



# Higher Education Commission (Pakistan)-ECU PhD Scholarship Conditions

## Scholarship Conditions

Effective from May 2019

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## 1. HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION-ECU PHD SCHOLARSHIPS

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Edith Cowan University (ECU) offer co-funded scholarships to students from Pakistan to undertake a doctoral program (PhD) at Edith Cowan University. Eligible doctoral programs at ECU include:

- Doctor of Philosophy (L61)
- Doctor of Philosophy Integrated (J42)

This is a co-funded scholarship and the conditions (HEC-ECU PhD Scholarship) must be read in conjunction with HEC-specific scholarship terms and conditions (<http://www.hec.gov.pk/english/Pages/Home.aspx>).

## 2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To apply for a HEC-ECU scholarship, applicants must meet **all** of the following criteria:

- **Must** meet HEC selection criteria and be shortlisted for HEC scholarship funding;
- **Must** meet all Edith Cowan University course admission requirements, including English proficiency, and be made an unconditional offer of a place in a *Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)* program before a scholarship can be considered/offered;
- **Must** meet international student visa requirements as specified by the *Department of Home Affairs* including the requirement to purchase and maintain an *Overseas Student Health Cover* policy approved by the *Commonwealth Government Department of Health* <http://www.health.gov.au/>;
- **Must** be enrolled as a full-time and on-campus student at ECU upon commencement of scholarship;
- **Must not** have held an *Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)* or an Australia Award scholarship within the two years prior to commencing the scholarship;
- **Must not** hold a *research doctorate* degree or equivalent;
- **Must not** be receiving income from another source to support general living costs while undertaking the course of study if that income is greater than 75% of the published Research Training Program Stipend rate<sup>1</sup>
- **Must not** be receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth designed to offset HDR fees.
- **May not** concurrently receive an ECU School funded Scholarship or other major scholarship but could receive a stipend supplement.

An applicant will not be considered or awarded a research scholarship unless ECU is satisfied that the applicant meets the above conditions. Where an applicant is expected to meet these conditions in good time, no payments will be made until the conditions are met.

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<sup>1</sup> Income unrelated to the course of study or income received for the course of study but not for the purposes of supporting general living costs is not taken into account. Research Training Program stipend rates are published at: <https://www.education.gov.au/research-training-program>

## **2. PROVISION OF DOCUMENTATION TO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING (AGDOET)**

Application documentation may be provided to AGDOET, if requested by the Department.

## **3. ACCEPTANCE, COMMENCEMENT AND DEFERRAL**

### ***Acceptance/Commencement***

Applicants must notify the Scholarships Office within 14 days (unless otherwise stated in their ECU scholarship offer letter) whether they will accept the offer of scholarship. Acceptance includes a declaration that the recipient accepts the *Scholarship Conditions* (stated in this document). If an applicant does not contact the Scholarships Office by the date specified in their scholarship offer letter, the scholarship offer will lapse. If an applicant does not expect to be at their nominated correspondence address at the time of notification, it is recommended that alternative arrangements be made.

A scholarship offer is only valid within the calendar year in which the offer is made. A scholarship cannot be deferred to a later year. Applicants who cannot commence within the same calendar year may reapply in subsequent scholarship rounds, but there is no guarantee of course placement or scholarship availability.

Applicants should also ensure that they comply with the relevant terms and conditions set out by the HEC.

### ***Deferral Limit***

A scholarship cannot be deferred to a later year.

## **4. VOLUNTARY SUSPENSIONS AND INTERMISSION**

### ***Suspension and Termination of Course and Scholarship within 6 Months of Commencing***

Course and scholarship suspensions are not permitted until a minimum of one semester of enrolment has been completed. If necessary, a scholarship holder must formally apply to terminate the scholarship within 6 months of commencing. Eligibility to reapply for a scholarship at a later date will be forfeited unless the scholarship is officially terminated within six months of the date of commencement of benefits. This condition may be relaxed at the discretion of the University. Future admission to a course and scholarship will be subject to ECUs admission requirements at the time of that application. There is no guarantee of course placement or scholarship availability.

