

Victoria University

Sport and Exercise Science Postgraduate Research Scholarship Application Guide 2009

This guide relates to applications for the School of Sport and Exercise Science Postgraduate Research Scholarships. The University will determine the applicant's eligibility for these scholarships. Applicants should note that the application process for all scholarship types is very competitive.

Applicants for this scholarship will undertake a research project in the area of Inactivity and Skeletal Muscle. Muscular inactivity can occur suddenly due to major injury or illness and disrupts active living in all age groups and health states. This can result in rapid and profound loss of muscle mass, strength and power, with adverse consequences for health, physical activity levels, training and athletic performance. Strategies are required to combat these effects of acute muscular inactivity, to minimise the rapid and subsequent deleterious effects, and to speed up recovery. This project will investigate the effects of acute muscular inactivity and related interventions on skeletal muscle performance, metabolism, ion regulation (lactate, potassium) and molecular biology.

Further details about this specific scholarship may be obtained from Professor Mike McKenna, tel. (03) 9919 4499 or via email on michael.mckenna@vu.edu.au Further information may also be obtained here: <http://www.staff.vu.edu.au/mmckenna/>

Inactivity and Skeletal Muscle Postgraduate Research Scholarships

The Sport and Exercise Science Inactivity and Skeletal Muscle Postgraduate Research Scholarship will be awarded to a postgraduate doctoral researcher on the basis of academic merit and research potential.

Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must:

- ◆ Be Australian citizens, or have been granted permanent resident status
(This includes New Zealand citizens who are granted permanent residency status on arrival)
- ◆ Have completed at least four years of tertiary education studies at a high level of achievement. For example:
 - a four year undergraduate degree (eg: Engineering);
 - a three year degree and an Honours year; or
 - a three year degree and a postgraduate diploma
- ◆ Have achieved First Class Honours or equivalent
- ◆ Be undertaking a doctoral research degree in 2009
- ◆ Enrol as a full-time student
(Part-time awards may be available for compelling social or medical reasons)
- ◆ Have had their enrolment into the proposed degree approved by the institution
- ◆ Be pursuing a doctoral degree in one of the relevant research areas

You are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for a this scholarship if you:

- ◆ Have already completed a doctoral degree.
- ◆ Have held any Victoria University Postgraduate Research Scholarship previously unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits.
- ◆ Are receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the proposed program
("equivalent" stipend is regarded as more than \$14,000 per annum).

Successful applicants will receive a full guide to the conditions and benefits of these scholarships at the time of offer. The following is a summary of the main benefits and conditions.

Scholarship Allowance

Scholarship stipends will be paid at the APA rate of \$20,007 per annum (2008 rate, 2009 rate to be advised). Full time scholarship stipends are currently tax-exempt.

Holders of these scholarships may:

- Be in receipt of minor award, allowances or other earnings which are supplementary to a scholarship, or derived from part-time work within the guidelines set out by Victoria University;
- Receive stipend top up funding from industry, or obtain from a non-Commonwealth source, provision for fieldwork, equipment and other such expenses not covered by the scholarship. Funds towards overseas travel costs may be obtained from Commonwealth awards or other sources.

Research Training Scheme (RTS)

In addition to the scholarship allowance provided for any of the above scholarships, each scholarship holder is expected to receive a Research Training Scheme Place (previously a HECS Exemption Award). This will exempt the scholarship holder from paying HECS fees for the duration of the scholarship.

Intellectual Property

Applicants should note that they may be required to assign intellectual property they create while working on certain research projects to the University through a formal agreement.

Duration of the Scholarship

For applicants commencing their enrolment in a research degree, the scholarship is normally for three years for Doctoral studies and two years for Masters studies.

For applicants who are currently enrolled in the Masters or Doctoral degree for which they are seeking the scholarship, the period of enrolment already completed in the degree will be deducted from the duration of the scholarship. This includes prior enrolment in a Masters degree where a Masters enrolment has been converted to a Doctoral enrolment.

A scholarship extension of up to six months may be granted to Doctoral candidates where the University is satisfied that the extension is based on grounds which are beyond the control of the candidate and are related to the research rather than of a personal nature. Scholarship extensions are not possible for Masters study. All students are expected to complete their study in the minimum time for their course.

Employment

Students are paid to study on a full-time basis and are only permitted to undertake a strictly limited amount of employment. This is set at a maximum of eight (8) hours per week during business hours Monday to Friday.

Commencement

All successful applicants are expected to commence study by 31 March 2009.

A late commencement, up to 30 June 2009, may be granted where employment commitments or circumstances beyond the applicant's control prevent the applicant from commencing by 31 March 2009. Approval for a late commencement must be sought in writing by the applicant, providing full details of the reasons for the request, before 31 March 2009.

