Summary

This document outlines the 2019 Conditions of Award for the Indigenous Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship Program. The Indigenous Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship Program is funded by Walanga Muru, in conjunction with Macquarie University. It is consistent with requirements of the Macquarie University Research Strategic Plan and the Macquarie University Indigenous Research Pathway Program. The Macquarie University Indigenous Research Pathway Program provides scholarship support to Indigenous Australians of exceptional research potential to undertake a postgraduate degree including Master of Research, Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy, in any field of research. The Scholarship is provided to assist with general living costs including an additional supplement.

The Strategic Research Framework 2015 – 2024 is our roadmap by which we deliver World-Leading Research with World-Changing Impact.

100% of Macquarie University’s Research has been evaluated as being world class or above through the 2015 Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) ratings.

These Conditions of Award outline eligibility requirements, entitlements and other requirements for the award and retention of a domestic Indigenous Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship (Indigenous MQRES). These conditions apply only to candidates awarded an Indigenous MQRES scholarship who commence at Macquarie in 2019. This scholarship is not transferable to any other institution.

Detail

1. Eligibility

The domestic Indigenous Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship (Indigenous MQRES) scholarship is subject to funding availability and applicant eligibility. The letter of offer to the successful scholarship applicant will specify the details of the awarded scholarship.

Scholarships are awarded based on the criteria outlined below to support and ensure excellence in research training skills for domestic candidates enrolled in the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research (BPhil/MRes), Master of Research (MRes), Master of Philosophy (MPhil) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

To hold this award a person must:

a) be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent *;

b) fulfill the criteria and gain admission to the Macquarie University Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research (BPhil/MRes) or the Master of Research (MRes) program or Master of Philosophy (MPhil) or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD);

c) be enrolled as a student for a BPhil/MRes or candidate for a MRes or MPhil or PhD program. Students who receive 32 credit points of advanced standing may enter the MRes program in Year 2. These candidates must also meet the standard entry requirements for admission;

d) be enrolled on a full-time internal attendance basis and onsite, unless special approval has been requested and granted for receipt of a part-time award;

e) not be receiving income from another source to support the candidate in their course of study if that income is greater than 75 percent of the Indigenous MQ stipend base rate. Income unrelated to the candidate’s course of study is not considered.
It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that they continue to meet the eligibility criteria and conditions for all awards they receive.

The candidate can contact the Higher Degree Research Office directly to discuss any questions pertaining to their individual case and circumstances.

*Aboriginality is a genuine occupational qualification and is authorized under section 14(d) of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. The applicant must meet all three Commonwealth criteria, these being that the person must i. be of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent; and ii. identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; and iii. be accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.

2. Ongoing Eligibility
The University monitors scholarship holders’ ongoing eligibility and progress to ensure that each candidate continues to meet eligibility requirements set out in paragraph 1 and maintain ongoing satisfactory academic progress, as outlined below, in the program of enrolment. Any variations to enrolment, including but not limited to deferral, suspension, change of study load or change of residency status, may affect the scholarship holder’s eligibility for the scholarship.

2.1 BPhil/MRes program

Year 1 (BPhil)
Full-time\(^1\) enrolled domestic candidates who are awarded an Indigenous MQRES MRES will be paid a stipend of AUD$8,000 in Session 1. Students who achieve a minimum overall weighted average of 65 at the end of Session 1 may also be eligible for a stipend of AUD$8,000 in Session 2 if enrolled full time. Enrolment in Session 3 units will not be considered when determining a domestic Year 1 candidate’s eligibility for the stipend payment in Session 2.

If a candidate withdraws from any unit(s) after the census date in either Session 1 or Session 2 in Year 1, and becomes ineligible, the student will not be entitled to receive MQRES MRES scholarship funding for that session. Any payments that have already been made will be regarded as an overpayment and will need to be returned to the University.

Year 2 (MRes)
The candidate awarded an Indigenous MQRES scholarship for the whole of Year 1 2018 of the BPhil/MRes program, and given provisional admission to the Year 2 MRes program the following year (2019), will be considered eligible for continuation of an Indigenous MQRES scholarship if, at the end of Year 1, they have achieved a minimum overall average of 75 SNG.

2.2 Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program
The candidate shall diligently pursue their course of study for the duration of their program and satisfy academic requirements. The candidate shall:

- a) Submit to the relevant faculty each year the Annual Progress Report;
- b) Successfully complete required stages/milestones relevant to the faculty;
- c) Complete in conjunction with principal supervisor the Candidature Action Plan with intent to periodic review during candidature.

