Higher Degree Research (HDR) Scholarship Conditions of Award

Overview

Edith Cowan University (**ECU**) provides Higher Degree by Research Scholarships (**HDR Scholarships**) to support Candidates with outstanding research potential who are undertaking HDR Courses. These Conditions apply where a Candidate receives a HDR Scholarship, unless otherwise stated, and are consistent with the Higher Education Support (Commonwealth Scholarships) Guidelines 2025.

Two major costs that may be supported by a HDR Scholarship include tuition fee offset and living costs:

- **Tuition fee offset:** to provide support to cover part or all of a recipient's tuition fees for a given period. Recipients may be invoiced for the remainder of fees not covered by a tuition fee offset or when the tuition fee offset ends.
- **Stipends:** to provide recipients with a stipend to support some of their living costs for a given period while undertaking study. Stipends are provided in various forms and may include co-funding from external organisations.

Recipients may be eligible for a tuition fee offset without receiving a stipend. However, any recipient receiving a stipend will typically also receive a tuition fee offset. The conditions (e.g. period of support and value) for tuition fees offset and stipends may differ and are outlined below. Recipients may also be eligible for other allowances as outlined in the Value of Scholarships and Payment section below.

Scholarships may have tax implications, and it is the recipient's responsibility to check on an ongoing basis any tax liability of receiving a scholarship. This is particularly important for recipients receiving a part-time scholarship or receiving funding outside their scholarship. Please refer to the Australian Taxation Office website for information about scholarships and taxation.

Recipients must read these Conditions in conjunction with their specific scholarship offer. If a HDR Scholarship is entirely or partly funded by an external party, or by a particular ECU School/Teaching Area, recipients must accept any additional terms and conditions of that funding.

Note: International Strategic Scholarships sponsored by foreign governments, e.g. Higher Education Commission (Pakistan) (HEC) or China Scholarship Council (CSC), are not covered by the scholarship conditions in this document. Recipients of International Strategic Scholarships should refer to the conditions associated with those scholarships.

Higher Degree Research (HDR) Scholarship Conditions of Award

1. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for a HDR Scholarship, Candidates must:

a. be enrolled, or have received an unconditional offer to be enrolled, and thereafter continue to be enrolled in an accredited ECU HDR Course, including meeting all admission and English proficiency requirements;

b. not be receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth designed to offset HDR fees;

c. not be receiving a scholarship for which course tuition is a component under any other scholarship scheme to which the Australian Government makes a substantial contribution;

d. be proposing research that aligns with ECU's research priority areas, as determined by ECU;

e. be able to be supervised by a supervisory team that has appropriate strengths and experience to support the Candidate and maximise outcomes from the proposed research, as determined by ECU;

f. be enrolled as a full-time Candidate or be granted approval for a part-time scholarship in line with criteria in Condition 4 - Part-Time Scholarship;

g. meet 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 (for international Candidates only); and

h. not have held an Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) or an Australia Award scholarship within two years before commencing the HDR Scholarship.

2. SELECTION, ASSESSMENT AND OFFERS

a. HDR Scholarships will be allocated following a selection process determined by ECU.

b. Applications will be assessed, scored and ranked on measures including academic merit, demonstrated and potential research performance, and relevant and directly related professional research experience. Further information on the scholarship assessment process and criteria is available in the HDR Scholarship Rounds Information for Applicant.

c. ECU will convene necessary committees and panels to assist with the provision of a transparent and quality selection process, including a selection panel for managing the process of selecting and awarding HDR Scholarships.

d. The quorum for a selection panel convened for deciding HDR Scholarships will be at least three (3) members, and must include the Dean, Graduate Research, or their nominee as Chair.

e. Members of the selection panel will disclose any conflict of interest in accordance with ECU's Conflicts of Interest policy and associated operational processes. Where there is a

potential, perceived or actual conflict of interest, the member is permitted to participate in panel processes, but will not participate in scoring or ranking the individual application to which the conflict relates.

f. The selection panel will be responsible for verification of final scores, rankings and providing recommendations of awardees for the HDR Scholarships to be reviewed and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), or nominee.

