Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships Policy

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Academic – Academic Board
Accountable Executive – Policy	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Training)
Responsible Manager – Policy	Senior Manager, Graduate and Global Research
Review Date	15 April 2029

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) This Policy outlines the principles and procedures under which La Trobe University offers graduate research scholarships to candidates enrolled in graduate research degrees.

(2) This Policy and its Procedures should be read in conjunction with:

a. Graduate Research Admissions Policy
b. Graduate Research Candidature Policy
c. Graduate Research Progress Policy
d. Graduate Research Supervision Policy
e. Graduate Research Support Policy

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Policy applies to:

a. Graduate research scholarships funded wholly by the University, including but not limited to:
    i. La Trobe University Graduate Research Scholarship (LTGRS)
    ii. La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarship (LTUFFRS)
    iii. David Myers Research Scholarship
    iv. The Dennis McDermott Research Scholarship
    v. La Trobe University Flexible Research Scholarship (LTFLEX)
b. Scholarships funded by the Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP):
    i. RTP Fees Offset Scholarship
    ii. RTP Stipend
    iii. RTP Allowance
c. Graduate research scholarships funded by industry, philanthropic or other external organisations, wholly or in part with the University, except where 3(a) applies.

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(4) This Policy does not apply to:

a. externally funded scholarships where payments only are administered by the University but the terms and conditions of the scholarship are defined by the sponsor;
b. scholarships and prizes wholly administered by organisations external to the University;
c. other payments made to candidates funded by the University except where 3(a) and 3(c) apply; or
d. scholarships for students enrolled in coursework degrees.

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Determines the annual value, duration, and allocation of all University graduate research scholarships	Board of Graduate Research (BGR)
Confirms and determines the award of all ranked University graduate research scholarships	BGR
Approves part-time graduate research scholarships	Chair, BGR
Approves the deferral of a commencement of a graduate research scholarship when outside of the commencement window.	Chair, BGR

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(5) La Trobe University will offer scholarships consistent with the requirements of the Higher Education Support (Commonwealth Scholarships) Guidelines 2025 to eligible candidates of exceptional research potential to undertake graduate research degrees.

(6) Candidates may be awarded more than one scholarship consistent with the provisions in Part C (Eligibility for Scholarships) of this Policy. Scholarships may include provision for tuition fees, fee offsets, living stipends and targeted allowances that may be awarded separately. Some scholarships provide additional living allowances and project support to outstanding applicants.

(7) Scholarships will be offered according to the strategic research priorities of the University, including both Central (Portfolio of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) and School-allocated processes. Allocations will be on the basis of competitive selection processes that consider merit, capability, the University's strategic priorities, and, where relevant, other equity considerations.

(8) Ranking and selection of candidates will be based on clear, consistent and published criteria (see Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule B - Ranking and Selection Process) and undertaken by university staff with appropriate knowledge, skills and training.

(9) The Board of Graduate Research is responsible for determining annually the availability, value and duration of all scholarships.

(10) The Board of Graduate Research is responsible for the final allocation of scholarships across the University and any decisions concerning the extension or cessation of individual scholarships is delegated to the Chair, BGR. The Board will be fair and equitable in the use of its discretionary powers in relation to scholarships.

(11) The Graduate Research School is responsible for the administration of all graduate research scholarships together with other parts of the University that are responsible for research contracts and payroll.

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Section 6 - Procedures

Part A - Types of Scholarship

Fee Scholarships

(12) The University administers two main types of fee scholarships:

a. RTP Fees Offset Scholarships are paid directly to the University by the Australian Government on behalf of the holder to partially offset costs to the University for the tuition and support of the studies undertaken by the Research Training Program scholarship holder. At La Trobe University RTP Fees Offset Scholarships are offered to all domestic candidates and may also be awarded, in some cases, to international candidates.
b. La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarships (LTUFFRS) pay the tuition fees for eligible international candidates, and may also be awarded in some circumstances to domestic candidates who may not be eligible for an RTP Fees Offset Scholarship or where the RTP Fees Offset Scholarship has expired.

Stipend Scholarships

(13) Stipend scholarships may be provided to both domestic and international candidates to support general living costs.

