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<b>Responsible Owner</b>	Executive Dean, Faculty of Tertiary Education and Research	<b>Version</b>	2021 v1
<b>Functional Manager</b>	Director Graduate School		

## 1. Background

1.1 From 1 January 2017, the Australian Government has replaced the following funding and scholarship schemes with a single program, the [Research Training Program \(RTP\)](#):

- Research Training Scheme (RTS)
- Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA)
- International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS)

1.2 As these three schemes are not continuing beyond 1 January 2017, the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (the Institute) has transferred all RTS, APA and IPRS recipients to the new RTP.

1.3 From 1 January 2017 Australian Government scholarship funding offered to Institute Higher Degree by Research (HDR) candidates is through the RTP.

## 2. Summary

2.1 The RTP is the program under which the Commonwealth through the Department of Education provides block grants, on a calendar year basis, to Higher Education Providers (HEPs) to support research training for candidates undertaking Masters and doctorate degrees by research.

2.2 This policy applies to RTP funded scholarships at the Institute. It applies to all prospective applicants for, and recipients of, a RTP Scholarship. The policy also applies to all staff working with RTP Scholarships including in relation to selection, ongoing eligibility and administration.

2.3 This policy does not apply to scholarships or funding other than RTP Scholarships.

### 3. Policy

#### 3.1 Types of RTP Scholarships.

The three types of RTP Scholarship that can be offered are:

RTP Fee Offset which is provided to satisfy the liability for HDR tuition fees and fully extinguishes the candidate's tuition liability in the year in which it is awarded. Eligible HDR candidates, including those candidates who are accepted on transfer from another HEP, are automatically awarded a RTP Fee Offset.

RTP Allowance which is provided to assist with ancillary costs such as:

- HDR thesis printing and academic publication costs; or
- Relocation costs.

RTP Stipend which is provided to assist candidates with living expenses while undertaking an HDR.

**Continuing Candidates.** The Institute will transfer Continuing Candidates to a RTP Scholarship in a form that does not disadvantage the continuing candidate and provides at least equivalent support to that provided, or that would have been provided, through predecessor Australian Government programs.

The RTP Allowance and RTP Stipend are considered on application and subject to the availability of funding.

**Relinquishment of Scholarship.** A candidate may relinquish their RTP Scholarship (stipend or fee offset) at any time by notifying the Research Committee in writing that they no longer require the support.

**Variation of Scholarship.** Either the candidate or the Institute may apply to the Research Committee to make a variation to a RTP Scholarship. If the candidate is dissatisfied with the decision of the Research Committee they should in the first instance provide a response to, and seek a reconsideration by, the Research Committee. If still dissatisfied the candidate should submit a complaint in accordance with the Student Complaints Grievances and Appeals Policy and Procedure.

#### 3.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for a RTP Scholarship, a candidate must be a domestic candidate or an overseas candidate enrolled in an accredited HDR course of study at an Australian Higher Education Provider (HEP).

To be eligible for a RTP Fee Offset, a candidate must not be receiving an equivalent award or scholarship from the Australian Government designed to

offset HDR tuition fees.

The Institute will select candidates to be offered a RTP Scholarship through a competitive process, and in accordance with the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017 (Commonwealth Guidelines) and the *PhD Degree of Indigenous Perspectives by Research Rules* and *Masters Degree of Indigenous Perspectives by Research Rules*.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander candidates will be given preference for RTP scholarships.

Scholarships and support available for eligible overseas candidates are by negotiation with the Research Committee through the Executive Dean, Faculty of Tertiary Education & Research.

Eligibility or support beyond the period of Commonwealth Support will be by negotiation on a case-by-case basis.

**Compliance with Institute Codes of Conduct, Rules and Policies.** All candidates including those who are awarded a RTP Scholarship are required to comply with all Institute rules, codes and policies, including those relating to satisfactory academic progress in the program of enrolment. The Institute will monitor academic performance and may terminate a RTP Scholarship, or take other appropriate action, if a candidate is in breach of any Codes of Conduct, Rules or Policies.

The guideline outlining the competitive process can be found at:  
<https://www.batchelor.edu.au/biite/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Guidelines--HDR-Admission-and-Enrolment-v1.0.pdf>

Application forms and additional information can be found at:  
<https://www.batchelor.edu.au/research/future-research-students/>

### 3.3 RTP Stipend Scholarship

#### 3.3.1 Eligibility.

To be eligible or continue to be eligible for an RTP stipend a candidate must not be in receipt of an equivalent award, scholarship or salary related to their course of study, eg paid Research Assistant, that provides a benefit greater than 75% of their annual RTP stipend rate.