### ***Suspension of Scholarship after 6 Months of Commencing***

After completing the first 6 months of enrolment, scholarship holders may be granted up to a total of 12 months voluntary suspension of scholarship during the remaining tenure. In exceptional circumstances, arising from causes outside the scholarship holder's control, an extension to the suspension period beyond 12 months may be considered by the Graduate Research School Committee (GRSC). Any periods of study undertaken towards the degree during suspension of the scholarship will be deducted from the maximum period of scholarship duration. Requests for suspension should be made via the *HDR Scholarship Variation* form at the earliest opportunity. Application forms for scholarship suspension are available from the student intranet (<http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/forms/home>)

### ***Intermission of Course and Scholarship***

Scholarship holders may intermit from their course of study and suspend their scholarship for either 6 or 12 months (one or two semesters). An Application for Variation of Higher Degrees by Research Candidature can be made online at <http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/forms/overview>. International scholarship holders should note that a course intermission may have visa implications. Students considering intermission should seek guidance from Student Connect via [enquiries@ecu.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@ecu.edu.au) and the HEC.

### ***Suspension of Scholarship Stipend Payments***

Scholarship stipend payments may be suspended (and reinstated) on the request of the Associate Dean (Research) to the Scholarships Office, in cases where scholarship holders have not maintained satisfactory progress, or have been absent without leave or approval. The Associate Dean (Research) may stipulate a period of suspension, and terms/conditions to satisfy reinstatement of payment.

## **5. TERMINATION**

Benefits will cease on the date of termination of the Scholarship. Any overpayment must be repaid to the University. If a scholarship is terminated, it cannot be re-activated unless the termination occurred in error. A scholarship will be terminated:

- If the scholarship holder ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in these *Scholarship Conditions*, other than during a period in which the scholarship has been suspended or during a period of approved leave as outlined in these *Scholarship Conditions*;
- When the scholarship holder ceases to be a full-time student and approval has not been obtained to hold the scholarship on a part-time basis;
- On death, incapacity or withdrawal of the student;
- On submission of the thesis for examination;
- If the scholarship holder does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension, or does not make arrangements to extend that period of suspension;
- If the scholarship holder accepts another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake their research degree providing more than 75% of the base RTP stipend rate and does not comply with the requirements outlined in *Additional Funding*;
- Once the maximum duration of the scholarship tenure has been reached; and
- If the University determines that:
  - The course of study is not being carried out competently and diligently or in accordance with the offer of the scholarship; or
  - The scholarship holder has failed to maintain Satisfactory Progress and to meet the required conditions outlined in their Research Progress Contract; or
  - The scholarship holder has committed serious academic misconduct including, but not limited, to the provision of false or misleading information as outlined in these *Scholarship Conditions*.

## **6. DURATION OF SCHOLARSHIP**

The duration of a full-time HEC-ECU Scholarship is a maximum of four years from the commencement date verified by the Principal Supervisor.

The duration of a scholarship will be reduced by any period of study undertaken:

- (a) Towards the degree prior to the commencement of the scholarship; OR
- (b) Towards the degree during non-voluntary suspension of the scholarship.

## **7. VISA REQUIREMENTS**

It is the responsibility of HEC-ECU scholarship holders to ensure that their student visa is valid.

HEC-ECU scholarship holders planning to depart and return to Australia during their course should ensure that they hold a valid visa for re-entry into Australia.

All international students studying in Australia are required to purchase and maintain Overseas Student Health Cover (*OSHC*) for the duration of their student visa. It is the responsibility of scholarship holders to ensure that their health cover is current.

A HEC-ECU Scholarship does not cover the cost of ancillary health services<sup>2</sup> or extra costs associated with *OSHC*, including medical costs associated with the issuing or renewing a student visa.

