

UNSW Higher Degree Research (HDR) Scholarship Guidelines

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1. Introduction

These Guidelines apply to various merit-based scholarships offered by the University of New South Wales, Sydney (UNSW), outlined in Section 2. These scholarships are referred to as UNSW HDR Scholarships. Scholarships not named in Section 2 are not covered by these Guidelines.

UNSW reserves the right to make amendments to these guidelines without prior notice.

Scholarships are for the purpose of supporting candidates through their own UNSW research and are not intended to be used to support dependants. Candidates who are bringing and/or supporting dependants need to be aware of additional fees & costs required for their dependants.

2. Scholarship types

Detailed benefits, value and duration can be found in the HDR Scholarships Procedure.

2.1. Domestic Scholarships

- 2.1.1. Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) scholarship
Includes RTP Stipend, RTP Fees Offset and RTP Allowance. Funded by the Australian Government.
- 2.1.2. University Postgraduate Award (UPA)
Consists of RTP Fees Offset funded by the Australian Government, and a stipend funded by UNSW.
- 2.1.3. RTP Fees Offset without stipend
Funded by the Australian Government, the Fees Offset is a contribution to the tuition gap between the Offset amount and tuition fees is covered by UNSW.

2.2. International Scholarships

- 2.2.1. Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) international scholarship
Includes RTP Stipend, RTP Fees Offset and RTP Allowance. Funded by the Australian Government.
- 2.2.2. University International Postgraduate Award (UIPA)
Consists of tuition fees, a stipend and allowances funded by UNSW
- 2.2.3. Tuition Fee Scholarship (TFS)
Consists of tuition fees funded by UNSW, and a stipend funded by the Faculty, School or Supervisor.
- 2.2.4. Tuition Fee Scholarship with External Scholarship agreement (TFS for [*External agreement name*])
Consists of tuition fees funded by UNSW, and a stipend funded by an [approved External organisation](#) (e.g. China Scholarship Council PhD scholarship).

2.3. Tuition Fee Scholarships (TFSs)

TFSs are for the purpose of pairing research funding sources from Faculties, Schools or Supervisors with tuition coverage to allow the recruitment of International candidates. There are 'regular' TFSs, and TFSs which accompany External Scholarship Agreements.

- 2.3.1. In the case of regular TFSs, a stipend must be available from either the Faculty, School or Supervisor for TFS consideration. Stipend funds must come from genuine research sources, independent of the recipient or their family. Self-support, work sponsorship, or similar is not permitted for the stipend component. Stipends are paid through the UNSW. Stipends will be confirmed during the application assessment process.
- 2.3.2. In the case of TFSs with External Scholarship agreements, these scholarships are developed by UNSW level Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and must meet the conditions and policies of the MoU and of both organisations. One-off agreements are not permitted. Stipends may be paid directly to the recipient by the MOU partner. In cases where the external scholarship agreement is not at the UNSW scholarship rate, the Faculty, School or Supervisor must provide the gap between these rates, under the same conditions as 2.3.1.

2.4. Additional benefits

Scholarships may include access to additional benefits in the form of allowances for ancillary costs associated with the degree. Benefits will be outlined in the scholarship offer letter, and conditions need to be met to access these benefits.

Recipients are expected to pay their costs upfront, and the allowances are reimbursed upon arrival and fulfilment of conditions. Allowances are meant to be contributions to these costs and might not cover the full cost.

- 2.4.1. Overseas Student Health Cover – International RTP and International UPA
- 2.4.2. Relocation Allowance – RTP and UPA
- 2.4.3. Thesis Allowance – RTP and UPA
- 2.4.4. Transport for NSW (TfNSW) Travel Concession (at the discretion of TfNSW) – RTP
- 2.4.5. Visa application fee costs (at the discretion of Department of Home Affairs) – International RTP

Candidates are responsible for payment of the UNSW Student Services Amenities Fee (SSAF) <https://student.unsw.edu.au/ssaf> due each term of enrolment, with the exception of candidates enrolled at UNSW Canberra.

3. Application process

3.1. Prospective candidates

UNSW has several scholarship applications rounds each year. Applications for a HDR scholarship round are submitted at the same time as the admission application, following instructions on the GRS [How to Apply](#) webpage. Within the admission application, the applicant will select that they will be applying for a scholarship, then select the scholarship round for which they are to be considered. Term dates and applications deadlines will be advertised on the UNSW website as outlined in [Application Deadlines](#).