(14) Stipends are paid on a fortnightly basis by La Trobe University directly into an Australian bank account in the name of the stipend holder.

(15) Stipend scholarships may be awarded to candidates enrolled in Master's by research, a Masters Pathway or doctoral degree. In addition to the eligibility requirements and terms and conditions of each scholarship, the application, ranking, selection and offer of scholarships may vary according to the type of degree.

Allowances

(16) Allowances may be paid to stipend holders to support costs associated with undertaking the degree, which include relocation to commence the degree, and the costs associated with producing the thesis or other materials for examination as specified in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule A - Terms and Conditions. The value and conditions associated with allowances will be outlined in a candidate's letter of offer.

Part B - Scholarship Terms and Conditions

(17) All scholarship holders must adhere to the scholarship conditions as set out in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule A - Terms and Conditions as may be amended from time to time.

(18) The Board of Graduate Research is responsible for setting terms and conditions for the following schemes (including but not limited to):

a. scholarships funded wholly by the University;
b. scholarships funded by the Australian Government Research Training Program;
c. scholarships funded by industry, philanthropic or other external organisations, wholly or in part with the University, except where 3(a) applies.

(19) The broad terms and conditions – including stipend and fee offset rates - for all scholarship schemes administered by the Board of Graduate Research are outlined in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule A - Terms and Conditions. These will be reviewed annually, provided to successful applicants and must be agreed to by the applicant

in accepting the scholarship.

(20) Terms and conditions for scholarships may include additional provisions or variations to the provisions outlined in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule A - Terms and Conditions. These will be provided to successful applicants and must be agreed to by the applicant in accepting the scholarship.

(21) Terms and conditions for scholarships under 4(a) which are administered by the University will be determined by the funding body, provided to successful applicants and must be agreed to by the applicant in accepting the scholarship.

Period of Support

(22) A candidate's maximum period of support is based on the date the candidate commenced their graduate research degree. The commencement date for candidates who transfer from one graduate research degree to another will be the date of the first research degree in which they enrolled.

(23) The expected (FTE) periods of support for RTP Fees Offset Scholarships or La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarships are:

a. a maximum of four years for a doctoral degree;
b. a maximum of two years for a Master's by research;
c. a maximum of one year for a Master's by research Pathways degree.

(24) RTP Fees Offset Scholarships can be held on a part-time basis. La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarships may be made available to candidates who are enrolled part-time only with the approval of the Chair, BGR, under specific conditions outlined in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule A - Terms and Conditions. For part-time load, periods of support are doubled.

(25) The University may charge candidates up to the equivalent current value of the fees offset amount (for domestic candidates) or tuition fee (for international candidates) for any periods of candidature beyond the maximum period of support. The extension or provision of tuition fee scholarships to candidates enrolled beyond the maximum periods of support outlined above will be considered by the Chair, BGR upon request only under exceptional circumstances.

(26) The expected and maximum full-time periods of support for stipend scholarships, unless otherwise specified in the letter of offer, are described in the table below:

Degree Type	Expected Period	Scholarship Grace Period	Maximum Period
Doctoral	3 years 3 months	3 months	3 years 6 months
Master's by research	20 months	2 months	22 months
Masters Pathway	8 months	2 months	10 months

(27) The scholarship grace period is an inbuilt extension of the stipend scholarship if a candidate is unable to submit their thesis on or before their initial expected work submission date (EWSD).

(28) Stipend scholarships may be made available to candidates who are enrolled part-time only with the approval of the Chair, BGR under specific conditions outlined in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule A - Terms and Conditions. For part-time load, periods of support are doubled.

(29) All stipend and fee scholarships will be terminated upon thesis submission or the expiry date of the scholarship, whichever comes first.

Part C - Eligibility for Scholarships

Eligibility to Take up a Fees Scholarship

(30) Applicants must:

a. be enrolled in a Master's by research or doctoral degree at this University;
b. not be receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Commonwealth designed to offset graduate research degree fees.

(31) La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarships will normally only be awarded concurrently with a stipend scholarship.