## **8. PAYMENTS AND ALLOWANCES TO SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS**

### ***HEC Contribution***

HEC will provide scholarship holders with:

- (a) A living allowance of AUD \$19,000 per year;
- (b) Single overseas student health cover insurance for the entire period of their PhD studies up to a maximum of 48 months;
- (c) A return international airfare to Perth, Australia via the route specified in the scholarship offer.

### ***ECU Contribution***

ECU will provide scholarship holders with:

- (a) A living allowance top-up<sup>3</sup> to the current ECU scholarship stipend allowance;
- (b) Tuition fee offset for the entire period of their PhD studies up to a maximum of 48 months;
- (c) Reimbursement of English language testing (IELTS/TOEFL) after accepting the ECU course offer and enrolling in their degree;
- (d) Reimbursement of the initial visa application fee upon production of receipts (see Appendix A)

The total amount of the living allowance for a HEC-ECU Scholarship will be equal to the current ECU scholarship stipend rates. This will be paid by ECU in equal fortnightly instalments to scholarship holders. Stipend base rates may be indexed annually.

Rates for ECU stipends and allowances are listed in Appendix A.

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<sup>2</sup> Health services provided by health professionals, but which are not classed as Medical or Hospital. Ancillary services include physiotherapy, dental services, speech therapy, ambulance travel, home nursing and spectacles.

<sup>3</sup> Top-up living allowance rates are to the value of the current ECU scholarship levels, and represent the gap between these levels and the stipend provided by the HEC.

### ***School Education for Dependents***

International scholarship holders may not be required to pay the education costs for any of their dependents attending government primary and secondary schools in Australia. However, exemption from education costs for dependents at government schools will vary according to the state/territory. Scholarship holders should contact the school where they propose to send their dependents to in order to determine what costs may apply, particularly in relation to *English as a Second Language (ESL)* tuition, which is not funded by the *Australian Government*.

NB: Eligibility will be determined by the Australian Government.

## **9. ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

### ***Progress Report***

Towards the end of each semester, a Progress Report notification is sent to the scholarship holder and the Principal Supervisor. This report must be completed online by the scholarship holder and the Principal Supervisor and submitted by the due date. Scholarship holders who do not complete their progress report by the due date will have their candidature discontinued, which will impact their scholarship.

The Principal Supervisor, via the Progress Report, will advise Research Assessments if a scholarship holder is considered to be achieving Satisfactory Progress (SP) towards his/her PhD goals. Scholarship holders who do not maintain satisfactory progress may be allocated a grade of Marginal Progress (MP) and be required to undertake a Research Progress Contract in the following semester in conjunction with their Principal Supervisor. In the event that the conditions in the Progress Contract are not met, the scholarship will be terminated.

Scholarship holders enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy (Integrated)(J42) program will have their scholarships terminated if they:

- Fail a non-thesis unit and are excluded from the course; or,
- Do not achieve an overall weighted average mark (WAM) of 70% in the first year of research preparation coursework and their candidature is subsequently discontinued.

### ***Confirmation of Candidature***

Scholarship holders must achieve Confirmation of Candidature by the deadlines prescribed in the Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules.

Progress will be regarded as unsatisfactory if the research proposal has not been approved within twelve months of full-time study or part-time equivalent. This may result in a grade of *Marginal Progress (MP)*, or exclusion from the course. Where exceptional circumstances can be substantiated, consideration of these circumstances should be requested in writing prior to the completion of 6 months of enrolment.

## **10. EMPLOYMENT FOR FULL TIME SCHOLARSHIP HOLDERS**

Full time scholarship holders can undertake part-time employment on condition that work undertaken does not interfere with the progress of the scholarship holder's study program.

Scholarship holders intending to undertake paid employment should complete a *HDR Scholarship Entitlement Request* form and obtain their Principal Supervisor's approval. In considering the application, the Principal Supervisor should be satisfied that the work will not interfere with the scholarship holder's study program. Once completed, the form should be returned to the Scholarships Office.