g. Not all applicants who meet the eligibility criteria will be offered a HDR Scholarship. The order of merit will not be made public, and applicants will not be informed of their rank. Individual ranking and specific details about the order of merit will only be made available to the selection committee.

h. Applicants do not have the right to a merits review or appeal relating to whether a HDR Scholarship will be given (for procedural review, refer to Condition 17 – Review).

i. ECU Fees and Scholarships Office may provide an offer of a HDR Scholarship in writing to a proposed recipient.

j. Recipients must accept offers and commence the HDR Scholarship by the deadlines in the HDR Scholarship offer letter. If the offer is not accepted and the HDR Scholarship commenced by the relevant deadlines, the offer will lapse, and the HDR Scholarship will be rescinded, without further notice being required.

3. PERIOD OF SUPPORT

a. The period of support for a HDR Fees Offset or HDR Stipend commences on the relevant date set out in the recipient's offer letter.

b. For a HDR Fees Offset, unless otherwise specified in the recipient's offer letter, the period of support will be up to:
- four (4) years if undertaking an eligible PhD full-time;
- eight (8 years) pro-rated if undertaking an eligible PhD part-time;
- two (2) years if undertaking an eligible MbR full-time; or
- four (4 years) pro-rated if undertaking an eligible MbR part-time.

c. For a HDR Stipend, unless otherwise specified in the recipient's offer letter, the period of support will be up to:
- three (3) years if undertaking an eligible PhD full-time;
- six (6 years) pro-rated if undertaking an eligible PhD part-time;
- two (2) years if undertaking an eligible MbR full-time; or
- four (4 years) pro-rated if undertaking an eligible MbR part-time.

d. HDR Scholarships will conclude at the expiry of the period of support, or if the HDR Scholarship is terminated under Condition 8. If the recipient remains enrolled in their HDR Course after termination of the HDR Scholarship, the recipient may be required to pay the Course tuition fees applicable at the time of termination.

e. The period of support will be reduced by any period of study undertaken at ECU or another university towards the HDR Course before the commencement of the HDR Scholarship.

f. The duration of the HDR Scholarship will be increased by periods of Extended leave approved by ECU (refer to Condition 12 – Leave Entitlements).

g. Approved part-time recipients are expected to progress at half the rate of full-time recipients.

4. PART-TIME SCHOLARSHIP

a. Recipients may apply in writing to receive their scholarship part-time. Approval for part-time scholarship is at discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee who will be satisfied that the recipient has exceptional circumstances that limit their capacity to undertake full-time study. Such circumstances may include:

- Carer responsibilities for pre-school or school aged children (supported by the child's birth certificate and/or Centrelink sole parent documentation);
- Carer responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent (supported by a Centrelink carer allowance document or similar);
- A medical condition or disability which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification or Centrelink disability pension document); or
- Engagement in employment activities that will not interfere with their progress (supported by a recommendation from the relevant Associate Dean (Research)).

The ability for a recipient to study part-time may be affected by their relevant visa requirements.

b. Employment, or intentions to commence employment, are not definitive grounds to the provision of a part-time scholarship and part-time HDR Scholarships are unlikely to be approved for recipients seeking to work more than 50% of a Full Time Equivalent (FTE) position.

c. Part-time HDR Scholarships are only available at 0.5FTE.
Note:
i. Recipients enrolled to study 0.5FTE-0.99FTE will only receive a 0.5FTE scholarship; and
ii. HDR Scholarships are not available to recipients studying at less than 0.5FTE. Part-time HDR Scholarships are not available to recipients studying at less than 0.5FTE. Recipients seeking to reduce their enrolment to 0.25FTE temporarily should consider suspending their HDR Scholarship payments (refer to Condition 5 – Scholarship Suspension).

d. Part-time recipients may revert to full-time study at any time, before ECU census dates with ECU's approval, using ECU's Prescribed Process. Please note that amendments to enrolment status can only be made before census date for the relevant Teaching Period (i.e. first semester and second semester).