Eligibility to Take up a Stipend or Allowance

(32) To receive a stipend, a candidate must have an Australian bank account in the scholarship holder's name.

(33) Some stipend or allowance scholarships have additional eligibility criteria, which are outlined in the relevant appendices of the Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule A - Terms and Conditions.

Consideration on Equity Grounds

(34) The Chair, BGR will reserve a portion of scholarship funding to provide special scholarships, on the basis of equity, to candidates who are eligible for scholarship consideration, as follows:

a. The Dennis McDermott Research Scholarship, for applicants who identify as Australian Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; and/or
b. The La Trobe University Flexible Research Scholarship, for applicants who have a documented disability and require reasonable adjustments to achieve successful progress in their candidature.

(35) In exceptional circumstances, scholarships may be awarded to domestic candidates who are not competitive or eligible for a School-allocated scholarship, a Dennis McDermott Scholarship or a FLEX scholarship, and who wish to make a personal case for consideration on equity grounds.

(36) The Graduate Research School will provide information about how to apply for a scholarship on equity grounds on the Graduate Research School website.

(37) The Board of Graduate Research will consider applications on a case-by-case basis.

Currently Enrolled Candidates

(38) Currently enrolled domestic and international candidates may apply for a stipend or fees scholarship. Any candidature time already consumed will be deducted from the duration of any scholarship awarded.

Part D - Application, Selection and Offer of Scholarships

(39) The University will advertise available scholarships on the Graduate Research School website. Scholarships may be advertised as part of a round or on an ad hoc basis for individual projects or other opportunities. Closing dates may vary depending on the specific scholarship and the applicant's residency status.

Application

(40) Candidates seeking to apply for a scholarship must follow the instructions on the Graduate Research School

website.

(41) Applicants for all scholarships must normally apply for candidature and scholarship simultaneously unless already enrolled at the University in a graduate research degree when they are applying for a scholarship.

(42) Applications by Australian and New Zealand Citizens, or Australian permanent residents, for School-allocated scholarships may include a request for consideration on equity grounds where the applicant fulfills the eligibility criteria for equity consideration as defined in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule B - Ranking and Selection Process.

General Principles for Selection

(43) Scholarships are awarded to applicants with research experience based on merit of applications and consideration of targeted areas of research strength at the University, including commitments to new academic appointments and partnerships, and awarded competitive grants.

(44) All eligible applicants for a Master's by research scholarship are allocated a score equivalent to a La Trobe University honours thesis grade on the basis of their performance in their qualifying degree/s and then placed in a ranked list of applicants for the available scholarship/s, and prioritised as per the criteria in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule B - Ranking and Selection Process.

(45) All eligible applicants for a doctoral scholarship are allocated a score equivalent to a La Trobe University Master's by research thesis grade on the basis of their prior qualifications and research experience and then placed in a ranked list of applicants for the available scholarship/s, and prioritised as per the criteria in Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships - Schedule B - Ranking and Selection Process.

(46) All domestic offers of candidature will be accompanied by an offer of an RTP Fees Offset Scholarship independently of whether they are also to receive a stipend under any other scholarship scheme.

Ranking of Scholarship Applicants (School Allocations)

(47) Schools will rank applications received for Master's by research (excluding Masters Pathway applications) and doctoral scholarships.

(48) After school ranking is complete the Board of Graduate Research will determine which school-ranked applicants will receive the relevant scholarship.

Ranking of Scholarship Applicants (Masters Pathways)

(49) Where applicable, schools will assess applications received for the Masters Pathway applications based on the provisional honours thesis mark.

(50) After school assessment is complete the Board of Graduate Research will determine which applicants will receive a Masters Pathway Scholarship.

Ranking of Scholarship Applicants (Other Centrally Funded)

(51) Applicants for other centrally funded scholarships including those allocated centrally as commitments to new academic appointments, partnerships, or competitive grants will be assessed and ranked at school level. Any scholarship offer will be subject to ratification by the Chair, BGR.

Offers

(52) All scholarship offers are conditional on the applicant receiving an offer of candidature for the relevant

scholarship. Offers of candidature may be conditional on meeting certain provisions such as English Language Requirements, or confirmation of honours or Master's by research results.