If an applicant cannot start by 31 March 2009, and approval has not been obtained for late commencement prior to 31 March 2009, the scholarship will be withdrawn. If an applicant has not commenced by 1 July 2009, for any reason whatsoever and whether or not approval for late commencement has been obtained, the scholarship will be withdrawn.

Part-time Scholarships

Part-time scholarships may be available to those who are unable to study full-time for all or part of their candidature. Part-time scholarships can only be approved only in the following specific instances:

Where the scholarship holder has:

- A medical condition which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification), OR

- Care responsibilities for a pre-school child, OR
- Care responsibilities for a school aged child as a sole parent with limited access to support, OR
- Care responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent

Part-time scholarships are NOT available to applicants who wish to study part-time in order to undertake full or part-time employment. Part-time scholarship holders are subject to the same restrictions on employment as full-time scholarship holders.

Applicants wishing to be considered for a part-time scholarship must meet the criteria listed above. Applicants must provide evidence of the reason(s) they are unable to study full time. They also require the agreement of the supervisor and the University to the part-time arrangements.

Scholarship Selection Procedures

Applications are assessed against the eligibility criteria for each of the scholarships available. Those deemed eligible are forwarded to the relevant School/Centre committee for further assessment and ranking. The School/Centre will rank applications on the basis of academic merit.

Due to increased competition in recent years, applicants are requested to provide transcripts with actual marks, wherever possible. These marks may be used to distinguish between applicants of high academic merit if necessary.

Only First Class Honours or equivalent applicants are ranked for the scholarships.

Students with the following qualifications are automatically classed as First Class Honours applicants:

- *Australian and New Zealand Bachelors Degree with First Class Honours*
- *Australian and New Zealand Research Masters Preliminary formally graded as First Class Honours*
- *Australian and New Zealand Research Masters Degree formally graded as First Class Honours*

Where an applicant does not hold one of the above qualifications, but the School/Centre believes that the applicant has qualifications and/or research experience equivalent to First Class Honours, an assessment of equivalence is determined. The following are examples of qualifications requiring assessment:

- *Bachelors Degree with 2nd and 3rd class honours as the highest qualification*
- *Research Masters Preliminary without a formal First Class Honours grade*
- *Research Masters Degree without a formal First Class Honours grade*
- *Coursework Masters Degree*
- *Graduate Diploma*
- *All overseas qualifications (except New Zealand)*
- *Other non-standard H1 Bachelors qualifications*

To assist the School/Centre in the process of assessing H1 equivalence, the following information should be included in or attached to the application:

- *Details of research projects/minor thesis for the highest qualifying degree. Include overall grade of research component, percentage of research in the program and examiners' reports (if available).*
- *Relevant research work experience.*
- *Publications – including percentage contribution of applicant, whether accepted for publication, or published, and nature of publication (eg. refereed journal article, report, conference abstract, etc).*
- *Relevant employment experience.*
- *Any tertiary prizes, awards or scholarships.*

For these scholarships, applicants must be undertaking research in one of the designated areas of research focus.

The School of Sport and Exercise Science Ranking Committee will review the School/Centre Order of Merit list to determine a the successful scholarship recipient based on academic merit and research potential. Applicants should note that the application process for all scholarship types is very competitive.

The final ranking and scholarship allocation is completed in the second week of December. All applicants will receive written notification of the result of their scholarship application after 15 December 2008.

Appeals

Appeals can only be lodged against process issues and not against Committee decisions or ranking. Appeals against the outcome of scholarship applications must be made in writing to the Chair, Scholarship Ranking Committee within 14 days of the applicant being notified of the outcome. Applicants must explain the basis of their appeal and provide relevant documentation and evidence to support the appeal. The appeals process will be carried out by an independent Senior University Officer who is not a member of any Faculty or University Scholarship Ranking Committee that has considered the scholarship applications in a particular year. The Senior University Officer appointed will consider the appeal and advise the applicant of their decision in writing.

How to complete the Scholarship Application Form

- Please type or use **BLACK** pen and write clearly
- Include all attachments where instructed
- Ensure all document copies are certified (refer to Checklist section of application form for details)
- Please provide the completed application form plus attachments clipped together (no staples, spiral binding, folders etc will be accepted)
- Incomplete applications will not be considered
- Late applications will not be considered

Applicant Details

Please provide all details in full. If there is any change to your address details after lodgement of the application, it is your responsibility to advise changes to the Scholarships Coordinator.

Residency Details

Please tick the correct box and attach documentation as instructed.