Applications must meet eligibility and application requirements prior to the scholarship round's closing date.

Applicants are only eligible to be considered for one HDR program at any one time.

3.2. Currently enrolled candidates

Currently enrolled HDR candidates can apply for scholarships if they have completed up to and including five terms of full-time enrolment (1.25 EFTSL) at the time of the scholarship round deadline.

To apply, candidates need to email the Admissions & Scholarships team prior to the relevant scholarship deadline, outlining the round for which they are to be considered (based on the term dates as outlined in [Application Deadlines](#)), and attaching any new documentation they wish to be considered in their scholarship application.

3.3. Out of Round (OOR) Scholarships

International TFSs or Domestic scholarships may be considered outside of a round (Out of Round - OOR) if the applicant meets specific requirements – for example: specialist programs, joint scholarships, or if you are at your campus location and ready to start.

Applicants must apply initially to a regular scholarship round as above, and discuss their funding situation with their prospective supervisor. If the application meets OOR requirements, and once the application has gone through admission and scholarship assessment process, your supervisor will need to liaise with the School during assessment to request OOR consideration on your behalf. OOR approvals are not automatic, and will require special Executive approval in lieu of a Central Committee Ranking Meeting.

If applying for specialist scholarship, applicants need to check the conditions and deadlines of the specific scholarship.

3.4. RTP Fee Offset only

Domestic applicants will be automatically considered for the RTP Fee Offset. Applicants who wish to be considered for the RTP Fee Offset only without a stipend, should indicate in Apply Online that they will **not** be applying for a UNSW scholarship.

3.5. Special consideration

3.5.1. Transferring applicants

Applicants to UNSW who have started a research degree at another Higher Education Provider (HEP), or previously at UNSW will need to be considered for a transfer on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of Graduate Research, as outlined in the [Admission to Higher Degree Research Programs Procedure](#). Applicants will be required to provide further information regarding their current/prior study upon request.

There is no transfer of RTP funding between HEPs. These applicants may be eligible for UNSW HDR scholarships, provided UNSW has sufficient scholarship funds available and the other eligibility criteria set out in this procedure are satisfied.

If approved, the time already consumed will be deducted from the scholarship duration entitlement.

3.5.2. Part-time consideration

Part-time scholarships are prorated (ie paid at 50% of the full-time rate over double the full time duration), and are taxable by the Australian Government. Recipients should seek independent professional advice prior to submitting their tax return. International recipients can only receive a part-time scholarship if permitted under the conditions of their visa.

3.5.3. External enrolment

UNSW scholarships do not support candidates who are externally enrolled. Recipients must be enrolled on campus or at a UNSW affiliated institution during their candidature, and meet the minimum residency requirement at UNSW. This is to ensure that recipients have access to the support, infrastructure and experience to successfully complete their HDR program.

4. Eligibility

- 4.1. To be considered for a scholarship at UNSW, applicants must meet all requirements detailed in the [Admission to Higher Degree Research Programs Procedure](#) and [Higher Degree Research Scholarships Procedure](#) from the time of application.
- 4.2. A complete application with all supporting documentation [required for assessment](#) must be provided by the relevant scholarship deadline. This includes transcripts for all degrees attempted, a financial declaration, the supervisor agreement/EOI outcome, satisfactory proof of English (English Waiver requests must be fully approved by the deadline), and requests for special consideration. All documents must be in English or include an English copy translated by an accepted translator.
- 4.3. Applicants who are currently completing a degree may be assessed based on a prediction of their final marks, which are to be confirmed once the degree is complete.
- 4.4. Applicants cannot be considered for a UNSW HDR Scholarship if they are receiving an equivalent scholarship covering a living allowance and/or tuition fees.

5. Selection

Scholarships are allocated in accordance with the objectives of the RTP and the research excellence, research capacity, and equity and diversity goals of UNSW. By applying for a UNSW HDR scholarship, applicants will be considered for all relevant UNSW HDR scholarships based on eligibility. UNSW HDR Scholarships are awarded in accordance with the Scholarships Procedure.

- 5.1. The Scholarship selection process and allocation is determined by the Central Scholarship Ranking Committee on advice from Schools and Faculties at UNSW, with final approval by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research & Enterprise).
- 5.2. Scholarships are awarded using a merit based, competitive process and in accordance with the UNSW objectives. Priority will be given to applicants who have not already been awarded a research degree at the level for which they are applying.
- 5.3. The number of scholarships available is dependent on budget and take-up rates, and may differ from round to round.
- 5.4. Scholarships will be allocated on this basis in the order listed in section 2. Successful applicants will only be offered one type of scholarship.