3. Scholarship Components

3.1 Stipend

3.1.1 BPhil (Year 1)
The scholarship stipend in 2019 for full-time enrolled indigenous MQRES MRES scholarship holders is AUD$16,000 per annum, tax free. This is paid in two tranches following confirmation of continued full-time enrolment after each sessional census date and of meeting the eligibility requirements set out in Section 2.

3.1.2 MRES (Year 2)
The Year 2 Indigenous MQRES MRES scholarship stipend in 2019 for full-time enrolled scholarship holders is AUD$35,596 per annum (2019 rate) including an $8,000 supplement, as per conditions outlined in Section 2. Year 2 stipend payments will be made fortnightly in arrears from the date of confirmation of enrolment until the

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\(^1\) Full-time enrolment is defined as a minimum of 3 units in each session.
end of the year or date of withdrawal, in the case of candidates withdrawing from the program during the year. If a candidate is approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or delegate to enroll on a part-time basis, the part-time Indigenous MQRES MRES stipend rate will be 50 per cent of the full-time RTP or MQRES stipend rate and taxable.

The stipend for the full-time award is currently tax exempt under Section 51-10 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. 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.

Stipend payments will be made following candidature commencement, subject to completing the appropriate forms and supplying appropriate supporting paperwork where required.

3.1.3 MPhil and PhD

Full time enrolled candidates who are awarded an Indigenous MQRES scholarship will be paid a stipend of AUD$27,596 per annum, tax exempt (2019 rate) and indexed annually, plus an additional AUD$10,000 per annum, fixed rate supplementary stipend.

The stipend will be paid for a maximum of two years for the MPhil and three years for the PhD (based on full-time enrolment).

Periods of full-time and/or part-time study already undertaken towards the degree, or undertaken during a suspension of scholarship, are called advanced standing and will be deducted from the tenure of the award. The successful applicant will be advised of their scholarship tenure in their letter of offer.

3.2 Tuition fee support

All Scholarship Holders

All students in Year 1 of the Bachelor of Philosophy/Master of Research (BPhil/MRes) are provided a Commonwealth supported place. Commonwealth supported students are liable for a student contribution towards the units they study.

All candidates in Year 2 of the Master of Research (MRes), Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) program are provided with a Commonwealth RTP Tuition Fee Offset Scholarship and are not required to pay tuition fees.

4. Research off campus

Scholarship holders may undertake research for the degree at locations away from Macquarie University as follows:

4.1 Offsite research (OSR)

a) The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or delegate may approve candidates conducting up to three (3) months in the Master of Research (MRes) program and twelve (12) months in a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) of their research away from the Macquarie University campus while under scholarship. Approval will only be granted if this research is essential for completion of the degree. The scholarship holder 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 for any research conducted offsite, including overseas, must be obtained prior to the OSR. 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 candidate’s access to the University insurance cover may be adversely affected.

b) Failure to resume study at the University on the date specified for return after a period of paid OSR will result in the scholarship being suspended.

c) Unless otherwise specified in their agreement, Cotutelle and joint award degree scholarship holders will not be paid a living stipend when undertaking research at the overseas partner institution unless specified in their individual agreement.

4.2 Research at other organisations

a) 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 candidate 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

5.1 Changes to enrolment (Variations)
Any transfers between faculties and departments, changes to the supervisory panel of the HDR candidate for scholarship holders or changes to part-time enrolment require special approval by the University. A case for such transfers or changes should accompany the request documentation.

Stipend holders seeking to change their enrolment from full-time to part-time or vice versa must seek approval from the DVC R on the Change of Program form for MRES candidates or PhD/MPhil candidates as appropriate. Please note that changing from full-time to part-time will usually result in the termination of the scholarship unless special consideration is approved (for example where a candidate is able to demonstrate significant caring commitments or a Medical condition which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study). The tenure of the scholarship will be adjusted to reflect any approved changes.

5.2 Leave of absence and suspension of scholarship (LOA/SOA)

5.2.1 BPhil/MRes program

Year 1
In the first year, enrolment is based around sessional dates and breaks are scheduled. If performance within study terms has been impacted by a serious and unavoidable disruption (as defined in the Macquarie University Disruption to Studies Policy and Procedure) such that they do not reach their usual demonstrated performance level, students should discuss their situation with their Faculty MRes Advisor and follow the University's Disruption to Studies procedure.

Year 2
Indigenous MQRES stipend holders are entitled to receive up to fourteen (14) calendar days paid sick leave each year of the scholarship tenure. The stipend tenure is not extended for periods of sick leave that fall under fourteen (14) working days and the candidate is advised to notify their Supervisor and Faculty HDR Manager of this only. This leave entitlement may be accrued over the life of the stipend but will be forfeited when the stipend is terminated.

