Purpose

The Schedule outlines the 2011 Conditions of Award for the Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship (MQRES) Scheme. It is consistent with requirements of the 2009-2011 Research Strategic Plan and the 2011 MQRES Schedule.

These Conditions of Award outline eligibility requirements, entitlements and other requirements for the award and retention of an MQRES scholarship. These conditions apply only to research candidates awarded an MQRES who commence at Macquarie in 2011. This scholarship is not transferable to any other institution.

Schedule

1. Eligibility

The MQRES has three flexible component parts – a living allowance (stipend), tuition fee support and other allowances. The letter of offer to the successful scholarship applicant will specify the individual availability of each component part, and is based on applicant eligibility and scholarship availability.

To hold an award a person must:

a) have qualified for an Australian Bachelor with First Class Honours degree or be regarded by Macquarie University as having demonstrated an equivalent level of academic attainment in prior studies, relevant work or research experience, research publications, and referee reports

b) be enrolled as a candidate for a Doctor of Philosophy degree at Macquarie University (unless awarded a Macquarie Indigenous Award)

c) be enrolled on a full-time attendance basis, unless special approval has been granted for receipt of a part-time award

d) not be in receipt of another award, scholarship or salary considered to be equivalent to or to duplicate the purpose and benefits of the scholarship. An equivalent award is defined as an amount of money which is greater than 75% of the basic stipend rate

e) not have already completed a research degree or equivalent qualification at the same level

f) not provide false or misleading information to the University. Where there is reason to believe this condition has not been upheld, the University reserves the right to reassess the student’s entitlement to the award.

2. Award Duration

The scholarship duration is a maximum period of 3.5 years full-time, or the equivalent part time. Periods of full time and/or part time study already undertaken towards the Degree or undertaken during a suspension of scholarship will be deducted from the period of tenure of
the award. The maximum scholarship tenure will be advised to the successful applicant in the letter of offer. Candidates who submit their thesis for examination with staff certification prior to their advised maximum scholarship date will be automatically awarded a MQRES Submission Scholarship until the maximum scholarship date, or the Senate approval date, whichever is earlier (Section 3.4).

3. Scholarship Components

When offered as part of the scholarship, direct payments relating to these components will be made following candidature commencement and will be subject to completion of the appropriate forms and supplying appropriate supporting paperwork where required.

3.1 Living Allowance (Stipend)

a) The living allowance (stipend) in 2011 for full-time award holders is $22,860 tax exempt. The living allowance (stipend) in 2011 for part-time award holders is $12,388 taxable. The level of stipend will not be reduced during the tenure of the award unless the award holder changes from full-time to part-time candidature.

b) The living allowance is paid fortnightly in arrears and may not commence prior to the commencement of enrolment for new awardees. For currently enrolled candidates, the earliest the payment may commence is from the beginning of the enrolment period in which the award was offered subject to scholarship eligibility requirements being met.

c) Cotutelle and joint degree candidates will be paid the living stipend when they are on-campus in Australia unless the Cotutelle Agreement states the otherwise.

d) The stipend for the full time award is currently tax exempt under Section 23(z) of the Income Tax Act 1936 (as amended). This tax exemption status is determined by the Australian Government and no guarantee can be given by the University on this matter. It is the responsibility of individual award holders to seek their own taxation advice.

3.2 Tuition Fee Support

a) For international candidates, the University will provide tuition fee support for the approved program for the scholarship duration, unless otherwise specified in the letter of offer. International candidates who have not submitted their thesis by the end of the scholarship will be required to pay the program tuition fee applicable at the time of scholarship expiry.

b) All domestic scholarship holders are provided with a sponsored place annually under the Research Training Scheme (RTS) and are not required to pay tuition fees.

3.3 Relocation Allowance

For domestic scholarship holders commencing their first postgraduate research study in Australia a relocation allowance may be available for candidates moving to Sydney from another Australian location outside of Sydney. To make a claim, suitable receipts must be lodged within six months of scholarship commencement. The maximum amount payable in 2011 for domestic candidates is $1,000. International scholarship holders are not entitled to a relocation allowance, unless otherwise specified in the letter of offer.

