Summary

This document outlines the 2019 Conditions of Award for the Australian Commonwealth Government funded Research Training Program (i/RTP) scholarships, and Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship (i/MQRES) Scheme. It is consistent with requirements of the Macquarie University future strategic direction and the Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship (MQRES) Scheme 2019. We fund postgraduate candidates of exceptional research promise and develop researchers with a proven capacity for research.

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 an Australian Commonwealth Government funded i/RTP scholarship at Macquarie University, and Macquarie University funded scholarships under the MQRES scheme. These conditions apply to PhD and MPhil candidates who hold a scholarship at Macquarie in 2019. Master of Research/bundle scholarship holders should refer to the Master of Research i/RTP and i/MQRES schedule and conditions of award governing the Master of Research component of their program.

This scholarship is not transferable to any other institution.

Details

1. Eligibility
   The i/RTP scholarship and i/MQRES have three components – i/RTP or i/MQRES stipend (living allowance), i/RTP or i/MQRES Tuition Fee Offset and may include other allowances. The letter of offer to the successful scholarship applicant will specify the individual availability of each component, and is based on applicant eligibility and scholarship availability.

   To hold an award a person must:

   a) be enrolled as a candidate for a Doctor of Philosophy or Master of Philosophy degree at Macquarie University;

   b) not be receiving income from another source to support the candidate in their course of study if that income is greater than 75 per cent of the i/RTP or i/MQRES stipend rate. Income unrelated to the candidate’s course of study is not considered.

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

   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.

2. Selection of Scholarship Awardees
   a) The Higher Degree Research Office is responsible for managing the process for awarding i/RTP and i/MQRES scholarships.
b) Criteria for the selection of applicants for the award of an i/RTP scholarship are outlined in the Macquarie University Scholarship Rating Criteria (found in the Rating Scholarship Applicants section of this webpage).

c) Candidates who hold a Doctoral level qualification are not normally awarded iRTP Tuition Fee Offset or Stipend Scholarships, or domestic RTP Stipend scholarships at Macquarie University.

d) For iRTP Tuition Fee Offset and Stipend scholarships, and for RTP stipend scholarships, candidates must meet the minimum scholarship rating as outlined in the Macquarie University RTP Scholarship Schedule.

e) Applicants assessed as possessing sufficient merit against the scholarship rating criteria will be ranked in order of rating by the Faculty Scholarship Selection/Ranking Committee, for scholarships through advertised rounds. This ranking is then reviewed by the University Scholarships Selection Committee (a subcommittee of the Thesis Examinations Subcommittee).

f) The final ranked list of scholarship applicants is reviewed by the Executive Director, Research Training and Research Training Partnerships, and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

g) RTP Stipend or International RTP Tuition Fee Offset/Stipend Scholarship recipients from other institutions seeking to transfer their candidature and scholarship award to Macquarie University will be subject to the selection process and criteria set out in 2 b) above. Where an application for transfer is received outside of advertised scholarship rounds, the Faculty Associate Dean Higher Degree Research may make a recommendation to the Executive Director, Research Training and International Research Training Partnerships in accordance with the principles of the Macquarie University Research Training Program Scholarship Guidelines (RTP Scholarship Policy) and the applicant may be considered for an out of round scholarship by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, in accordance with the Macquarie University Research Excellence Scholarship Scheme Schedule.

h) Part-time RTP stipends are available under specific circumstances, on application to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) via the Higher Degree Research Office. Part-time stipends will not be awarded because of candidate’s other employment commitments. Note that this does not apply to candidates enrolled part-time on a tuition-fee offset only.

i) Awardees must 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;

j) Awardees who are an international candidate, must be in attendance on campus (onsite), unless otherwise specified in, for example, a joint doctoral supervision agreement (Cotutelle), or varied by approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

3. Period of Support

The period of support for an i/RTP or i/MQRES Stipend and/or i/RTP or i/MQRES Tuition Fee Offset for a PhD program is a maximum period of three (3) years full-time, or the equivalent part-time. If an i/RTP scholarship or i/MQRES is offered to an MPhil candidate the maximum period is two (2) 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, are called advanced standing and will be deducted from the tenure of the award (refer to section 6.3). The successful applicant will be advised of their scholarship tenure in their letter of offer.

