



Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships Policy

Schedule B – Ranking and Selection Process for Graduate Research Scholarships at La Trobe University

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

- 1) This Schedule outlines the criteria to be used to rank and select applicants for graduate research scholarships at La Trobe University

Section 2 - Scope

- 2) This Schedule covers the following schemes:
 - a) Research Training Program (RTP) scholarships
 - i) RTP Stipend
 - b) La Trobe University scholarships
 - i) La Trobe Graduate Research Scholarship (LTGRS)
 - ii) The David Myers Research Scholarship
 - iii) The Dennis McDermott Research Scholarship
 - iv) La Trobe University Flexible Research Scholarship

Section 3 - Ranking and Selection Process

Assessment and Scoring of Scholarship Applications

- 3) All applications for graduate research scholarships are assessed and scored by their relevant School.
- 4) Applications are scored based on the applicant's performance in their qualifying degree(s), calculated so as to be equivalent to a La Trobe honours degree if they are applying for a Masters by research scholarship, or to a La Trobe Masters by research degree if they are applying for a doctoral scholarship, and on the relevance of their qualifications and experience to the research topic where the application relates to a specific advertised project or theme. Applicants may also be awarded additional marks based on other relevant achievements such as publications; grants; awards and prizes; exhibitions; work experience; content or quality of referee reports; etc.
- 5) For doctoral research scholarships, the Board of Graduate Research will prioritise applications from full-time candidates, enrolled to undertake their research at a La Trobe University campus and who have attained a Masters by research degree, or equivalent, assessed at a La Trobe Masters by research standard of 75 or above, or if applying for consideration on equity grounds, a standard of 70 or above.
- 6) For Masters by research scholarships, the Board of Graduate Research will prioritise applications from full-time candidates, enrolled to undertake their research at a La Trobe University campus and who have attained the equivalent of a first-class honours degree at an Australian university or recognised overseas university, or if applying for consideration on equity grounds, a high honours 2A grade or equivalent.
- 7) The award of RTP Stipend Scholarships will be prioritised to applications from domestic candidates.

Honours and Masters by Research Equivalence

- 8) Where an applicant for a Masters by research scholarship holds an Australian Honours degree or a graded Australian Master's by Coursework degree with a research component as their highest qualification, the numerical grade assigned to this degree will be used as the Honours Equivalence score.
- 9) Where an applicant is transferring from an approved Bachelor (Honours) or Masters by coursework degree at La Trobe, the weighted average mark achieved prior to transfer will be used as the Honours Equivalence Score.
- 10) Where an applicant for a doctoral scholarship holds a graded Australian Masters by research degree as their highest qualification, the numerical grade assigned to the research component of this degree will be used as the Masters by Research Equivalence score.
- 11) Where an applicant for a doctoral scholarship holds an Australian honours degree or a graded Australian Master's by coursework degree with research component as their highest qualification, schools will refer to *Schedule C – Masters by Research Equivalence for a Minor Thesis Grade* to determine a Masters by Research Equivalence score based on the research component of the qualifying degree.
- 12) In the case of any other qualifying degrees, independent La Trobe academic staff will assess the applicable thesis, or a comparable work of research by the applicant such as a journal article or articles, and assign a grade using the La Trobe University honours or Masters by research band criteria respectively.
- 13) Schools are required to provide an explanatory narrative for every applicant to justify the resulting Masters or Honours Equivalence score.
- 14) Applications which are deemed to be ineligible for entry to the degree for which the applicant is applying do not need to be scored.

Ranking of Scholarship Applications

- 15) School Ranking Committees, chaired by the School Director of Graduate Research, will review and approve the explanatory narrative and determined score for each eligible applicant.
- 16) Applications are ranked by their relevant School using the score determined as described above.
- 17) School Ranking Committees will additionally identify any applicants that are applying for consideration on the grounds of equity or who will be nominated for other named scholarships as appropriate.

Nomination of Successful Applications

- 18) The Board of Graduate Research may allocate to each School on the basis of research performance drivers a set number of scholarships to be awarded to Masters by research and doctoral candidates. The distribution of scholarships between Schools is reviewed and approved by the Office of the Provost.
- 19) School Ranking Committees may take into account strategic considerations when allocating scholarships to ranked applications, but these must be justified and applied consistently across the School.
- 20) Schools must allocate at least 30% of both Masters by research and doctoral scholarships to a 'merit' pool, which is awarded to the top-ranked applicants for each cohort. The remainder of the School allocation will be awarded to top-ranked applicants for each cohort based on pre-determined 'target' criteria, such as in strategically important areas of research, set by the School.
- 21) A number of scholarships may also be awarded in a 'central' pool based on University commitments, such as those associated with successful major grant applications, or where scholarships are provided to new academic staff. Scholarships awarded from the central pool do not form part of a School's allocation. Applications for such scholarships will be ranked as a separate cohort for each advertised project or theme.
- 22) School Ranking Committees will determine and indicate whether applicants in their ranked list should be awarded a 'merit', 'target', or 'central' scholarship until their

allocation is exhausted.

Approval of Successful Applications

- 23) Ranked School lists with allocated scholarships ('merit', 'target', and 'central') are confirmed by the Board of Graduate Research. The Board reviews and approves the allocation of scholarships to successful applicants by Schools, and determines the final allocation of scholarships including the number of scholarships awarded to domestic and international applicants, the awarding of the David Myers Research Scholarships, and the Dennis McDermott Research Scholarship and any remaining available scholarships. Any remaining available scholarships from School allocations will be retained for a future scholarship round, or not awarded.
- 24) Once confirmed by the Board, scholarship offers are made to successful applicants by the Graduate Research School.

Other Scholarships

- 25) RTP Fees Offset scholarships are made available to all domestic candidates who receive an offer of candidature to undertake graduate research at La Trobe University.
- 26) RTP Allowances are paid to RTP Stipend holders to support costs associated with the production of publications, including research theses and other examinable artefacts, and relocation to undertake the degree.
- 27) La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarships are made available to all international candidates who receive an award of a stipend scholarship and will normally only be awarded concurrently with a stipend scholarship.
- 28) In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Graduate Research may award on request a La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarship to candidates enrolled beyond the maximum period of support of their RTP Fees Offset Scholarship or La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarship. Candidates must demonstrate a significant delay in progress as a result of issues such as problems with continuity of supervision; or major disruption to essential research infrastructure.