar has failed to observe any condition of the Rules or the RHD Code of Practice in which event any monies paid to the scholar subsequent to that breach shall immediately become repayable to the University; or
  - 12.1.5. if, in the opinion of the Committee, the scholar has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress and the candidature is terminated; or
  - 12.1.6. upon the death or incapacity of the scholar, or written resignation or withdrawal from enrolment is received from the scholar by the Office of Graduate Studies; or
  - 12.1.7. if the scholar does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension or does not obtain approval to extend that period of suspension; or
  - 12.1.8. when the scholar ceases to be a full-time scholar and when approval has not been obtained to hold the award on a part-time basis (but not when the scholar is to revert to full-time study after an approved period of part-time study); or
  - 12.1.9. if the scholar accepts another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the program providing a benefit greater than 75% of the stipend and the scholar does not suspend the scholarship for the period of the concurrent award, scholarship or salary.
- 12.2. If a scholarship is terminated, it cannot be re-activated.

## 13.0 OBLIGATIONS

- 13.1. The scholar shall accept the award of the scholarship subject to these conditions and shall agree to abide by the conditions.
- 13.2. The scholarship conditions which have been agreed between the University and the scholar shall normally not be varied during the tenure of a scholarship.
- 13.2.1. Where the Dean of Graduate Studies does approve variations of conditions the scholar shall have the option to accept the amended conditions or to retain the original conditions.

- 13.2.2. No scholar will suffer disadvantage because of any variation to conditions.
- 13.3. The scholar is required to conform to the Rules of the University governing their program (including disciplinary provisions).
- 13.4. The University shall provide a code of supervisory practice for research higher degrees.

**14.0 APPEAL**

- 14.1. Students and scholars may appeal against decisions taken by the Dean of Graduate Studies or the Committee on the grounds that the procedures followed were deficient. Written appeals should be submitted to the Executive Officer - Policy, Office of Graduate Studies, within twenty one days of notification of a decision of the Dean of Graduate Studies. Appeals will be considered by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the determination by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) is final.

**15.0 RELAXATION CLAUSE**

- 15.1. In order to provide for exceptional circumstances arising in a particular case, the Dean of Graduate Studies may relax any provision of these conditions.

-----