3.4 MQRES Submission Scholarship

3.4.1 MQRES Submission Scholarship

Candidates who submit their thesis for examination prior to their advised maximum scholarship date will be automatically awarded a MQRES Submission Scholarship. The value of the Submission Scholarship will be at the rate payable at the time of
submission. The duration of the Submission Scholarship will be determined by the maximum scholarship date at the time of submission, or the date of Senate approval, whichever is earlier, and will be capped at a maximum of six months. The Submission Scholarship is intended to support the candidate while addressing matters raised by examiners, attending a conference, preparing papers for publication, or other matters directly related to the thesis submission and examination.

3.4.2 MQRES Submission Scholarship for APA Candidates
APA candidates who submit their thesis for examination prior to their advised maximum scholarship date will be eligible for a MQRES Submission Scholarship. The value of the MQRES Submission Scholarship for APA candidates will be at the rate payable at the time of submission. The duration of the MQRES Submission Scholarship for APA candidates will be determined by the maximum scholarship date at the time of submission, or the date of Senate approval, whichever is earlier, and will be capped at a maximum of six months. Each MQRES Submission Scholarship for an APA candidate will be subject to approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) on a case-by-case basis. The MQRES Submission Scholarship for an APA candidate is intended to support the candidate while addressing matters raised by examiners, attending a conference, preparing papers for publication, or other matters directly related to the thesis submission and examination, and is awarded on an equitable basis in line with the MQRES Conditions of Award.

4. Research off Campus

Research for the degree may be undertaken at locations away from Macquarie University as follows:

4.1 Offsite Research (OSR)
   a) The Higher Degree Research Committee may approve candidates conducting up to 12 months (18 months for anthropology and other special cases) of their research outside Australia while under scholarship. Approval will only be granted if this research is essential for completion of the degree. The student must remain enrolled and adequate supervision must be in place and approved by the Faculty Associate Dean Higher Degree Research. The required Ethics approval from Macquarie University must be obtained prior to conducting this research.
   b) Scholarship holders are required to complete an OSR application form and have approval to undertake offsite research prior to their departure. Without this approval in place, the student’s access to the University insurance cover may be adversely affected.
   c) Failure to resume study at the University on the date specified for return after a period of paid offsite research will result in the scholarship being suspended.
   d) Unless otherwise specified in the Agreement, Cotutelle and joint degree scholarship holders will not be paid a living stipend when undertaking research at the partner institution.

4.2 Research at Other Organisations

The University may approve a candidate conducting research at organisations outside the higher education system, provided that in such cases, the University is assured that the student has adequate support, supervision, training and research freedom. The rights to intellectual property should be resolved prior to commencement at the organisation. The required Ethics approval from Macquarie University must be obtained prior to conducting this research.
5. Enrolment Variations

The MQRES Schedule outlines the allocation plan for MQRES in 2011. Accordingly, any transfers between Faculties and Departments or changes to the supervisory panel for 2011 scholarship holders may require special approval by the University. A case for such transfers should accompany the transfer documentation.

6. Part-Time Enrolment

Part time scholarships will be granted only in circumstances where a candidate is unable to study full time due to compelling reasons such as those related to heavy carer commitments or a medical condition. A part time scholarship shall not be granted for reasons related to paid employment. The University may also require holders to convert to full-time if compelling reasons as approved no longer apply.

7. Employment

The University recommends paid employment should take up no more than 14 hours per week on average throughout the year (728 hours per scholarship year). Scholarship holders shall discuss their intended part-time employment with their supervisor and seek agreement on the appropriate amount of time they may spend in employment without affecting their study. This may be less than the University’s recommended rate. The undertaking of teaching or academic work or other form of employment shall not be regarded as an obligation under the conditions of the scholarship.

8. Leave Entitlements

8.1. Recreation leave

A scholarship holder undertaking a research program is entitled to 20 days paid recreation leave for each year of full-time study calculated on a pro-rata basis, subject to the following conditions:

a) No more than 20 days recreation leave may be accumulated and leave must be taken during the prescribed period of tenure of the scholarship.
b) Recreation leave is presumed to be used in the December/January period of each year of tenure.
c) If recreation leave is taken at any other time than the December/January period, the supervisor’s agreement must be obtained before that leave is taken and advice forwarded to the Higher Degree Research Office.