5. SCHOLARSHIP SUSPENSION

a. Course Intermission

i. If a recipient intermits from their Course, their HDR Scholarship will be automatically intermitted for the same period.

ii. International recipients should note that Course intermission may have visa implications. International recipients considering Course intermission should seek guidance from Student Success via enquiries@ecu.edu.au.

b. Scholarship Suspension

This section applies when a recipient continues to be enrolled in Units for their Course but wishes to apply for a HDR Scholarship suspension.

i. HDR Scholarship suspension is not permitted until a minimum of one teaching period has been completed, unless in Exceptional Circumstances and approved by the Deputy Vice- Chancellor (Research) or nominee.

ii. Where a recipient elects to voluntarily suspend their HDR Scholarship Stipend but continues to be enrolled or undertake study, this period will count towards and be deducted from the maximum period of scholarship support.

iii. Recipients that cease their stipend scholarship but wish to remain enrolled must seek approval from the relevant Associate Dean (Research) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee seeking continuation of their tuition fee offset.

c. Suspension of HDR Stipend by School / Teaching Area

The Dean, Graduate Research or nominee may suspend or reinstate stipend payments upon the relevant Associate Dean (Research)'s recommendation if a recipient has been absent (but remains enrolled) without leave or approval. Any period of suspension under this paragraph will be deducted from the period of support. The Dean, Graduate Research or nominee may stipulate a period of suspension, and conditions required to be satisfied in order for payments to be reinstated.

d. Requests for scholarship suspensions should be made via ECU's Prescribed Processes at the earliest opportunity.

e. A recipient who is suspended pursuant to any ECU Rule, including the Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules, the Academic Misconduct Rules (Students) or the General Misconduct Rules (Students), will also have their HDR Scholarship suspended for the equivalent period. Where provisional enrolment applies, and/or a period of candidature is consumed, then any period of suspension will be deducted from the period of support.

6. ELIGIBLE RESEARCH INTERNSHIPS

a. The Dean, Graduate Research, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, may approve a recipient to undertake an Eligible Research Internship (refer to RTP industry internship). An Eligible Research Internship must:

i. be undertaken by a Research Doctorate student;

ii. be a minimum of three calendar months in duration;

iii. include 60 full-time equivalent days of engagement in research and development activities undertaken by the recipient;
iv. be agreed in writing in an internship agreement; and
v. be related to the student's doctorate area of research.

b. The HDR internship agreement must be made:
i. if a recipient is undertaking full-time study – within 18 months from the commencement date of the student's Research Doctorate; and
ii. if a recipient is undertaking part-time study – within 36 months from the commencement date of the student's Research Doctorate.

c. An Eligible Research Internship may be undertaken on-campus, onsite with a research end-user, online or hybrid, and may be part-time or full-time.

d. An Eligible Research Internship may be undertaken during a period of enrolment or scholarship suspension.

e. Internship undertaken during a period of scholarship stipend suspension:
If a recipient suspends their HDR Scholarship stipend in order to receive payment from the internship provider:
i. the scholarship will cease for the duration of the internship;
ii. the internship period will not be considered a voluntary suspension and will not count towards the maximum period of stipend support.

f. Internship undertaken without suspending the scholarship stipend:
If a recipient undertakes an unpaid Eligible Research Internship without suspending their HDR scholarship stipend:
i. ECU may continue the scholarship during the internship;
ii. where the recipient has reached the maximum candidature period (four years full time equivalent), any request for additional candidature time will be assessed separately in accordance with ECU Research Training policy; and
iii. in both cases, completion of an Eligible Research Internship may be considered as supporting justification for a stipend scholarship extension (Completion Scholarship application, see below) and/or candidature extension application.

g. Conditions for requesting Completion Scholarship (Internship-Related)
Completion Scholarship support related to an Eligible Research Internship may only be granted where all of the following conditions are met:
i. the recipient has completed an Eligible Research Internship;
ii. the support period requested is equivalent to the full-time equivalent duration of the internship undertaken outside any period of scholarship suspension, including applicable weekend days;
iii. the support period does not exceed the three calendar months and falls within the overall maximum allowable stipend extension period (that is, it is not additional to the standard six-month extension limit); and
iv. the recipient remains enrolled during the support period and has not submitted their thesis.