#### 3.3.2 Transfer of RTP stipend scholarships.

Unless otherwise approved by the Research Committee, the Institute will not take over the payment of a RTP Stipend awarded to a candidate by another HEP, where the candidate transfers to the Institute. The transferring candidate may apply for a RTP Stipend at the Institute at the next available opportunity and will be considered on the basis of the Institute selection criteria and in relation to other applicants.

If a candidate transfers to another HEP the Institute will not transfer RTP or other funding that has been allocated to the Institute.

### 3.3.3 Stipend rates

The Institute RTP Stipend rate for a full-time candidate in any calendar year is \$2,000 above the base (minimum) full-time RTP Stipend rate published in the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) for that year. In exceptional cases, and depending on available funding, an increase to this rate may be approved up to the maximum RTP stipend rate allowed from year to year.

For 2021 the base full-time RTP stipend rate is \$28,597 with a maximum RTP stipend rate of \$44,674. RTP Stipends will be paid fortnightly.

The RTP Stipend rate for a part-time candidate is 50% of the corresponding rate for a full-time candidate; unless otherwise approved by the Executive Dean, Faculty of Tertiary Education and Research.

### 3.3.4 Period of stipend support

A HDR Masters candidate may receive a Stipend as an RTP Stipend for a total of up to 2 years full time equivalent. No extension of this period of support will be granted.

A HDR Doctoral candidate may receive a Stipend as an RTP Stipend for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 4 years full time equivalent. An extension of up to 6 months full time equivalent may be granted if a compelling justification is provided by the candidate.

A candidate who converts from a HDR Masters to a HDR Doctoral program may receive a Stipend as an RTP Stipend for a maximum of 4 years full time equivalent. An extension of up to 6 months full time equivalent may be granted if a compelling justification is provided by the candidate.

The period of support will be increased by any periods of leave. A period of approved suspension does not contribute to the period of support.

An extension of up to six months to the Period of Support may be granted if a student is otherwise making satisfactory progress and the grounds for the extension relate to the student's *course of study* being materially adversely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions. The provisions relating to any extension are detailed in cl1.6.6 of the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017.

### 3.3.5 Paid Leave for Candidates with a RTP Stipend Scholarship

Candidates are entitled to receive up to 20 working days' paid recreation leave and ten working days' paid sick leave for each year of the RTP Stipend. These leave entitlements may be accrued over the life of the RTP Stipend but will be forfeited when the RTP Stipend is terminated.

Candidates are entitled to receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of 60 working days during the duration of the RTP Stipend for periods of illness where the candidate has insufficient accrued sick leave entitlements, provided that a medical certificate has been provided by the candidate.

Sick leave entitlements (including additional sick leave) may also be used to cover leave for candidates with family caring responsibilities.

Candidates who have completed 12 months of their RTP Stipend are entitled to a maximum of 60 working days paid maternity leave during the duration of the RTP Stipend. Paid leave may also be approved if the candidate has adopted a child.

Candidates who are partners of women giving birth while receiving a RTP Stipend and who have completed 12 months of their RTP Stipend, are entitled to a period of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth or adoption, as approved by the Executive Dean, Faculty of Tertiary Education & Research.

**3.3.6 Suspension of Stipend for non-lodgement or completion of milestones.** Candidates who do not meet agreed or required program milestones may have their stipend payments suspended. No reimbursement for periods of suspension under these circumstances will be granted.

**3.3.7 The RTP Stipend will be terminated if any of the following criteria apply:**

- Where the Research Committee deems that the candidate has failed to maintain satisfactory progress, or
- Where a doctoral candidate fails to meet the requirements of confirmation.

Prior to the termination of a RTP Stipend the candidate will be afforded the opportunity to address any issues that they deem may be relevant in a final determination by the Research Committee.

**3.3.8 False or Misleading Information**

If the Institute has reason to believe that a candidate in receipt of an RTP Stipend has provided false or misleading information in relation to the stipend it will re-assess the candidate's entitlement. The candidate may be required to repay any stipend benefits to which they are not entitled.