3.1 Duration of award for Cotutelle or joint award degree scholarship holders (i/MQRES only)

The duration of the award for Cotutelle or joint award degree scholarship holders will be individually packaged and as stated in the Cotutelle or joint award degree supervision agreement. If the duration of award in the agreement is different from the duration in these conditions, the agreement overrides the conditions.

4. Scholarship components

Payments relating to scholarship components will be made following candidature commencement, subject to completing the appropriate forms and supplying appropriate supporting paperwork where required.

4.1 i/RTP and i/MQRES Stipend (living allowance)

a) The i/RTP and i/MQRES stipend rates in 2018 for full-time award holders is $27,082pa tax exempt. The rate is indexed annually. This document will be updated when the 2019 rate is announced by the Department of Education and Training. The rate of stipend will not be reduced during the tenure of the award unless the award holder is approved to change from full-time to part-time candidature and a part-time scholarship is approved.
b) If a candidate is approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or delegate to enrol on a part-time basis, the part-time RTP or i/MQRES Stipend rate will be 50 per cent of the full-time RTP or i/MQRES stipend rate and is taxable.

c) The i/MQRES stipend for co-funded scholarships may vary as approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

d) The i/RTP or i/MQRES Stipend is paid fortnightly in arrears to an Australian bank account and will not commence prior to the commencement of enrolment for new awardees. For currently enrolled candidates, the earliest the payment may commence is currently set out in the letter of offer and does not pre-date the date of offer subject to scholarship eligibility requirements being met.

e) Cotutelle and joint award degree candidates will be paid the i/MQRES stipend only when they are on-campus in Australia, unless the Cotutelle agreement states otherwise.

f) The i/RTP or i/MQRES 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.

4.2 i/RTP and i/MQRES Tuition Fee Offset

The Australian Commonwealth Government provides domestic candidates with a tuition fee offset scholarship for the approved duration of their candidature. The University will provide a tuition fee offset for the approved program for the scholarship duration to offset the liability of international candidates to pay tuition fees, unless otherwise specified in the letter of offer. International candidates who have not submitted their thesis by the end of the scholarship tenure will be required to pay the program tuition fee applicable at the time of scholarship expiry. Fees are payable from the scholarship end date until the date of thesis submission, unless otherwise advised. https://www.mq.edu.au/research/phd-and-research-degrees/fees-and-costs

4.3 i/MQRES Allowances

Some candidates, including Cotutelle or joint award degree candidates, may have an airfare allowance included as part of their agreement. Any such allowance will be specified in the candidate’s offer letter and/or Cotutelle or joint award agreement. Airfares are booked at Macquarie University by the Higher Degree Research Office (HDRO) in accordance with the Macquarie University Travel Policy. The candidate will be requested to complete a Cotutelle/Joint Degree Airfare Request Form to claim the allowance.

4.4 i/RTP Allowances

International candidates in receipt of an RTP scholarship (iRTP) may have an allowance included in their offer, to meet the costs of a single Overseas Student Health Cover policy. Any such allowance will be specified in the candidate’s offer letter.

5. Research off campus

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

5.1 Offsite research (OSR)

a) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) or delegate may approve candidates conducting up to 12 months 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.
5.2 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.
   b) International scholarship holders must be enrolled full-time and in attendance on campus, unless otherwise specified in, for example, a Joint Doctoral Supervision Agreement (Cotutelle), or varied by approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

6. Enrolment variations

6.1 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 PhD/MPhil candidates. The tenure of the scholarship will be adjusted to reflect any approved changes. Please note that changing from Full-time to Part-time will usually result in the termination of the scholarship unless special consideration is approved (see 2 i) above).

6.2 Leave of absence and suspension of scholarship (LOA/SOA)
LOA/SOA may not be taken within the first 12 months of candidature unless there are exceptional circumstances. Refer to the Leave of Absence/Suspension of Award Form and Guidelines.

A scholarship holder who applies for Leave of Absence (LOA) from candidature and Suspension of Award (SOA) during the tenure of their scholarship will not be entitled to receive any benefits from their scholarship while their scholarship is suspended.

A scholarship holder may apply for a combination of paid leave (if eligible) and unpaid suspension of award while on approved Leave of Absence from candidature. Refer to Section 7 for information about leave entitlements.

6.3 Advanced standing
Advanced standing refers to periods of enrolment undertaken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the scholarship or during periods of suspension of award. If a scholarship holder remains enrolled in his/her program of studies (either full-time or part-time), or enrolls in another course of study, during an approved Suspension of Award (SOA), this period of study will be considered advanced standing. Accordingly, any remaining scholarship tenure will be reduced by that period of study undertaken during the suspension upon resumption of the scholarship (i.e. the scholarship will not be extended to compensate for the period of study during suspension).

