

Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Domestic Fee Offset Guidelines 2023

1. Introduction

The Commonwealth Government's Research Training Program (RTP) (in effect as of 1 January 2017) provides funding to universities to support the research training of both domestic and international higher degree research (HDR) candidates. The funding provided through the RTP offers the provision for universities to provide tuition fee offsets to domestic candidates commencing or enrolled in HDR programs for which RTP support is available, with the requirement that the university fully offsets tuition fees applicable for a candidate within a maximum period of candidature. The support provided through the RTP Domestic Fee Offset replaces the Commonwealth Government's Research Training Scheme (RTS) (see Section 11 of these Guidelines for arrangements for continuing candidates previously supported under the RTS), and is governed by the [Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#).

HDR programs for which candidates may be supported by a RTP Domestic Fee Offset are determined by the University on the basis of advice from the Board of Graduate Research. The University will identify these programs in the specific program information set out on the University's [Programs and Courses](#) website. Domestic candidates enrolled in programs that the University determines will not receive support through the RTP are required to pay tuition fees as specified in the *Fees and Charges Policy*.

2. Eligibility Requirements

- (1) To be eligible to receive an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset, a candidate must be:
 - a. an Australian or New Zealand citizen or an Australian permanent resident; and
 - b. commencing or enrolled in a HDR program (for which RTP support is available) at Griffith University.
- (2) An Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset will not be provided to a candidate who is in receipt of an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth Government designed to offset HDR fees.

3. Notification of Provision of a RTP Domestic Fee Offset

- (1) Domestic applicants who are offered a place in a supported HDR program at Griffith University will be provided with an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset. This tuition fee offset will be supplemented by support from Griffith University in order to remove the liability of the HDR candidate to pay tuition fees during the tenure of the RTP Domestic Fee Offset place. The offer letter will set out the estimated annual value of the Commonwealth Government's support provided towards the offset of the candidate's tuition fee liability.

Conditions of the Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset

4. Tenure

- (1) The maximum period of tenure for an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset is up to four years (full-time equivalent) for a Doctoral program and up to 2 years (full-time equivalent) for a Masters (Research) program, calculated from the date of commencement in the HDR program.
- (2) Periods of study towards the research degree within three years prior to commencement in the HDR program will be deducted from the period of the RTP Domestic Fee Offset for candidates seeking recognition of the prior research study.

5. Changes to Candidature

(1) *Transferring from another university*

A request for transfer to Griffith University by a domestic HDR candidate in receipt of an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset from another university will be considered subject to sufficient RTP funds being available to support the candidate. Section 4(2) of these Conditions of Award will apply to transfer of candidature where recognition of prior study is sought. Normally, candidates seeking recognition of prior research study will only be approved to transfer from another institution where they have sufficient RTP Domestic Fee Offset tenure remaining to allow a minimum of one year (full-time equivalent) enrolment at the University.

(2) *Transferring to another university*

On request, Griffith University will provide a HDR candidate with information about their RTP Domestic Fee Offset that is required for enrolment at another University.

(3) *Changing enrolment status*

Candidates supported by an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset may apply to change their enrolment status from part-time to full-time or full-time to part-time in accordance with section 8.10.1 of the University's *Higher Degree Research Policy*. Candidates in receipt of a stipend scholarship will also be subject to the enrolment status requirements set out in the conditions of award for that scholarship.

(4) *Changes to HDR program*

Candidates supported by an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset may apply to change their candidature from a Doctoral to a Masters (Research) degree program or from a Masters (Research) to a Doctoral degree program in accordance with sections 8.10.3 and 8.10.4 respectively of the University's *Higher Degree Research Policy*. Tenure of the RTP Domestic Fee Offset will be adjusted and fees fully offset accordingly upon transfer of candidature into the new program. Candidates in receipt of a stipend scholarship will also be subject to the candidature status requirements set out in the conditions of award for that scholarship.