8.2. Sick Leave

A scholarship holder will receive up to 10 days paid sick leave each year which may be accrued over the tenure of the scholarship. A scholarship holder undertaking a research program may be granted paid sick leave up to a maximum of three months under the following longer term conditions.

a) *For the first six (6) weeks of illness* benefits are to continue provided that the scholarship holder notifies the Higher Degree Research Office of the illness within fourteen days (unless prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond his or her control). A medical certificate must be provided.
b) *After the first six (6) weeks of illness* benefits shall continue only where the scholarship holder produces another medical certificate to confirm the inability to resume studies.
c) The scholarship may be extended by a maximum of 12 weeks to compensate for periods of paid sick leave in excess of ten days. An extension of scholarship will not normally be granted for periods of less than eleven days.

d) Scholarship holders who discontinue enrolment or suspend their scholarship because of illness shall not be entitled to receive any benefits from the scholarship effective from the date of discontinuation or suspension.

e) Where tenure has been held for less than 6 months, benefits will normally be paid on a pro rata basis of 1 week for each month of tenure. For example, a student who has held a scholarship for 4 months is entitled to a maximum of 4 weeks paid sick leave. Periods of paid sick leave may not count towards the 6 months of tenure required for full benefits.

f) Sick leave entitlements may also be extended to cover scholarship holders with family responsibilities caring for sick dependents.

8.3 Maternity leave

a) The scholarship holder may be granted a maximum of twelve weeks paid maternity leave provided that she has completed at least 52 weeks of continuous full time study (or equivalent part time study) on the scholarship before commencing the leave. The application must be accompanied by a medical certificate from a medical practitioner stating the expected date of birth of the child.

b) Leave of absence from scholarship and candidature may be taken for that period following the approved maternity leave.

c) The maximum duration of the scholarship will be extended by that length of time spent by the scholarship holder on approved maternity leave.

d) Equivalent maternity leave provision will be made available at the time of adoption of a child.

8.4 Parenting Leave

a) Scholarship holders who have completed twelve months of their scholarship and are partners of women giving birth, may be entitled to a period of one week of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth.

b) The period of paid parenting leave is added to the scholarship tenure.

c) Equivalent parenting leave provision will be made available for adoption of a child.

9. Suspension of Scholarship

A scholarship holder who applies for Leave of Absence during the tenure of their scholarship will not be entitled to receive any benefits from their scholarship. If a scholarship holder remains enrolled in his/her program of studies (either full time or part time) during an approved suspension of scholarship, this period of study will be considered to be advanced standing. Accordingly any remaining tenure of scholarship will be reduced by that period of study undertaken during the suspension, upon resumption of the scholarship (ie. the scholarship will not be extended to compensate for the period of suspension)

10. Retention of Scholarship

Continuation of the scholarship is subject to satisfactory academic progress and compliance with the scholarship conditions.
11. Completion of Scholarship

A scholarship will normally be terminated at the end of the fortnightly pay period following the one in which the candidate's thesis is accepted for submission to the examiners, or on the expiry date of the scholarship, whichever is earlier; unless an MQRES Stipend Submission Scholarship has been awarded (Section 3.4)

12. Obligations of the Scholarship Holder

A scholarship holder who is unable to pursue their degree, other than while on approved leave, must notify the Scholarships Manager so the scholarship can be terminated.

Scholarship holders are required to repay to the University any allowances or stipend overpaid whether through the candidates failure to comply with the conditions governing the scholarship or from any other cause.

13. Review Process

Candidates may request the Higher Degree Research Committee to review decisions affecting their scholarship in relation to the implementation of scholarship conditions.

Candidates wishing to request a review should submit the request to the Scholarships Manager within four weeks of the date of the original decision as advised to the applicant.

14. The University

The University reserves the right to amend these Conditions of Scholarship for commencing scholarship holders.

Related Policies / Procedures/Plans


MQRES Schedule 2011

| Date Approved | 2 November 2010 |
| Approval Authority | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). |
| Amended | |