7. i/RTP and i/MQRES Stipend leave entitlements

7.1 Recreation leave – (Annual Leave)
An i/RTP or i/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 over the life of the stipend and leave must be taken during the prescribed period of tenure of the scholarship; this leave entitlement 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.
7.2 Sick leave
7.2.1 i/RTP or i/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.

7.2.2 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. Additional paid sick leave is subject to the following 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 (additional) provisions will extend a candidate’s Expected Work Submission (EWS) date.

c) If a candidate is sick for a period that is greater than 14 Calendar days and up to twelve (12) weeks (84 Calendar days), they can apply for paid sick leave using the Scholarship Leave Request Form. The application must be accompanied by a medical certificate from a medical practitioner. This will extend the scholarship end date and Candidature EWS date.

d) The scholarship may be extended up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks (84 Calendar days) 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.

7.3 Maternity leave
The i/RTP or i/MQRES Stipend holder may be granted up to a maximum of twelve (12) weeks (84 Calendar days) paid maternity leave over the term of the scholarship if 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. Applications for paid maternity leave are subject to the following conditions:

a) If a candidate is applying for paid maternity leave for a period up to twelve (12) weeks (84 Calendar days), they can apply for paid maternity leave using the Scholarship Leave Request Form. The application must be accompanied by a medical certificate from a medical practitioner stating the expected date of birth of the child. This will extend the scholarship end date and Candidature EWS date.

b) If the period of leave 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. The application will need to be submitted using a Leave of Absence from candidature (LOA) and Suspension of Award (SOA) request form. The request will be for a Leave of Absence from candidature in conjunction with paid Maternity Leave (maximum entitlement 12 weeks or 84 Calendar days) followed by a Suspension of Award (SOA). This total combined period of paid maternity leave and suspension of award will match the entire approved period of LOA from candidature.

c) The period of paid maternity leave extends the scholarship tenure, end date, and Candidature EWS date.

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

7.4 Parental leave
i/RTP or i/MQRES Stipend 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 partners of women giving birth may be
entitled to a period of one (1) week (7 Calendar days) of paid parental 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. Applications for paid parental leave are subject to the following conditions:

a) If a candidate is applying for paid parental leave for a period up to one (1) week (7 Calendar days), they can apply using the Scholarship Leave Request Form. 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 parental leave extends the scholarship tenure, end date, and Candidature EWS date.

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

8. Employment

The University advises paid employment should take up no more than 728 hours per scholarship year, this equates to approximately fourteen (14) hours per week on average throughout the scholarship year.

Scholarship holders must 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 forms of employment shall not be regarded as an obligation under the conditions of the scholarship.

9. Retention of scholarship

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

10. Termination of the Scholarship

A scholarship will naturally expire on the end date of the award or when a candidate ceases their enrolment at the University and stipend payments and Tuition Fee Offset will cease. It is incumbent upon transferring candidates to ensure that they have appropriate scholarship to continue their studies at another institution.

International candidates in receipt of a Tuition Fee Offset as part of their award need to be aware that if their scholarship expires part way through an Enrolment Period (EP), that being for EP 1 - 1 January to 30 June or EP 2 - 1 July to 31 December, then a gap tuition fee will be automatically generated for the period of the enrolment that the scholarship does not cover. This amount will be shown as a fee debt within the e-student portal at the end of their award in the EP that the scholarship expires.

If the thesis is submitted prior to the expiry of the award, the scholarship will normally be terminated at the end of the fortnightly pay period in which the candidate’s thesis is accepted for submission to the examiners, or on the expiry date of the scholarship, whichever is earlier.

i/RTP and iMQRES scholarships will be terminated when the scholarship holder ceases to be eligible for the award or does not comply with one or more of the obligations below.

11. 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.

2019 i/RTP and i/MQRES Conditions of Award
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 scholarship holder must 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 candidate’s entitlement to the award.

12. Review process
Candidates may request the Higher Degree Research Management 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 Executive Director, Higher Degree Research Office, within four weeks of the date of the original decision as advised to the applicant.

13. The University
The University reserves the right to amend these Conditions of Award for commencing and continuing 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
- Cotutelle and Joint PhD Programs

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