HDR Scholarship forms are available on-line at: <http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/forms/overview>.

It is expected that part-time work between Monday and Friday should not exceed an average of 8 hours per week over a 6-month period (January to June or July to December). The total number of hours worked for each 6-month period between Monday and Friday should not exceed 208 hours.

In exceptional circumstances, the Associate Dean (Research) may approve additional hours of paid employment if a case can be made that the additional employment has a direct benefit for the student's research degree (for example practicum or industry experience) and will not interfere with progress. The scholarship holder's Research Proposal and Ethics clearance should be formally approved prior to considering additional work. In such a case, the supervisor must support the scholarship holder's application for extra employment, keeping in mind the possible impacts on progress. Where additional paid employment is approved, the arrangements must be reviewed each semester for approval to continue.

Working hours are to be noted on the biannual *Progress Reports*. Scholarship holders should note either the average hours they worked each week or the total number of hours they worked over the previous 6-month period, including the kind of work undertaken. Scholarship holders should also note the average or total number of hours they intend to work in the coming 6-month period, and if more than the 208 hours allowed, seek approval from the relevant Associate Dean Research.

Scholarship holders accepting employment as lecturers or tutors are reminded that when determining the average or total number of hours worked, they must use the following multiplier:

- One hour (1) of lecturing equates to three (3) hours of employment
- One hour (1) of tutoring equates to two (2) hours of employment

Therefore, eight hours of lecturing and/or tutoring is not permitted. An acceptable employment load must take account of any multiplication factor.

Forms to calculate the number of hours worked in a week are available from: [scholarships@ecu.edu.au](mailto:scholarships@ecu.edu.au)

Scholarship holders should also ensure that they comply with the relevant terms and conditions set out by the HEC.

## **11. ADDITIONAL FUNDING**

Scholarship holders are permitted to:

- Obtain funds from other sources for fieldwork, equipment or other expenses not covered by the award;
- Obtain funding for overseas travel costs from other Australian Government awards or any other sources;
- Receive income derived from part-time work undertaken within the guidelines set out under the *Employment* section of these guidelines; and



- Receive another award, scholarship or salary to undertake the research higher degree as long as it is less than 75% of the Research Training Program base stipend rate.

The University provides travel insurance cover for personal accident and sickness, hijack and detention, baggage/business property, travel documents, etc. for enrolled students travelling with authorisation from Edith Cowan University.

## **12. LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS**

This section must be read in conjunction with the relevant terms and conditions set out by the HEC.

All leave (except maternity leave) for a scholarship with a duration of less than the maximum period of the relevant award is calculated pro-rata based on the duration of that scholarship.

### ***Annual Recreation Leave***

Scholarship holders are entitled to up to 20 working days of annual recreation leave each year. Recreation leave is part of the scholarship allowance and normal stipend payments will continue to be paid throughout the annual leave period.

Annual leave days may be accrued for use in another year, however, the scholarship holder will forfeit any unused leave once the thesis is submitted for examination or when the scholarship is terminated or expired, whichever occurs first.

No application to the Scholarships Office is required for annual leave. However, the dates should be arranged in consultation with the Principal Supervisor, and in line with School requirements for HDR student leave.

Scholarship holders are required to report the number of days of annual leave taken each semester on the *Progress Report*.

### ***Other Approved Leave***

Scholarship holders may apply for:

- Short leave (with sufficient cause) of up to 3 days per annum;
- Compassionate leave (life-threatening illness/injury of someone close) of up to 3 days per annum;

### ***Sick Leave***

Scholarship holders may take up to a total of 10 working days of sick leave each year of the scholarship. Sick leave is part of the scholarship allowance and normal stipend payments will continue to be paid throughout the period of leave.

Sick leave days may be accrued and used in subsequent years. However, the scholarship holder will forfeit any unused leave once the thesis is submitted for examination or when the scholarship is terminated or expired, whichever occurs first.