7. VALUE OF SCHOLARSHIP AND PAYMENTS

a. The recipient's offer letter must stipulate the value of the proposed HDR Scholarship.

b. HDR Stipend

i. ECU will pay recipients an annual stipend at least equivalent to the base full-time RTP Stipend rate, published by the Department of Education for the relevant year of award. The annual HDR Scholarship stipend will be pro-rated to the equivalent full-time study load consumed in each calendar year.

ii. Part-time recipients will be administered with a HDR Scholarship stipend at a rate equivalent to half (50%) the base full-time HDR Scholarship stipend rate. Note:

- Recipients enrolled to study 0.5FTE-0.99FTE will only receive a 0.5FTE stipend rate; and
- HDR Scholarships are not available to recipients studying at less than 0.5FTE.

iii. Base RTP Stipend rates are indexed each year in accordance with the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (Cth).

iv. Fortnightly payments of HDR Scholarship stipends will be made directly to recipients to an Australian Approved Deposit-taking institution (such as an Australian bank).

c. Tuition Fee Offsets

i. RTP Fees Offsets can only be used to extinguish the recipient's liability to pay tuition fees.

ii. A tuition fee offset may cover part, or all, of a recipient's fees for an approved HDR course.

iii. Recipients who have not submitted their thesis by the end of the period of support, will be required to pay Course tuition fees applicable at the relevant time, unless exempted by ECU in exceptional circumstances.

d. HDR Scholarship Allowances

Relocation Allowance (Domestic recipient only)

i. The Dean, Graduate Research, may at their discretion provide relocation allowances to Domestic recipients who relocate their place of residence to Perth, Western Australia from remote Western Australia or interstate to commence their HDR Course.

ii. Domestic recipients are Australian citizens, Australian permanent residents (including humanitarian visa holders), or New Zealand citizens. All other recipients are classified as International recipients and will not be eligible for a relocation allowance.

iii. A relocation allowance is payable for a Domestic recipient, their spouse and their dependents, and may comprise both removal expenses and either:

- Air travel expenses, up to a maximum amount equivalent to the comparable economy class or student airfare, whichever is the lower amount; or
- Travel by car, calculated using a per kilometre rate as determined by ECU up to the comparable economy class or student airfare, whichever is the lower amount.

iv. The maximum value of a relocation allowance to a Domestic recipient is $515 for each eligible adult and $255 for each eligible child, up to a cumulative total of $1,485.

v. Relocation allowances are payable by way of reimbursement on submission of original receipts. For assistance, please contact Scholarship Office at scholarshipsadmin@ecu.edu.au

Overseas Health Cover Allowance

i. International recipients, with a valid student visa, may be provided a HDR Scholarship Allowance to cover the cost of a standard (single) Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for the duration of their study in Australia.
ii. A HDR Scholarship Allowance does not cover the cost of ancillary health services or extra costs associated with an OSHC, including medical costs associated with the issuance or renewal of a student visa.
iii. It is the responsibility of recipients to ensure their health cover is current.

Other Allowances

i. International recipients may, via ECU's Prescribed Processes, be provided an allowance towards the cost of their Student visa application fee (excluding surcharges), up to a maximum amount of $710, via ECU's Scholarships Office. ECU may increase this allowance to align with increases in the prescribed government fee.

8. TERMINATION

a. Benefits will cease on the date of termination of the HDR scholarship. If a scholarship is terminated it cannot be re-activated unless the termination occurred in error.