A stipend holder may also be granted additional paid sick leave for up to a maximum period of twelve (12) weeks (84 calendar days) over the full duration of the stipend under the following longer-term conditions.

a) A maximum period of twelve (12) weeks (84 calendar days) paid sick leave entitlement over the duration of the award is allowable. The scholarship holder must notify the Higher Degree Research Office of the illness within fourteen (14) days (unless prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond his or her control). A medical certificate which includes specific dates of illness must be provided.

b) Paid Sick Leave provisions are generally taken in conjunction with a period of Leave of Absence from Candidature. Approved LOA will extend a candidate’s Expected Work Submission (EWS) date. The minimum period of LOA from candidature is eight (8) weeks. The medical documentation for an LOA request can be used for the associated scholarship paid sick leave request.

c) If a candidate is sick for a period that is greater than fourteen (14) calendar days and less than eight (8) weeks, they can apply for paid sick leave from their scholarship only using the Leave of Absence Master of Research Year 2 form. This will extend the scholarship end date and must be supported by a medical certificate.

d) The scholarship may be extended up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks to compensate for periods of paid sick leave more than fourteen (14) calendar days. An extension of scholarship will not be granted to compensate for periods of sick leave less than fifteen (15) calendar days.

e) Scholarship holders who withdraw from their enrolled program 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.

f) Sick leave entitlements may also be extended to cover scholarship holders who are primary care givers with family responsibilities required to care for sick dependents subject to the approval of the Executive Director, Higher Degree Research Office.
g) Requests submitted within three (3) months of a candidate’s EWS date may not be approved. In these cases, candidates should consider applying for an extension to their EWS date on the MRes Extension Form.

5.2.2 MPhil and PhD program

MQRES stipend holders are entitled to receive up to fourteen (14) calendar days paid sick leave each year of the scholarship tenure. The stipend tenure is not extended for periods of sick leave that fall under fourteen (14) calendar days and the candidate is advised to notify their Supervisor and Faculty HDR Manager of this only. This leave entitlement may be accrued over the life of the stipend but will be forfeited when the stipend is terminated.

A stipend holder may also be granted additional paid sick leave for up to a maximum period of twelve (12) weeks (84 calendar days) over the full duration of the stipend under the following longer-term conditions.

a) A maximum period of twelve (12) weeks (84 calendar days) paid sick leave entitlement over the duration of the award is allowable. The scholarship holder must notify the Higher Degree Research Office of the illness within fourteen (14) days (unless prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond his or her control). A medical certificate which includes specific dates of illness must be provided.

b) Paid Sick Leave provisions are generally taken in conjunction with a period of Leave of Absence from Candidature. Approved LOA will extend a candidate’s Expected Work Submission (EWS) date. The minimum period of LOA from candidature is eight (8) weeks. The medical documentation for an LOA request can be used for the associated scholarship paid sick leave request.

c) If a candidate is sick for a period that is greater than 14 calendar days and less than eight (8) weeks, they can apply for paid sick leave from their scholarship only using the Scholarship Leave Request Form. This will extend the scholarship end date and must be supported by a medical certificate.

d) The scholarship may be extended up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks to compensate for periods of paid sick leave more than fourteen (14) days. An extension of scholarship will not be granted to compensate for periods of sick leave less than fifteen (15) calendar days.

e) Scholarship holders who withdraw from their enrolled program 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.

f) Sick leave entitlements may also be extended to cover scholarship holders who are primary care givers with family responsibilities required to care for sick dependents subject to the approval of the Executive Director, Higher Degree Research Office.

5.3 Recreation leave (Annual Leave)

5.3.1 BPhil/MRes program

Year 1

In the first year, enrolment is based around sessional dates and breaks are scheduled. If performance within study terms has been impacted by a serious and unavoidable disruption (as defined in the Macquarie University Disruption to Studies Policy and Procedure) such that they do not reach their usual demonstrated performance level, students should discuss their situation with their Faculty MRes Advisor and follow the University’s Disruption to Studies procedure.

Year 2

Stipend holders are entitled to receive up to four weeks (28 calendar days) paid recreation leave which is to be used after thesis submission. If requesting leave prior to thesis submission, recreational leave is calculated on a pro rata basis. Recreational leave does not extend a candidate’s expected work submission date (EWS). Scholarship payments continue during periods of recreational leave.