Scholarship holders are required to report the number of days of sick leave taken each semester in the *Progress Report*. For periods exceeding 2 consecutive days, scholarship holders must provide a medical certificate upon their return from sick leave to their School, and upload a medical certificate with their progress report.

No application is required for standard sick leave (up to 10 days per year). Sick leave entitlements may be used to cover scholarship holders with family responsibilities, caring for sick children or relatives, subject to the usual practice of the University.

***Extended Sick Leave\****

Scholarship holders may also receive additional/extended paid sick leave of up to a total of 12 weeks during their scholarship after all sick leave entitlements have been utilised. Extended paid sick leave will be applied to periods of illness where the scholarship holder has insufficient sick leave entitlements and for which a medical certificate has been/can be provided. For extended paid sick leave, the duration of the award will be extended by that period, up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

The maximum period Extended Sick Leave may be approved is 60 days inclusive of all public holidays but excluding weekends.

HDR Scholarship forms are available on-line at: <http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/forms/overview>.

***Maternity Leave\****

Scholarship holders who have completed 12 months of their scholarship are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks (inclusive of public holidays or working public holidays) paid maternity leave during their scholarship. As paid maternity leave may not be taken within the first 12 months of an award, unpaid maternity leave may be accessed through the Suspension provisions outlined in these Conditions. In the case of paid maternity leave, the duration of the award would be extended by that period, up to 12 weeks.

HDR Scholarship forms are available on-line at: <http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/forms/overview>.

\*NB: Scholarship holders will still be consuming candidature while on Extended Sick/Maternity Leave if the enrolment has not been amended. Enrolment can only be amended for full semesters.

***Parenting Leave***

Scholarship holders who are the partner of a birth mother or an adoptive parent who is not the primary care giver and has completed 12 months on scholarship may apply for single continuous period of 2 weeks paid partner leave immediately after the birth or placement of the child (As per ECU Enterprise Agreement 2017 section 41.11)

In this case the scholarship holder shall advise the Scholarships Office at least 4 weeks (where possible) prior to the commencement of parenting leave, and submit an application for leave that includes:

- (i) Notice of his or her intention to take short partner leave and the dates of such leave; and
- (ii) A certificate from a medical practitioner or midwife stating that the employee's partner is pregnant and the expected date of birth. (As per ECU Parental Leave Policy HR156 section 4.5.2)

In this case, scholarship holders are not required to defer from their course.

A scholarship holder who is not the primary care giver may also request up to 6 weeks unpaid partner leave to be taken:

- Concurrently with any paid partner leave granted; or
- Within 12 months of the birth or placement of the child in separate periods, normally no shorter than 2 weeks in duration.

Scholarship holders who have not completed 12 months of the award may access unpaid parenting leave through the *Suspension* provisions outlined in these *Conditions*.

### 13. RESEARCH OVERSEAS

Stipend payments will continue during periods spent conducting research outside Australia, where:

- The research is essential for completion of the degree;
- There will be continued regular supervision;
- The scholarship holder will remain enrolled as a full-time student complying with all scholarship and course enrolment conditions; and
- The work will be credited to the scholarship holder's course.

Where the scholarship holder is undertaking a Joint PhD, the scholarship conditions will be determined in accordance with the Joint Doctor of Philosophy Programs Policy ac097 [http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies\\_db/policies\\_view.php?rec\\_id=0000000394](http://www.ecu.edu.au/GPPS/policies_db/policies_view.php?rec_id=0000000394)

It is normally expected that the scholarship holder will have their research proposal approved (Confirmation of Candidature) before an application to carry out overseas study is considered.

At least one month before departure, a scholarship holder planning international fieldwork must submit a *HDR Scholarship Entitlement Request* form to the Scholarships Office, endorsed by the Principal Supervisor. The scholarship holder must personally make arrangements for his/her enrolment to be maintained and for his/her semester *Progress Reports* to be completed, signed and returned to Research Assessments by the due date.

HDR Scholarship forms are available at: <http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/forms/overview>. This documentation must be lodged with the Scholarships Office at least one month prior to departure.