b. A HDR Scholarship will be terminated:
i. on initial submission of the thesis for examination. Where a stipend payment has already entered payroll processing at the time of submission, the scholarship will cease at the end of that pay period. The effective scholarship end date will be the later of the thesis submission date or the end of that pay period (if applicable);
ii. if the recipient ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in these Conditions;
iii. if the recipient ceases to be a full-time recipient and approval has not been obtained to hold the HDR Scholarship on a part-time basis;
iv. upon death, incapacity or withdrawal of the recipient from ECU;
v. if the recipient does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of Course intermission, or does not make arrangements to extend the period of Course intermission;
vi. once the maximum duration of the period of support has been reached;
vii. if ECU determines that the recipient has breached the terms and conditions of the HDR Scholarship or these Conditions, as determined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee;
viii. in the event the recipient's enrolment in the Course is terminated for any reason, subject to any right to provisional enrolment; or
ix. If a recipient wishes to cease, rather than suspend their scholarship, they are required to notify the Scholarships Office that they intend to terminate the HDR Scholarship. If a HDR Scholarship is terminated, recipients will be required to reapply should they later wish to recommence a HDR Scholarship. There is no guarantee of course entry or scholarship availability.

c. ECU may seek reimbursement of HDR Scholarship payments where there is a breach of these Conditions, or if the recipient does not meet the relevant HDR Scholarship criteria.

9. ERRONEOUS OVERPAYMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP

a. A recipient who is changing their enrolment, intermitting, taking leave or any other changes that may influence their scholarship are required to submit the appropriate approval form in a timely manner and, where possible at least 4 weeks in advance in order to avoid receiving overpayment of their HDR Scholarship.

b. In circumstances where an overpayment occurs, the recipient must refund the overpayment to ECU, unless ECU determines otherwise.

10. OUTSIDE WORK AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

a. Full-time recipients can undertake part-time employment, a paid research fellowship, an industry placement, or other enrichment activities ("**Outside Work**"), on condition that the Outside Work undertaken does not interfere with the progress of the recipient's study program. An Eligible Research Internship (refer to Condition 6 – Eligible Research Internship) is not considered Outside Work.

b. Recipients intending to undertake Outside Work must complete a HDR Living Stipend Employment Entitlement Request form and obtain written approval of the recipient's Principal Supervisor and relevant Associate Dean (Research). Before approval is given, the Principal Supervisor and Associate Dean (Research) must be satisfied that the Outside work will not interfere with the recipient's study program or contravene the terms of any agreement the recipient or ECU may have with an Industry Collaborator who is providing support for the recipient's HDR studies.

c. Recipients who undertake a paid research fellowship, industry placement or other similar enrichment activity may be required to apply to suspend their HDR Scholarship Stipend for the duration of the activity. A recipient will only be eligible for continuation of the scholarship if they are not provided with a salary or comparable stipend from any other source, which is equal to or above the rate of the relevant HDR Scholarship stipend, during the activity.

d. It is expected that part-time work between Monday and Friday (9am to 5pm) should not exceed an average of 8 hours per week on average over a 6-month period (January to June or July to December). The total number of hours worked in each 6-month period between Monday and Friday should not exceed 208 hours.

e. In Exceptional Circumstances, with the endorsement of the recipient's Principal Supervisor, 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 to the recipient's Course (for example practicum or industry experience) and will not interfere with progress. The recipient's research proposal and ethics approval should be formally confirmed before considering additional work. Where additional paid employment is approved, the arrangements must be reviewed each academic semester for continued approval.

f. The recipient must keep a record of their working hours and discuss with their Principal Supervisor. Recipients 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 that was undertaken. Recipients should also specify 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).

g. Recipients accepting employment as lecturers or tutors are reminded to consider additional work completed outside of face-to-face delivery that is required as part of the employment.

h. ECU academic staff accepting a HDR Scholarship must, with the approval of the relevant School Executive Dean (or equivalent), either take leave without pay and accept sessional employment within the above limits or reduce their employment load to a maximum of 0.25 FTE. Forms to calculate the number of hours worked in a week are available from: scholarshipsadmin@ecu.edu.au

11. ADDITIONAL FUNDING

a. Recipients are permitted to:
   i. obtain funds from other sources for fieldwork, equipment or other expenses not covered by the HDR Scholarship;
   ii. obtain funding for overseas travel costs from other Australian Government awards or any other sources; and
   iii. receive income derived from part-time work undertaken within the guidelines set out under the Employment section of these guidelines.

b. ECU may provide travel insurance cover for personal accidents and sickness, hijack and detention, baggage/business property, travel documents, etc. for recipients travelling with ECU's prior authorisation.

12. LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

Recipients may be eligible for a range of paid and unpaid leave. Leave entitlements are separated into short-term and extended leave. Applicants applying for leave that may influence their scholarship or payments must submit their application as early as practicable to avoid an erroneous payment (refer to Condition 9 – Erroneous Overpayment). Recipients who are already on intermission are ineligible to apply for any leave entitlements.

a. Short-term leave
Short-term leave includes Annual Recreation Leave, Personal Leave, Family and domestic violence leave and Other Approved Leave. All short-term leave entitlements are included within the period of support; however, recipient will forfeit without compensation any unused leave remaining when the scholarship is terminated or expires. The period of support will not be extended for any short-term leave. Normal stipend payments will continue throughout periods of short-term leave.
   i. Recreation Leave

- Full-time enrolled recipients are entitled to 20 working days of annual recreation leave each year of the HDR Scholarship Stipend. Recipients on part- time enrolment are entitled to pro-rata annual recreation leave.
- Annual recreation leave days will be accrued and used in subsequent years.
- Recipients should submit a request for annual recreation leave prior to the leave using the HDR Leave online portal which will be reviewed by the Principal Supervisor and in line with School/Teaching Area requirements for recipient leave.
- Recipients are required to report the number of days of annual recreation leave taken on each Progress Report.

ii. Personal Leave

- Recipients may take up to a total of 10 working days of personal leave each year. Recipients on part-time enrolment are entitled to pro-rata personal leave.
- Personal leave days will be accrued and used in subsequent years.
- Personal leave entitlements may be used to cover recipients to provide care or support for an immediate family member or household member because of personal illness, injury or unexpected emergency affecting the member.
- Recipients are required to report the number of days of personal leave taken on each Research Progress Report. For periods exceeding 2 consecutive days, recipients must provide a medical certificate upon their return from personal leave to their School/Teaching Area and upload a medical certificate with their Research Progress Report. Medical certificates must be provided by medical practitioners or other approved and registered health professionals (excluding chemists).

iii. Family and Domestic Violence Leave

- Recipients may take up to a total of 10 working days of paid family and domestic violence leave each year. Recipients on part-time enrolment are entitled to pro-rata family and domestic violence leave.
- Family and domestic violence leave will not be accrued and used in the subsequent years.

iv. Other Approved Leave

- With appropriate documentation and approval from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee, recipients may be eligible for:
  - Compassionate leave (life-threatening illness/injury of someone close) of up to 3 days each year;
  - Cultural leave for Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders of up to 3 days each year;
  - Defence Force Leave for domestic students of up to 10 days each year;
  - Jury Duty/Witness Leave if no other payments are being received.
- Other Approved Leave does not accrue over the life of the HDR Scholarship Stipend and does not roll over to the subsequent year.

b. Extended leave

Extended Leave includes Parental and Partner Leave and Additional Personal Leave. The period of support for recipients with approved Extended Leave will be increased by length of the approved leave. Recipients will continue to consume Candidature during their

Extended Leave, but Candidature will be extended by the length of the approved Extended Leave.

Recipients who choose to intermit their studies following a successful application to take Extended Leave may be entitled to continue receiving their scholarship during the period of any approved Extended Leave, subject to approval from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee.

i. Parental and Partner Leave

- Paid and unpaid Parental and Partner Leave is available to recipients on the birth or legal adoption of each child under 5 years of age.
- Primary caregivers, who have completed 12 months of their scholarship, are entitled to 20 weeks paid parental leave (pro-rata for part time scholarship recipients) on the birth or adoption of the child.
- HDR recipients who are not the primary care giver, and have completed 12 months of their scholarship, are entitled to a maximum of 2 weeks paid Partner Leave (pro-rata for part time scholarship recipients).
- Recipient must advise the Scholarships Office at least 4 weeks before the commencement of Parental or Partner Leave, and apply for leave by including:
  - Notice of their intention to take Parental or Partner Leave and the dates of such leave;
  - For the birth of a child, a certificate from a medical practitioner or midwife stating that the recipient or recipient's partner is pregnant and the expected date of birth;
  - For an adoption, sufficient verifiable evidence of adoption.
- Retrospective Parental and Partner Leave will not normally be approved. However, where exceptional circumstances beyond the recipient's control (e.g. unexpected hospitalisation) prevented a timely application, retrospective approval may be considered with supporting documentation.
- Recipients who have not completed 12 months of their course may access unpaid Parental and Partner leave through the voluntary suspension provisions outlined in these conditions (refer to Condition 5 – Scholarship Suspension).