These scholarships are available **ONLY** to Australian Citizens or Permanent Residents. If you were born in Australia or have become an Australian Citizen, you must provide a certified copy of documentation showing your citizenship – a Birth Certificate, Citizenship Certificate, or Passport.

If you have been granted Permanent Residency Status you must have been granted permanent residency before 31 October 2008. You must provide a certified copy of the pages of your passport showing relevant visas and entry and departure dates.

Scholarship Eligibility Checklist

Please respond to ALL four questions. If you have answered YES to question 1, you may not be eligible for some categories of scholarship. If you have answered YES to questions 2, 3 or 4 you are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for any of these scholarships.

Proposed Research

Please ensure that you attach a typed Research Proposal to your application. This proposal should not exceed 2 typed A4 pages, and should include a brief statement addressing each of points A to F as listed on the application form.

Statement of Support from Head of School / Centre

- Applicants may only enrol in one School or Centre.
- Applicants who are currently enrolled in the degree for which the scholarship is sought are NOT required to provide a statement of support, however this should be indicated on the form.
- Applicants who are not already enrolled in the degree for which a scholarship is sought should note that the scholarship application form is not an application for admission. Applicants should contact the School / Centre in which they wish to study to discuss their proposed research and obtain information on the research interests and availability of potential supervisors.
- The Head of School / Centre or their nominee must complete the '*Statement of Support*' form. This must be attached to your application. It is your responsibility to ensure that this form is completed. Applications without departmental support will not be considered.

Qualifications

- Where undergraduate or honours degrees include a work experience or industry placement, fieldwork, practicum or similar, applicants **MUST** provide evidence of satisfactory completion of this placement. Applications without evidence of satisfactory completion will be ineligible for consideration.
- Attach a separate statement listing any prizes or distinctions gained in your academic career that are not listed in the official transcripts.
- All listed qualifications must be supported with certified copies of academic transcripts, including a key to result codes. Your application may be disadvantaged if the University is not able to fully assess your academic performance. You need to include a transcript with actual marks where possible.

- If any degree was completed in a country other than Australia, you will need to provide a certified copy of the original academic transcript (including a key to result codes), and an English translation if necessary. You need to include a transcript with actual marks where possible.
- Any supporting documents submitted in languages other than English, will require an official certified translation into English, in addition to the certified copy of the document.
- Applicants with academic records from overseas may be disadvantaged if the Scholarships Ranking Committee is unable to make a comparison with this University's standards. Applicants with overseas qualifications should obtain assistance from the following organisations for assessment of their qualifications:

<p>National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) Postal Address: GPO Box 1407, Canberra, ACT, 2601 Telephone: +61 2 6240 7644 from overseas Telephone: 1800 020 086 (free call within Australia) Email: noosr@dest.gov.au Internet: http://www.dest.gov.au/noosr</p>	<p>Overseas Qualification Unit Level 5, 1 Spring Street MELBOURNE VIC 3000 Telephone: (03) 9208 3317 in Australia Email: oqu@employment.vic.gov.au http://www.employment.vic.gov.au/</p>
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Research Experience

- The information you provide in this section, together with your academic results, is used to assist the Ranking Committees to assess your academic merit, research experience and potential.
- Please list any details that you think are relevant to your application or your proposed research. This information may also be used to assess Honours 1 equivalence if you do not have a First Class Honours degree and you wish to be considered for an APA.

Academic Referees

- The referee reports play a very important role in the scholarship selection process. Choose referees who have a good knowledge of your academic background, ability and potential.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that your referees return their reports to the Scholarships Coordinator by Friday 24 October 2008. Late or missing referee reports will not be pursued. Applications without referee reports will not be considered.

Declaration

Please read, sign and date this section to complete your application.

False reporting of information will lead to the scholarship offer being withdrawn.

Checklist

- Please refer to the checklist to ensure you have attached all required documentation to your application. Procedures for having document copies certified are explained in the checklist section.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Application Submission

Applications close at 4.00 pm on **Friday 31 October 2008**. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Applications should be sent to:

*The Scholarships Coordinator
 Office for Postgraduate Research
 Victoria University
 PO Box 14428
 Melbourne, Victoria, 8001*

Courier or hand-delivery address:
 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm)

14 Geelong Road, Footscray, VIC, 3011

Further Assistance and Enquiries

An electronic version of this application form and the guidelines are available on the Office for Postgraduate Research website which is found at: <http://www.vu.edu.au/postgrad/>

Further enquiries can be made to Professor Mike McKenna:

Telephone: (03) 9919 4499
 Fax: (03) 9919 4891
 Email: Michael.McKenna@vu.edu.au
 Webpage: www.staff.vu.edu.au/mmckenna