Whilst a scholarship holder is abroad, the scholarship stipend will only be paid into a bank account in Australia. Any arrangements for the transfer of money overseas will be the responsibility of the scholarship holder.

Approval to continue on scholarship whilst conducting research overseas does **not** constitute approval to travel. This must be organised through the appropriate School.

#### ***Travel Insurance***

The University provides travel insurance for personal accident and sickness, baggage/business property, travel documents etc. Enrolled students travelling must have authorisation from the University. Further information regarding travel insurance should be sought from the scholarship holder's School.

### 14. SCHOLARSHIP VARIATIONS

#### ***Extension of Scholarship Tenure***

No extension is possible for a HEC-ECU Scholarship. Scholarship and course duration is a maximum of 48 months.

#### ***Transfers***

HEC-ECU Scholarships are not transferable to another provider/institution.

### ***Change of Research Area or Transfer of Course***

Subject to the usual practices of the University, a scholarship holder may change the research area or transfer to a different course from that which was originally indicated at the time of being awarded a scholarship, as long as appropriate supervision is available. This transfer must be accommodated within the original tenure of the scholarship (i.e. no extension of the scholarship will be approved for a change in research area or course alone).

There may be visa implications for a change in course. Scholarship holders should contact a Student Connect Officer for further information and advice.

## **15. SUBMISSION OF THESIS**

Scholarship holders will cease to be entitled to stipend payments once their thesis has been submitted for examination. This means that stipend payments will cease within two weeks of the date of thesis submission. A scholarship holder must advise the Scholarships Office of submission within five days of the event. If a scholarship holder fails to advise the Scholarships Office, any stipend payment received after the date of thesis submission must be repaid to the University.

## **16. PROVISION OF FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION**

If the University knows, or has reason to believe, that a scholarship holder has provided false or misleading information to the University in relation to that scholarship, the University will immediately:

- Re-assess the student's entitlement to the scholarship; and
- Notify *AGDOET* of the suspected offence and provide a copy of the student's application and any other relevant information requested by *AGDOET*.

Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code (Commonwealth)

## **17. OBLIGATIONS OF EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY**

- For detailed information on the conduct of research degrees, scholarship holders are referred to the Research Forms, Policies and Guidelines, which is available on-line at: <http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/research/for-research-students/research-journey/forms-policies-and-guidelines>
- For details of academic regulations, including grievance resolution, students are referred to *Student Information* (<http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/my-studies/home>).
- The Scholarships Office will administer the scholarship, monitor progress, and arrange payment of all entitlements to scholarship holders.
- The GRSC has the right to vary conditions with due cause at any time. The Scholarships Office will advise applicants and scholarship holders of such changes.
- Applicants have the right of appeal against process issues, but not against committee decisions or assessor ratings and comments. To initiate an appeal on due grounds, a letter that specifies the grounds for appeal can be sent to the Scholarships Office within 14 days of the date on the letter/email advising the outcome of the scholarship application. The case will be reviewed by the GRSC (or Nominee) and a response to the applicant will be provided within 28 days.
- Provision of scholarships under the above conditions, by Edith Cowan University, is subject to the continuing receipt of funding from the *AGDOET*.

## APPENDIX A

### STIPEND AND ALLOWANCE AMOUNTS

Effective for 2019

**1. STIPEND**

For full-time students receiving a HEC-ECU Scholarship, the stipend is \$28,420 to be paid fortnightly in equal instalments through the University payroll system.

**2. TUITION FEE OFFSET**

For full-time students receiving a HEC-ECU Scholarship, the tuition fee offset is \$33,250 for up to 48 months (four years)

**3. INITIAL VISA APPLICATION FEE**

Visa Application Fee reimbursement for a maximum amount of \$550.00.

**4. IELTS/TOEFL TESTING**

Reimbursement for one IELTS or TOEFL test fee, payable upon submission of receipt after accepting the ECU course offer and enrolling in degree