ii. Additional Personal Leave

- If all short-term leave has been used, recipients may be eligible for additional paid personal leave of up to 60 working days. Part-time recipients are eligible for pro-rata additional paid personal leave entitlements.
- Recipients must provide a medical certificate in a timely manner to their School/Teaching Area. Medical certificates must be verifiable and provided by a medical practitioner or other approved and registered health professional (excluding chemists).
- Recipients are required to report the number of days of additional personal leave taken on each Progress Report.
- Recipients will not be entitled to any compensation for unused additional personal leave remaining when the scholarship is terminated or expires.
- With approval, additional personal leave entitlements may be used to support recipients when providing care or support for an immediate family or household member during periods of personal illness, injury, unexpected emergency or the family or domestic violence.

13. OFF-CAMPUS OR OVERSEAS RESEARCH

a. In order to receive a HDR Scholarship, recipients must be completing their studies on campus, unless otherwise approved by the Dean, Graduate Research or nominee.

b. A recipient planning to undertake research overseas must comply with ECU's Authorised University Travel Policy, including obtaining any relevant approval of their insurance arrangements. Please refer to the Travel requirements website for more information.

c. The Dean, Graduate Research or nominee may, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, approve a recipient conducting their research off-campus or overseas if:

i. ECU travel approval has been obtained, or the recipient is enrolled in an approved joint, online or collaborative partner HDR course or program, where applicable;
ii. the research is essential for completion of the thesis;
iii. there will be continued regular supervision;
iv. the recipient will continue to comply with all scholarship and course enrolment conditions; and
v. the work will be credited to the recipient's course.

Note: A PhD candidate planning to undertake off-campus or overseas research, please refer to the Off-campus, Industry Engagement, and Joint HDR programs Guideline for more information.

d. Where the recipient is undertaking a Joint PhD, these Conditions may be modified with approval from the Dean, Graduate Research, having regard to prevailing ECU policies on educational partnerships and any agreements between ECU and the joint PhD partner.

14. SCHOLARSHIP VARIATIONS

a. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or nominee may grant a HDR Scholarship Stipend recipient a Completion Scholarship for up to 6 months (from 3 years to 3.5 years equivalent full-time load, or pro-rated), where the recipient is enrolled in a PhD Course Student's progress has been affected by Exceptional Circumstances.

b. A HDR Scholarship Completion Application, which outlines the reasons for the extension, a revised schedule for completion and the intended thesis submission date should be submitted to the Scholarships Office no later than two months before the scholarship is due to expire. A supporting statement from the Principal Supervisor and endorsement from the Associate Dean (Research) are also required.

c. Transferring institution, changing course or research area, or work commitments are not sufficient grounds for an extension. However, a change of research area resulting from circumstances outside the recipient's control may be considered.

d. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Variation in Enrolled Course

i. Recipients transferring from a MbR Course to a HDR Course may apply to continue their HDR Scholarship provided there is no interval between the MbR Course and HDR Course or that such an interval is covered by suspension of the HDR Scholarship. Such arrangements require endorsement of the relevant Associate Dean (Research) and approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or

nominee. The recipient's application must be made before the MbR studies are concluded. In such cases the maximum duration of a converted HDR Scholarship is the equivalent of the timeframe for the new HDR Course, minus periods of study undertaken towards the related degree before conversion.

ii. Recipients transferring from a PhD Course to a MbR Course may continue their HDR Scholarship, however the duration is reduced to two years (or pro-rated for part-time studies) from the commencement of the PhD.

