

# Award Benefits and Conditions 2016

The conditions and benefits contained in these guidelines apply to **new** award holders commencing in 2016 and to **continuing** award holders in the following scheme:

## ❖ Centre of Policy Studies Top Up Scholarship

The following terms are used in this document:

“University” refers to Victoria University.

“The Committee” refers to the Postgraduate Research Committee

## Award Conditions

### 1. Commencement

Scholarship payments will commence from 1 January 2016 for new award holders who are already enrolled students.

A new award holder who is not already enrolled, must commence study by 31 March 2016. Scholarship payments will commence from the date of enrolment for new students. A new mid-year scholarship recipient must commence study by 29 August 2016.

A late commencement up to 29 August 2016 may be granted in exceptional cases (such as a late offer of award) and unusual circumstances. (Unusual circumstances do not include a student trying out a job for a few months before deciding whether to continue or to take up an award). Approval for a late commencement must be sought in writing by the student, providing full details of the reasons for the request. Applications for late commencement must be submitted to the Graduate Research Centre for consideration by the Committee before 1 March 2016.

If a student does not start by 31 March 2016, and approval has not been obtained for late commencement prior to 1 March 2016, the award will be withdrawn. If a student has not commenced by 29 August 2016, for any reason whatsoever and whether or not approval for late commencement has been obtained, the award will be withdrawn. For mid-year scholarship recipients, the student must commence by 29 August 2016 or the award will be withdrawn.

A student who commences an award must terminate the award within six (6) months of commencement to remain eligible to apply for an award in any future year.

### 2. Tenure and Extension of Award

A full-time award may be held for a maximum of **three** years for a Doctoral program. Periods of study already undertaken towards the degree prior to the commencement of the award will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure. Similarly, periods of study undertaken during suspension of the award, or undertaken during the tenure of a previous Australian Postgraduate Award, will be deducted from the maximum period of tenure.

The Committee may approve extending the tenure of an award for Doctoral studies by six (6) months where the research has been delayed due to circumstances beyond the student's control and related to the research rather than of a personal nature. Applications for extension of the award must be submitted to the Senior Coordinator, Admissions & Scholarships at least one month prior to expiry of the award.

Awards are granted to individuals for completion of one program of study only. Holders of awards are ineligible to apply for a further award, unless the original award was terminated within six (6) months of commencement.

Continuation of awards is subject to satisfactory progress. Award holders are required to submit bi-annual progress reports and other reports as requested by the University. The University will terminate the award of students who fail to maintain satisfactory progress.

### 3. Part-Time Awards

The University may approve a part-time award where an applicant can demonstrate heavy care commitments or a medical condition which precludes full-time study. The award holder must demonstrate either:

- care responsibilities for a pre-school child, or
- care responsibilities for school aged children as a sole parent with limited access to *outside support*, or
- care responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent, or
- a medical condition which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification).

Part-time awards are NOT available to applicants seeking to undertake paid employment on a full-time or on a substantial part-time basis. Holders of part-time awards are subject to the same restrictions on employment as full-time award holders.

A part-time award holder is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time award holder. Award holders approved to study part-time may revert to full-time study at any time.

Stipends for part-time awards are NOT tax exempt.

International Award holders are ineligible to study part time.

### 4. Suspension of an Award

The University may grant award holders up to twelve months suspension (intermission) for any reason. However, suspension of the award within the first six months of tenure is not normally permitted. An additional twelve months may be granted when students can demonstrate reasons outside their control. No suspension is possible beyond two years in total. Applications for suspension must be submitted to the Graduate Research Centre at least one month prior to the date of proposed suspension.

Periods of study undertaken towards the degree during suspension of the award will be deducted from the maximum period of award tenure.

### 5. Reports

The award holder must provide reports on the progress of the research as required by the University, including bi-annual progress reports submitted through the supervisor. If the Committee considers that progress is not satisfactory, the award will be terminated or the award holder placed on probation.

### 6. Human and Animal Experimentation

Award holders are required to abide by the National Health and Medical Research Council codes on human and animal experimentation, guidelines established by the Australian Government's Recombinant DNA Monitoring Committee and rulings of the relevant Safety and Ethics Committees of the University.

### 7. Employment

The award holder is only permitted to undertake a limited amount of employment. Generally, the University recommends that part-time work during the hours 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, should not exceed more than a maximum of fifteen (15) hours per week. However the candidate's supervisor/s must be satisfied that any part-time work undertaken does not interfere with the candidate's study program. Fractional appointments are not to exceed 0.4 and sessional teaching must take into account that one (1) hour of class contact time constitutes three actual working hours when marking and preparation times are taken into account. Work undertaken must not interfere with an award holder's study program. The University cannot require the award holder to undertake employment.

## **7. Termination of an Award**

The award will be terminated on the date that the thesis is submitted for examination, or at the end of the award, whichever is earlier. The award will be terminated before this time if after due inquiry the University concludes that the award holder has not fulfilled award obligations, met the eligibility criteria or if satisfactory progress is not being made.

A student who commences an award must terminate the award within six months to remain eligible for an award in any future year.

The award must be terminated in the following circumstances:

- on completion of the course (submission of the thesis for examination);
- when the student ceases to be a full-time student and when approval has not been obtained to hold the award on a part-time basis;
- on the death, incapacity, resignation or withdrawal of the student;
- if the award holder does not resume study at the conclusion of a period of suspension, or does not make arrangements to extend that period of suspension;
- if, in the opinion of the University, the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of award, and no suitable alternative arrangements can be made for continuation of the postgraduate degree.
- Please note that if the University begins an Unsatisfactory Progress Nomination, any scholarship will normally be suspended until the resolution of such proceedings.

## **Award Benefits**

### **8. Stipend**

The Centre of Policy Studies Top Up Scholarship will be awarded in addition to an APA or International Postgraduate Research Scholarship. The top up for a full time candidate will be of \$15,000 per annum. This payment will be indexed annually and is currently exempt from taxation.

### **9. Tuition Fees**

Tuition fees will be funded as per the fee conditions of either the award holders Australian Postgraduate Award or International Postgraduate Research Scholarship.

### **9. Annual Leave**

Award holders are entitled to paid annual leave as per the conditions of their APA or IPRS.

### **10. Sick Leave**

Award holders are entitled to sick leave as per the conditions of their APA or IPRS.

*Award holders are required to submit an application for leave form, signed by their supervisor or College Director of Research & Research Training, to the Senior Coordinator, Admissions & Scholarships, within two weeks of the leave being taken.*

### **11. Maternity Leave**

Award holders are entitled to maternity leave as per the conditions of their APA or IPRS.

*Award holders wishing to access maternity leave provisions must contact the Senior Coordinator, Admissions & Scholarships to discuss their plans and arrange access to maternity leave.*

## **General**

### **12. Change In Circumstances**

An award holder must promptly notify the Senior Coordinator, Admissions & Scholarships, of any changes in his or her circumstances which may affect eligibility to continue to receive payments under the award.

The award holder will promptly notify the Senior Coordinator, Admissions & Scholarships, Graduate Research Centre of any intention to alter the mode of study, thesis title, supervisor, or any such change related to their research program.

### **13. Overpayment of Award**

If in the opinion of the University a student has been overpaid any part of an allowance or stipend under an award, either through the failure of the student to comply with the Conditions of Awards or for any other reasons whatsoever, the student shall repay the overpayment within thirty (30) days of being requested to do so by the University.

### **14. Appeals**

Award holders have the right to appeal against decisions made in relation to the award. In the event of a dispute arising, the student should first approach his or her research supervisor who will then direct the student through the appropriate channels within the University.