(5) *Change of research topic*

A request for a major change to the thesis topic must be supported by the principal supervisor and approved by the Dean (Research). If it is established through this approval process that the recorded field of research (FoR) and/or field of education (FoE) for the thesis topic have changed, the Griffith Graduate Research School will update

these fields in the candidate's record.

(6) *Suspension of candidature*

Candidates supported by an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset may apply to suspend their candidature in accordance with sections 8.13.1 to 8.13.4 of the *Higher Degree Research Policy*. Candidates in receipt of a stipend scholarship will also be subject to the requirements regarding suspension of candidature set out in the conditions of award for that scholarship.

6. Employment

- (1) Full-time candidates supported by an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset should consult with their principal supervisor in regard to the decision to undertake paid employment while in the HDR program. Decisions as to the undertaking of any paid employment will be on the proviso that the activity does not impede progress within the HDR program. As such, it is expected that no more than 15 hours per week during normal working hours (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday) will be spent undertaking paid employment.
- (2) The limit on paid employment will normally be different to that set out in Section 6(1) above for candidates in receipt of a stipend scholarship to undertake the HDR program. Such candidates will primarily be subject to the paid employment requirements set out in the conditions of award for that scholarship.

7. Industry placements, research internships and professional practice activities

- (1) Candidates supported by a RTP Domestic Fee Offset may undertake industry placements, research internships and professional practice activities, normally no more than three months (full-time equivalent) duration, that are approved by the Dean GGRS as part of their eligible HDR program.
- (2) Ongoing receipt of the RTP Domestic Fee Offset may be available for the duration of an approved industry placement, research internships or professional practice activity if the scholarship awardee has not exceeded the maximum duration of their HDR Program.
- (3) The undertaking of an approved industry placement, research internship or professional practice activity does not constitute grounds for extension to the tenure of the RTP Domestic Fee Offset place as set out in Section 4 of these Conditions of Award.

8. Supervision and Infrastructure Support

- (1) All HDR candidates, including those in receipt of a HDR scholarship will be entitled to supervisory arrangements as detailed in the *Higher Degree Research Policy*, with responsibilities of parties involved in the supervisory relationship set out in the University's *Code of Practice for the Supervision of HDR Candidates*.
- (2) All HDR candidates are entitled to support towards the infrastructure required for their project as set out in the *Minimum Standards of Resources, Facilities and Other Support*.

9. Termination of the Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset

- (1) Provision of an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset will be terminated in any of the following circumstances:
- a. at the end of the period of tenure provided for by award or when the candidate lodges a thesis, whichever is earlier;
 - b. on the candidate's withdrawal from the HDR program;
 - c. if the candidate ceases to be enrolled and has not requested a period of suspension;
 - d. if the candidate does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension or does not make arrangements to extend that period of suspension
 - e. if the candidate ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in Section 2 of these Guidelines, other than during a period in which a suspension of candidature has been approved;
 - f. if the HDR candidature is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of place in the HDR program, and no suitable alternative arrangements can be made for the continuation of the program.

10. Acknowledgement Requirement

- (1) The Commonwealth Government's contribution towards the offset of tuition fees must be acknowledged when, at any time during or after completion of the HDR degree, the candidate, his/her supervisor or any other party, publishes or produces scholarly material and/or artistic works which relate to the research project carried out by the candidate. This acknowledgement must take the form of a statement included in the published material mentioning the support received through an 'Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship'.

Specific University Obligations

11. Arrangements for continuing candidates previously supported by the RTS

- (1) Current domestic HDR candidates who commenced prior to 1 January 2017, and who were supported through the Australian Government's Research Training Scheme will be provided with an Australian Government RTP Domestic Fee Offset offering equivalent support for the period remaining on the candidate's Research Training Scheme place.

Relevant External Documents

[Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines \(Research\) 2017](#)

The Department of Education and Training's [Research Training Program \(RTP\) webpage](#)

The Department of Education and Training's [Research Training Program – Frequently Asked Questions for Students](#)