e. HDR Scholarships are not transferable to another provider or institution.

f. Change of Research Area or Transfer of Course

i. Subject to the usual practices of ECU, a recipient may change their research area or transfer from a Course originally indicated at the time of being awarded a HDR Scholarship, provided appropriate supervision is available. The transfer must be accommodated within the original tenure of the HDR Scholarship (i.e. no extension of the scholarship will be approved for a change in research area or course alone).

ii. There may be visa implications for a change in course. Recipients should seek guidance from Student Success via enquiries@ecu.edu.au.

g. In the event an international recipient is granted Australian Permanent Resident status, the international recipient must notify ECU Admissions and the Scholarships Office immediately.

15. PROVISION OF FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION

a. If ECU knows or has reasonable grounds to believe that a recipient has provided false or misleading information to ECU in relation to the HDR Scholarship, ECU:

- will immediately reassess the recipient's entitlement to the HDR Scholarship;
- may terminate the HDR Scholarship; and
- is responsible for notifying the Department of Education or Department of Home Affairs, where relevant, of the suspected false or misleading information, and providing a copy of the recipient's application or other relevant information.

16. ACKNOWLEDMENT OF RTP SCHOLARSHIP

a. Recipients of Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarships (**RTP Scholarships**) through ECU are subject to these Conditions (**Conditions**) in conjunction with the ECU's Research Training Program Scholarship Policy and the terms outlined in the recipient's offer letter.

b. At all times during and after completion of the RTP recipient's HDR studies, if the recipient publishes or produces material such as books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works which relate to the research project carried out by the recipient, the recipient must ensure that the Commonwealth's contribution is acknowledged in a prominent place and in an appropriate form.

c. The acknowledgement must include the following form of words in any acknowledgement: "This research was supported by the Commonwealth through an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship [DOI: https://doi.org/10.82133/C42F-K220]."

d. RTP Scholarship recipients with an ORCID must acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution through the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship by including the RTP DOI in the recipient's ORCID record.

17. REVIEW

a. ECU's Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules contain provisions to enable recipients who are dissatisfied with the assessment of their academic work or academic progress to appeal against those decisions.

b. A recipient (or prospective recipient) who has reason to believe that ECU has acted outside of these Conditions may ask the Dean, Graduate Research or nominee to review the relevant decision or omission within 14 days of it occurring.

c. In conducting the procedural review, the Dean, Graduate Research or nominee may, but is not obliged to:
   i. consult with any relevant Staff member;
   ii. seek advice from relevant subject matter experts within ECU;
   iii. consult with and seek further information or documentation from the recipient;
   iv. consider any information or documentation available to them at the time of the review; and
   v. rely on any information, guidance or standards (if any) provided by the Australian Government or industry.

d. Within a further 14 days (or such longer timeframe as may be reasonable in the circumstances and communicated to the recipient or prospective recipient), the Dean, Graduate Research or nominee will confirm in writing the outcome of the review including reasons for any decision made.

e. The review outcome is the final avenue of review within ECU in relation to determinations made under these Conditions.

f. Recipients may also access ECU's Complaints Policy and processes.

18. GENERAL

a. For detailed information on the conduct of research degrees, recipients are referred to the Research Forms, Policies and Guidelines.

b. For details of academic regulations, including grievance resolution, recipients are referred to Student Information.

c. The Scholarships Office will administer the HDR Scholarship, monitor recipient progress, and arrange payment of all entitlements to recipients.

d. Capitalised terms in this document are defined in the ECU Admission, Enrolment and Academic Progress Rules, or the ECU Glossary, in that order of precedence.

e. These Conditions may be varied by ECU with the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), to reflect current ECU rules, policies and processes, to reflect changes to HDR Scholarship support, or where required by changes in law, regulations, or reporting requirements.

f. A reference to a statute or other law includes regulations and other instruments under it and consolidations, amendments, re-enactments or replacements of any of them.

g. A reference to ECU policy, procedures or guidelines includes any consolidations, amendments, re-enactments or replacements of any of them.