- 5.5. RTP Fee Offset Only: Domestic applicants need to meet Admission eligibility to receive the RTP Fee Offset only award.

6. Scholarship outcomes

Notification period

- 6.1. Scholarship outcomes are released from the advertised release date ([Application Deadlines](#)). Initial offers are released within 2 weeks of the advertised date. Further offers can take around two months, depending on several factors, including:
- 6.1.1. Decline/finalisation of initial offers
 - 6.1.2. Confirmation of final degree marks
 - 6.1.3. Confirmation of TFS stipend from relevant source
 - 6.1.4. Finalisation of admission/supervision requirements
- 6.2. Admission and scholarship outcomes are provided in separate correspondence, and may be at separate times. All applicants, successful and unsuccessful, will be notified.
- 6.3. Some applications may require more time for School/Faculty assessment or may require confirmation of final marks before assessment can be finalised. In certain cases, the application may need to be moved to the following scholarship round. Affected applicants will be notified, and may need to re-meet English for the new term they will be considered for.
- 6.3.1. Applicants requiring final mark consideration are expected to provide their final transcript showing completion of all requirements of the degree (including research components which may have a pass/fail/complete status as well as any Honours Class grades), examiner reports (if applicable), and completion certificates to the GRS by the date outlined in the notification. Current UNSW students can notify GRS once final marks are available (including Honours Class) so the final transcript can be accessed internally.
- Final confirmed results will be assessed by the School/Faculty to determine a final assessment (may take 4 weeks), after which time a scholarship outcome will be provided.

Unconditional Offers

- 6.4. Scholarship offers may be available for multiple terms (conditional upon admission deferral approval and continued Proof of English validity), details are outlined in the scholarship offer letter.
- 6.5. Domestic RTP Fee Offset Only: The admission offer also indicates success of the RTP Fee Offset.

Conditional offers

- 6.6. Applicants who are currently completing a degree may be assessed based on a prediction of their final marks if their prior experience does not meet eligibility. If the predicted marks are at a high enough level, a conditional scholarship offer may be made. Applicants are not able to accept conditional offers.
- Refer to 6.3.1 for requirements for confirmation of final marks.
- 6.7. A conditional offer does not guarantee a final offer.

Unsuccessful outcomes

- 6.8. Applicants will be notified if their application has been unsuccessful. Due to the volume of applications, GRS cannot provide further details on unsuccessful outcomes.
- 6.9. Applicants may be eligible to be reconsidered for a scholarship on a case-by-case basis. Reconsideration will be permitted where a TFS stipend becomes available after the round, and where the applicant has written confirmation of the stipend from their supervisor. It may also be permitted in the following cases, as detailed in the applicant's outcome email:
- 6.9.1. After 6 months of the unsuccessful outcome,
 - 6.9.2. Where the reapplication meets the eligibility requirements, *and either*
 - 6.9.3. If the applicant has completed further substantial relevant research experience (eg 1 year of research experience + publication in an international refereed journal), *or*
 - 6.9.4. If there is significant change in the research topic, or a change of supervisor or program.

In such cases, the applicant should email the GRS Admissions & Scholarships team with their request, addressing the above points, and attach supporting documentation.

7. Response to unconditional offers

Recipients must respond to their offer within 2 weeks of receiving the offer. Recipients can accept, decline, or, if outlined in the offer, request to defer their admission and scholarship. If admission is deferred, acceptance is due two weeks from the deferred admission letter.

Acceptance

By accepting the scholarship, the recipient accepts the accompanying Terms & Conditions, & other Conditions of candidature.

- 7.1. Recipients accept their admission and scholarship offers through the UNSW [Accept Online system](#). Recipients should not proceed with Accept Part 2 or Enrolment until they have arrived on campus and are ready to start studying.
- 7.2. Recipients who have previously accepted their admission offer will accept their scholarship offer by completing an Acceptance Form (included with the scholarship offer letter) and returning to the nominated email address.
- 7.3. International recipients: a Confirmation of Enrolment (CoE) will be issued within the fortnight following scholarship acceptance. Once received, recipients should immediately apply for the student visa (including purchasing the required Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC))

Decline

Recipients not proceeding with their UNSW offer should decline the offer via [Accept Online](#), and in writing to their supervisor.