#### **3.4 Supervision, Facilities and Support**

HDR Candidates, including those who are awarded a RTP Scholarship, will be provided with a standard range of support and supervision. The supervision arrangements and responsibilities can be found in the Rules for the PhD and Masters degrees. This information is available at:

<https://www.batchelor.edu.au/research/scholarships-support/>

### 3.5 Suspension, Leave of absence or discontinuation of award

A RTP Scholarship holder who wishes to take leave of absence from his/her higher degree candidature or otherwise discontinue the approved program of research must notify the Research Office at least two weeks in advance of the request for suspension or termination. This must be done by application for leave of absence.

- A candidate may apply for leave of absence for a period or periods not exceeding 12 months in total during the tenure of an award.
- If leave of absence is required because of circumstances beyond the candidate's control the maximum period(s) of suspension may be extended to a total of 12 months with the permission of the Research Committee. Requests for further periods of suspension will not be considered. This excludes leave associated with pregnancy, childbirth, parental or carer leave.
- A candidate will be required to repay allowances received to which he or she ceased to be entitled by reason of discontinuation or suspension of studies.

Periods of study during suspension of the award (eg half-time study) toward the degree will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.

### 3.6 Change in Enrolment

In the case of a change in circumstances a candidate may request to change their enrolment status; such as changes in the field of education, changes between full-time and part-time or transitioning between the Masters and PhD research programs will be as determined by the provisions of the Rules for the PhD and Master's degrees and/or the decisions of the Research Committee.

HDR candidates must advise the Research Committee in writing of any change to the title or topic of their HDR project in order to establish whether the recorded field of research has changed.

HDR candidates may transfer to Batchelor Institute from another HEP according to the Guideline *Higher Degree by Research (HDR) application for admission and enrolment* which is available at <https://www.batchelor.edu.au/research/research-application/>

On request, the Institute will provide an HDR candidate with information about their RTP Scholarship that is required for enrolment at another HEP.

Changes to enrolment and candidature, requests for leave of absence or discontinuation of the HDR program should be requested on the appropriate forms which can be obtained at: <https://www.batchelor.edu.au/research/current-candidates/>

### 3.7 Termination of RTP Scholarship

RTP Scholarships will be terminated if one or more of the following criteria apply:

- The candidate ceases to meet the eligibility criteria,
- The maximum duration of the scholarship has been reached,
- The candidate fails to return from an approved period of Leave of Absence,
- The candidate has committed serious misconduct, including the provision of false or misleading information,
- Candidature has been terminated due to unsatisfactory progress,
- The candidate fails to re-enrol, with no response to attempts at communication by the Institute,
- The candidate takes unapproved leave, with no response to attempts at communication by the Institute,
- The candidate fails to participate in a formal progress review and does not respond to reasonable requests to do so.

The process for determining a termination or amendment to an RTP Scholarship will be as determined by the Research Committee in each particular case. Any process will ensure that the candidate is informed of the process prior to any process being undertaken; that the candidate is afforded natural justice at all points in the process; is provided with all necessary information and provided with the opportunity to respond to any issues before the Research Committee reaches a final decision.

### 3.8 Employment and Work Outside the HDR Field of Study

Candidates who are enrolled full-time should not be engaged in more than 15 hours of paid work or external study a week unless this work on the judgement of the Research Committee is viewed as not interfering with the pursuit of the research award. Part-time candidates should advise the Research Committee of their combined outside study and/or employment commitments to ensure that such commitments do not impact negatively on their study program.

### 3.9 Community, Industry or Work Placements or Internships.

The undertaking of community, industry or work placements or internships as part of a HDR will have no impact on the duration of RTP support or the value or amount of support.

### 3.10 Grievance and Review

Depending on the nature of the grievance or review; for example, whether it relates to an academic or administrative issue; a candidate may seek a review of, or

appeal, decisions of the Institute relating to a RTP Scholarship in accordance with the following relevant documents:

- Candidate Conduct Rules
- Candidate Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Policy
- Candidate Complaints, Grievances and Appeals Procedure
- PhD Degree in Indigenous Perspectives by Research Rules
- Master’s Degree in Indigenous Perspectives by Research Rules

**3.11 Acknowledgement by Recipients**

When, at any time during or after completion of a HDR, the recipient of a RTP Scholarship, his/her supervisor or any other party, publishes or produces material which relate to the research project carried out by the recipient of a RTP Scholarship an acknowledge of the Commonwealth’s contribution must be made. The acknowledgement must include the mention of the candidate’s support through an “Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship”.

**4. Responsibilities**

Responsibilities are as outlined above.

