

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 candidates to be offered graduate research scholarships at La Trobe University, that are administered by the Board of Graduate Research.

Section 2 - Scope

- 2) The following schemes are covered by this Schedule:
 - a) Research Training Program (RTP) scholarships
 - i) RTP Stipend
 - b) La Trobe University (LTU) scholarships
 - i) LTU Postgraduate Research Scholarship (LTUPRS)
 - ii) The David Myers Research Scholarship
 - iii) LTU Research Equity 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, calculated so as to be equivalent to a La Trobe honours degree. 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) The Board of Graduate Research will prioritise applications from full-time candidates, enrolled to undertake their research at a La Trobe University campus, who have attained the equivalent of a first class honours degree at an Australian university or recognised overseas university, or in the case of the LTU Research Equity Scholarship a high honours 2A grade or equivalent. The award of RTP Stipend Scholarships will be prioritised to applications from domestic candidates

Honours Equivalence

- 6) Where an applicant's highest qualifying degree is an Australian honours degree, a graded Australian Master's by Research degree, or a graded Australian Master's by Coursework degree with research component, this numerical grade will be used as the Honours Equivalence score.
- 7) In the case of 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 band criteria.
- 8) Where the other qualifying degree comprises coursework and research components, the percentage weighting of both components will be determined by the Graduate Research Coordinator. The research grade will be determined as described above, and the coursework grade will be determined by averaging grades achieved over the entire qualifying degree. These grades are multiplied by the respective percentage weighting and combined to produce the Honours Equivalence score. School ranking committees may determine a minimum acceptable research component.
- 9) Graduate Research Coordinators are required to provide an explanatory narrative for every applicant to justify the resulting Honours Equivalence score.
- 10) Applications which are deemed to be ineligible or uncompetitive are not required to be scored.

Ranking of Scholarship Applications

- 11) School Ranking Committees, chaired by the School Graduate Research Coordinator, will review and approve the explanatory narrative and determined score for each eligible applicant.
- 12) Applications are ranked by their relevant School using the score determined as described above.
- 13) School Ranking Committees will additionally identify any applicants that are applying for Equity Scholarships or who will be nominated for other named scholarships as appropriate.

Nomination of Successful Applications

- 14) The Board of Graduate Research allocates to each School on the basis of research performance drivers a set number of scholarships to be awarded. The distribution of scholarships between Schools is reviewed and approved by the respective College Executive.
- 15) 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.
- 16) Schools must allocate at least 30% of scholarships to a 'merit' pool, which is awarded to the top-ranked applicants. The remainder of the School allocation will be awarded to top-ranked applicants based on pre-determined 'target' criteria, such as in strategically important areas of research, set by the School.
- 17) A number of scholarships will 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 to recruit graduate researchers directly. Scholarships awarded from the central pool do not form part of a School's allocation.
- 18) 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

- 19) 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 awarding of Equity Scholarships and David Myers Research Scholarships and any remaining

available scholarships. Any remaining available scholarships from School allocations will be awarded within their respective College.

20) Once confirmed by the Board, scholarship offers are made to successful applicants.

Other Scholarships

21) 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.

22) RTP Allowances are paid to RTP Stipend holders to support costs associated with production of publications, including research theses and other examinable artefacts, and relocation to undertake the degree.

23) 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.

24) 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.