Deferral

Some scholarships may be deferred to a later term. If this is the case, this will be outlined in the offer letter.

- 7.4. Recipients can request to defer their offer to a later term if required. Prior to requesting, recipients should check:
 - 7.4.1. they meet the UNSW English requirements for the new term and, if required, submit updated satisfactory English proof to the Admissions & Scholarships Team, GRS; and
 - 7.4.2. whether the scholarship is still valid for the relevant term, as outlined in the Scholarship offer.

- 7.5. Recipients request to defer through [Accept Online](#) if they hold an unconditional offer, or by reply email to the GRS if they hold a conditional offer.
- 7.6. Deferral consideration may take around 4 weeks for assessment, and an outcome will be provided once finalised.
- 7.7. For Scholarships which are not able to be deferred, recipients will be placed in the next available scholarship round for competitive reassessment. The outcome will be available after the relevant round release date as advertised on the [Application Deadlines](#) page.

8. Commencement of the scholarship

- 8.1. Prior to scholarship commencement, recipients must arrive on campus, fulfil any requirements outlined in the admission offer letter, and enrol.
Stipend scholarship recipients must hold an Australian Bank Account in their own name, which must be activated in person.
- 8.2. Domestic RTP Fee Offset only: the RTP Fee Offset will be applied automatically.
- 8.3. To initiate stipend and/or tuition fee payments, scholarship recipients must complete a Commencement of Study form (located within the scholarship offer letter), including organising a Supervisor signature, and submit to the nominated email address no later than the relevant term census date.
 - 8.3.1. Part-time recipients must also send a [Tax File Declaration form](#) to [UNSW HR Salaries](#), otherwise they will be taxed at the highest rate. Recipients must refer to the Australian Tax Office for any further advice.

Payment details

- 8.4. Stipend payments are made fortnightly based on HR pay dates, and may take up to 4 weeks for initial payment to reach the recipient's bank account. Tuition Fees are paid directly to the UNSW prior to census date of the relevant term.
- 8.5. Scholarships will be back paid from the day of enrolment/scholarship commencement, which can be no earlier than the [Enrolment Commencement Date](#) for that term.
- 8.6. Recipients may be entitled to additional allowances which will be paid after submission of the Commencement Form and relevant documentation as outlined in the Terms and Conditions (excluding the Thesis Allowance). These will be paid as a lump sum on the date of the first stipend payment.
- 8.7. Any top ups outlined in the scholarship offer letter will be paid in line with the UNSW HDR scholarship stipend. Any additional awards/top ups not outlined in your scholarship offer letter must be [initiated](#) by the Scholarship Proposer.
- 8.8. Payment details will be confirmed in writing once the payment has been processed. Further Information related to scholarship payments can be found [online](#).
- 8.9. Scholarships are pro rated, and calculated on a day count basis. Payments for a given period can be calculated based on the following formula:

Scholarship amount / amount duration * days of payment

For example, a fortnight's payment for a \$30,000 per annum (pa) stipend will be calculated:

$\$30,000 / 365$ (or 366 for leap year) * 14 = \$1150.68

- 8.10. Once the initial payment is set up, bank account details can be updated by the candidate directly through their [myUNSW](#) profile.

Pay slips

- 8.11. Scholarship recipients can view their payment history and the details of the scholarship through their [MyUNSW](#) profile. Candidates can download payslips by logging into MyUNSW and going to:

- Manage my profile
- Payroll information
- View payslip

Then select the dates they are interested in and download their payslip.

- 8.12. The first payslip will have an artificial annual figure. This is because the first payment will usually not be an exact fortnight of pay, and may include back pay.

- 8.13. Subsequent pay advice will reflect an annual rate calculated on a 364 day year, due to UNSW's payroll system, and will not appear to reflect the true per annum rate of their scholarship. It will show a figure that is 364 out of 365ths of their true per annum rate. Recipients will however receive 365 (or 366 for a leap year) days' worth of that 364 day pay rate, and hence after 365/366 days, they will have received the full 365/366 day scholarship amount they are entitled to.

(eg) For a \$22,860 per annum scholarship (ie for 365 days), pay advice may show a candidate is receiving \$22,797.37 pa ($364/365 \times \$22,860$).

Calculation to check the true scholarship entitlement:

Pay advice annual rate / 364 * 365 (or 366 for a leap year)

(eg) For \$22,797.37 annual rate: $\$22,797.37/364 \text{ days} \times 365 \text{ days} = \$22,860$ per annum.