5.3.2 MPhil and PhD program
An indigenous MQRES stipend holder undertaking a research program is entitled to 4 weeks (28 calendar days) paid recreational leave for each year of full-time study calculated on a pro-rata basis, subject to the following conditions:

a) No more than 4 weeks (28 calendar days) recreational leave may be accumulated and leave must be taken during the prescribed period of tenure of the scholarship; this leave entitlement may be accrued over the life of the stipend but will be forfeited when the stipend is terminated.

b) Recreational leave is presumed to be used in the December/January period of each year of tenure.

c) If recreational 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 a Scholarship Leave Request Form completed and forwarded to the Higher Degree Research Office.

d) Recreational leave does not extend a candidate’s expected work submission date (EWS).

e) Scholarship payments continue during periods of recreational leave.

5.4 Maternity leave

a) Indigenous MQRES scholarship holders may be granted up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks (84 calendar days) paid maternity leave over the term of the scholarship provided that they have completed at least 12 months of continuous full time study (or equivalent part-time study) while in receipt of the stipend 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) If the period of Leave of absence from candidature (LOA) is longer than the paid maternity leave provisions allowed for under the Conditions of Award then a candidate can apply for a period of suspension of award (SOA) for the period following the approved paid maternity leave. This total combined period of paid maternity leave and suspension of award will be the entire approved period of LOA from candidature.

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

d) The equivalent maternity leave provision may be made available at the time of adoption of a child, and supported by appropriate documentation.

5.5 Parental leave

a) Indigenous MQRES scholarship holders who have completed at least twelve (12) months of continuous full-time study (or equivalent part-time study) while receiving the stipend and are the partner of a woman giving birth, may be entitled to a period of one (1) week (7 calendar days) of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth. The application must be accompanied by a medical certificate from a medical practitioner stating the expected date of birth of the child.

b) The period of paid parenting leave extends the scholarship tenure.

c) The equivalent parenting leave provision may be available for the adoption of a child.

7. Employment

For students/candidates in BPhil/MRes Year 2, MPhil and PhD programs, 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 must discuss their intended part-time employment with their MRes Advisors or 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 any other form of employment shall not be regarded as an obligation under the conditions of the scholarship.

8. Retention of Scholarship

Continuation of the scholarship is subject to continued enrolment in the program, satisfactory academic progress and compliance with scholarship conditions.

9. Termination of Scholarship

The scholarship will naturally expire on the end date of the scholarship and stipend payments and Commonwealth supported place or Tuition Fee Offset will cease.

For Scholarship holders in the MPhil or PhD program who submit their thesis prior to the expiry of their scholarship, the 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.

10. Obligations of the scholarship holder

a) A scholarship holder who is unable to pursue their degree, other than while on approved leave, must notify the Higher Degree Research Office so the scholarship can be terminated.

b) Scholarship holders are required to repay to the University any allowances or stipend overpaid, whether through the candidate’s failure to comply with the conditions governing the scholarship or from any other cause.

c) While the scholarship holder may be free to publish any results arising from research completed while on scholarship, any publications must acknowledge that the work was done while holding the scholarship.

d) Scholarship holders must be aware of and comply with the University’s research ethics policies and procedures about the gathering and use of data, and comply with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, The Macquarie Code and relevant external and internal ethical guidelines (see http://www.research.mq.edu.au/research_integrity)

e) The conduct of all Macquarie University research must adhere to The Macquarie Code irrespective of its funding source or whether it requires ethical review.

f) Failure to adhere to The Macquarie Code or the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007) may be a ground for disciplinary action (see Part B: Resolving Allegations of Breaches or Research Misconduct).

g) All Macquarie University staff and students have an obligation to report any possible breaches of The Macquarie Code or the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007), or possible research misconduct to the Director, Research Ethics and Integrity. The preparation and presentation of reports should follow The Macquarie Code, and include any advice received from a Research Integrity Advisor, as well as indicating if the individual wishes that their identity is protected. Reports should be made in writing.

h) A scholarships holder must not withhold or 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 candidate’s entitlement to the award.

10. Review process

Scholarship holders may request the Higher Degree Research Management Committee to review decisions affecting their scholarship in retention to the implementation of scholarship conditions.

Scholarship holders wishing to request a review should submit the request to the Director, Higher Degree Research Office within four weeks of the date of the original decision as advised to the scholarship holder.

11. The University

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

Related Plans/Resources/Documents

Macquarie University Strategic Research Framework 2015-2024
Macquarie University Research Integrity
Macquarie University Research Training Program Scholarship (MQRES) Scheme 2018
Macquarie University Disruption to Studies Policy
Macquarie University Disruption to Studies Procedure

Contact Officer          Executive Director, Higher Degree Research Office
Date Approved            2019
Approval Authority        Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
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Date for Next Review      November 2019

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