(53) The scholarship holder will commence studies within such period as La Trobe University will allow. Normally the scholarship will commence on the commencement date specified in the original scholarship offer letter; any deferral beyond this date, arising from exceptional circumstances, must be approved by the Chair, BGR.

(54) The University may stipulate and advertise a specific period within which the scholarship holder must commence studies. Deferral of the scholarship beyond this specified period will normally not be permitted.

(55) The University reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a scholarship if an applicant does not reply to the offer by the date specified or does not commence studies by the allowed date.

(56) Applicants who have been unsuccessful in their application for a scholarship will be notified in writing following the conclusion of the scholarship round. Applicants who have been unsuccessful in one round may apply in subsequent rounds.

Part E - Supervision and Resources

(57) Applications will only be considered where appropriate supervision and resources are available to support the proposed research project.

(58) All candidates offered candidature and/or a scholarship at La Trobe University will be:

a. allocated a minimum of two supervisors throughout their candidature and a progress committee to support their research according to the conditions outlined in the Graduate Research Supervision Policy and other relevant candidature and progress policies;
b. provided with appropriate facilities and resources to undertake their research projects in accordance with Graduate Research Support Policy.

Part F - Termination of a Scholarship

(59) Candidates must adhere to the Terms and Conditions pertaining to their scholarship. This may include any Australian Government guidelines where relevant.

(60) The University reserves the right to terminate any scholarship before the completion of the period of tenure if, after due inquiry, the Chair of the Board of Graduate Research concludes that the scholarship holder has not adhered to the Terms and Conditions of their scholarship.

Part G - Right of Review

(61) Appeals will be considered only in relation to the application of this Policy, Procedure and associated schedules.

(62) Candidates wishing to appeal a decision in relation to a scholarship must do so in writing to the Board of Graduate Research within 20 business days of the date of the written notice of the decision.

(63) Members of the Board who were not involved in the original decision will consider the appeal.

(64) Scholarship applicants or holders not satisfied with the outcome of any review may seek a review from the University Ombudsman.

(65) If a scholarship is awarded as a result of a successful appeal that determines the original decision was made in error due to the academic school's assessment, the school will be responsible for funding the stipend until the start of

the following academic year.

Part H - Acknowledgement of Scholarships

(66) Candidates holding an RTP Fees Offset Scholarship, RTP Stipend or RTP Allowance are required to acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution of an RTP Scholarship in any published materials related to the graduate research degree. This relates to any time, both during and after completion of the graduate research degree, and includes items such as their thesis, books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works. The RTP scholarship holder must acknowledge receipt of this support using the exact phrase:

> This research was supported by the Commonwealth through an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship [DOI: https://doi.org/10.82133/C42F-K220].

(67) Candidates holding an RTP Fees Offset Scholarship, RTP Stipend or RTP Allowance who also have an Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID), must acknowledge the Commonwealth's contribution through the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship by including the [DOI: https://doi.org/10.82133/C42F-K220] in their ORCID record.

(68) Candidates holding a La Trobe University Full-Fee Research Scholarship, La Trobe University Graduate Research Scholarship, David Myers Research Scholarship, Dennis McDermott Research Scholarship, or La Trobe University Research Scholarship are required to acknowledge La Trobe University's contribution in any published materials related to the graduate research degree. This relates to any time, both during and after completion of the graduate research degree, and includes items such as their thesis, books, articles, newsletters or other literary or artistic works. The scholarship holder must acknowledge receipt of this support per the Graduate Research Examinations - Schedule B - Presentation of Theses for Graduate Research Degrees.

(69) Scholarships funded by industry, philanthropic or other external organisations, wholly or in part with the University, should also be acknowledged if this is a requirement of the sponsor per the guidelines in the Graduate Research Examinations – Schedule B – Presentation of Theses for Graduate Research Degrees.

Section 7 - Definitions

(70) Nil.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(71) This Policy is made under the La Trobe University Act 2009.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	4th May 2026
Review Date	15th April 2029
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	4th May 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Rebecca Lubansky Senior Manager, Graduate and Global Research
Enquiries Contact	Graduate Research School

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