**5. Acronyms & Terms**

<b>Acronym/Term</b>	<b>Definition/Description</b>
<i>continuing candidate</i>	means either:  a candidate whose period of support under the Research Training Scheme, International Postgraduate Research Scholarships or Australian Postgraduate Awards would terminate on or after 1 January 2017.  or  a candidate who has received an offer of support by a HEP under the Research Training Scheme, International Postgraduate Research Scholarships or Australian Postgraduate Awards, and accepted this offer of support, and whose offer of support was scheduled to commence on or after 1 January 2017.
<i>domestic candidate</i>	is a candidate who is not an overseas candidate



<b>Acronym/Term</b>	<b>Definition/Description</b>
<i>Full-time candidate load</i>	in respect of a course of study, is at least 75 per cent of an equivalent full-time candidate load in the period for which RTP Scholarship support is received.
<i>Guidelines</i>	means the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017
<i>HDR</i>	means a higher degree by research which is a Research Doctorate or Research Masters course for which at least two-thirds of the candidate load for the course is required as research work.
<i>HEP</i>	means a higher education provider as specified in section 16-15 of the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> (Table A Providers) or section 16-20 (Table B Providers).
<i>HESDC</i>	means the Higher Education Candidate Data Collection maintained by the Commonwealth Department of Education.
<i>Institute</i>	means the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education.
<i>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander candidate</i>	means a HDR candidate who identifies herself or himself as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent and is reported as such in the HESDC.
<i>non-Aboriginal candidate</i>	means a HDR candidate who is not an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander candidate.
<i>overseas candidate</i>	As defined in the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i>
<i>part-time candidate load</i>	in respect of a course of study, is less than 75 per cent of an equivalent full-time candidate load in the period for which RTP Scholarship support is received.
<i>RTP</i>	means the Research Training Program.

<b>Acronym/Term</b>	<b>Definition/Description</b>
<i>RTP Allowance</i>	is a type of RTP Scholarship to assist with ancillary costs incurred by a HDR candidate in undertaking a HDR.
<i>RTP Fees Offset</i>	is a type of RTP Scholarship to assist with course fees that would otherwise be payable by a HDR candidate.
<i>RTP Scholarship</i>	is a form of support awarded to a candidate for one or more of a RTP Allowance, Fees Offset and Stipend.
<i>RTP Stipend</i>	is a type of RTP Scholarship to assist candidates with general living costs.
<i>student</i>	has the same meaning as candidate.
<i>suspension</i>	means a period of time during which a scholarship holder is not receiving RTP Scholarship support, which has been approved in accordance with this Policy.

## 6. Supporting Documents

- Student Conduct Rules
- Student Code of Conduct
- *Masters Degree of Indigenous Perspectives by Research Rules*
- *PhD Degree of Indigenous Perspectives by Research Rules*
- *Rules for PhD Doctor of Philosophy*
- *Rules for MA Master of Philosophy*
- Student Complaints Grievances and Appeals Policy
- Student Complaints Grievances and Appeals Procedure
- Research Policy
- Research Plan 2016 -2020
- Fair Treatment, Equal Benefits and Opportunity Policy
- Student Encumbrance Policy
- Free Intellectual Inquiry Policy

- Application for RTP Stipend
- Application for Admission

## 7. Related documents

- Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017  
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2020C00875>
- Explanatory Statement to the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017  
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2016L01602/Explanatory%20Statement/Text>
- *Higher Education Support Act 2003*
- Research Training Program – Frequently Asked Questions for Candidates  
<https://www.education.gov.au/research-training-program-frequently-asked-questions-students>

## 8. Modification history

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Sections modified</b>	<b>Authority</b>	<b>Details</b>
June 2017	2017 v1		Academic Board	New policy
October & November 2017 March 2018	2017 v2 & v3 2018 v1	All content sections	Academic Board	Revisions as a result of comments by Commonwealth Dept Educ & Trg on the first version of the policy
November 2019	2019 v1	3.3.3 Stipend rates 7 – Related documents	Deputy CEO Higher Education & Research	Update of the stipend rates for 2020 Update web links Transfer to new template
8 February 2021	2021v1	3.3.3 Stipend Rates 6 Supporting Documents	Academic Board	Update of the stipend rates for 2021 Added Institute Policy to offer stipend rate \$2000 above the commonwealth base full time RTP stipend rate

**9. Feedback**

If you have any comments or feedback about this Policy, please contact the Director Graduate School.