1. Context
Torrens University Australia is responsible for the administration of any scholarships awarded to its students under the Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) scholarships. It includes the promotion, selection and allocation of RTP scholarships within the conditions and provisions set out under the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017.

2. Definition
Domestic student: Australian citizens, New Zealand citizens, or holders of an Australian permanent visa (holders of all categories of permanent resident visas including Humanitarian Visas).

Full-time student: a student maintaining a minimum enrolment load of 75% over a year (that is, 0.75 equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL) or above).

International student: a student who is not a domestic student, and who may hold a student visa and is protected by the ESOS Legislative Framework.

Part time student: a student has an enrolment load of less than 75% over a year (that is, 0.74 EFTSL or below).

3. Scope
This policy applies to:
- domestic students enrolled in the University’s higher degree by research (HDR) courses
- international students enrolled in the University’s higher degree by research (HDR) courses.

4. Principles
- The University awards RTP scholarships in line with the eligibility criteria laid out in the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017.
- The University adheres to a competitive and transparent selection process and will prioritise eligible students primarily by academic merit.
- The University determines the entitlements and scholarship allocations awarded to eligible students subject to conditions outlined in the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017 and the Higher Education Support Act 2003.
- The Vice-Chancellor determines additional RTP eligibility criteria and conditions consistent with the principles of the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017, and reports changes to the Research Committee.

5. Research Training Program Scholarship Entitlements
The University may decide to offer an HDR student, based on the outcome of a competitive selection process, one or more of the following RTP scholarships:
- fees offset to cover course fees
stipend to assist with general living costs
- allowances to help students with ancillary costs of undertaking an HDR course including but not limited to:
  - a standard Overseas Student Health Cover policy approved by the Commonwealth Department of Health for an HDR international student which covers the student and their spouse and dependents
  - relocation costs to undertake an HDR course
  - thesis printing and academic publication costs.

The annual ancillary costs will be capped based on the Commonwealth Government’s annual financial contribution.

Scholarship entitlements are subject to Commonwealth Government requirements (refer to the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017).

6. RTP Stipend

The RTP Stipend full-time rate in any calendar year will be equivalent to the base full-time RTP Stipend rate published in the Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research). A part-time recipient will receive 50% of the rate of a full-time recipient.

The University will review RTP stipend rates annually and will take into consideration the base and maximum full-time stipend rate set by the Australian Government. The University will advise the student of the outcome of any such review in writing.

7. Eligibility

The student must meet the eligibility criteria for the relevant RTP Scholarship entitlements as outlined in the Commonwealth Scholarship Guidelines (Research) 2017.

7.1 General Requirements

To be eligible for any RTP Scholarship, the student must be a domestic or international student enrolled in a Torrens University Australia Higher Degree Research (HDR) course (i.e. Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy).

7.2 Additional Eligibility Requirements for RTP Stipend

To be eligible for the RTP Stipend, in addition to the general requirements listed in section 7.1, the student must not be receiving an equivalent award, scholarship or income greater than 75% of their RTP stipend rate from another source for the same purpose (i.e. living allowance for the purpose of undertaking the HDR course).

7.3 Additional Eligibility Requirements for RTP Fees Offset

To be eligible for the RTP Fees Offset, in addition to the general requirements listed in section 7.1, the student must not be receiving an equivalent Commonwealth Government award or scholarship designed to cover an HDR course.

8. Ongoing Eligibility

HDR students receiving RTP Scholarships must maintain ongoing eligibility as set out in this Policy, the RTP Scholarships Guidelines and other University policies. The student must maintain satisfactory academic progress to ensure continued receipt of the scholarship.
9. RTP Application Process

9.1 Application Process
The University opens and assesses scholarship applications three (3) times a year coinciding with the commencement of each study period. Applicants must submit their complete RTP Application Form and supporting documentation at least two months before commencing their TUA HDR course. The University reserves the right to reject incomplete applications.

9.2 Selection Process
The Higher Degree Research Committee will shortlist eligible candidates and the Research Committee will prioritise RTP scholarship awardees based on academic merit. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- research capacity and experience
- student’s potential to complete the HDR course
- undertaking research in line with the University’s Research Strategic Plan

Other considerations will include:

- other HDR courses completed at an equivalent or higher level
- study mode (full-time or part-time study)

Refer to the RTP Scholarships Guidelines for details regarding the application and outcome notification process.

9.3 Notification
The University will send the student the outcome of their scholarship application in writing (to student’s email address on record) a month after the application period closes.

10. Continuing students
HDR students who are in receipt of a scholarship under the Research Training Scheme, International Postgraduate Research Scholarships or Australian Postgraduate Awards (predecessors of the Research Training Program Scholarship) and whose scholarship offer from the University was due to commence on or after 01 January 2017 will not be disadvantaged as a result of these scholarships’ cessation. These students will be offered the following RTP Scholarships:

- domestic HDR students who are recipients of the former Research Training Scheme will be provided RTP Fee Offset for a period during which the students will receive support equivalent to the level of support they would have received under the Research Training Scheme
- international HDR students who are recipients of the former International Postgraduate Research Scholarships will be offered RTP FEE Offset and RTP Allowance for a period during which the students will receive support equivalent to the level of support they would have received under the International Postgraduate Research Scholarships
- HDR students who are recipients of the former Australian Postgraduate Awards will be offered RTP Stipend and RTP Allowance for a period during which the students will receive support equivalent to the level of support they would have received under the Australian Postgraduate Awards.

The duration of the scholarship that applies to continuing students will be based on the HDR course commencement dates and not on the RTP Scholarship commencement dates.
11. RTP Scholarship Terms and Conditions
To ensure continued receipt of RTP Scholarship, recipients must maintain ongoing eligibility and comply with the terms and conditions outlined in this policy and within the RTP Scholarship Guidelines (including conditions relating to scholarship deferral, academic progression, employment and other income sources, and RTP scholarship acknowledgement).

12. Scholarship Duration
RTP fees offset and stipends are provided for:
• a minimum of three (3) years up to a maximum of four (4) years for an eligible full-time PhD student or a minimum of six (6) years up to a maximum of eight (8) years for an eligible part-time PhD student
• a maximum of two (2) years for an eligible full-time MPhil student or a maximum of four (4) years for an eligible part-time MPhil student.

The duration of the scholarship will be increased for any periods of University approved leave (see section 13). Any RTP Scholarship suspension periods will not count as part of the scholarship duration.

13. Leave Entitlements
RTP Stipend recipients are entitled to the following:
• a maximum of 20 working days’ paid recreation leave and ten (10) working days’ paid sick leave for each year they receive RTP Stipend. These leave entitlements may be accrued over the life of the RTP Stipend but will be forfeited when the student’s RTP Stipend is terminated.
• additional sick leave of up to a total of 60 working days for the duration of the RTP Stipend for periods of illness where the student has insufficient sick leave entitlements available provided that the student submits a medical certificate. Sick leave entitlements may also be used to cover leave for students with family caring responsibilities.
• a maximum of 60 working days paid maternity leave upon student’s completion of 12 months of their RTP stipend. Paid leave may also apply if the student chooses to adopt a child.
• where the student is a partner to a woman who is going to give birth while receiving the stipend and who has already completed 12 months may be entitled to parental leave.

RTP Stipend recipients may also apply for unpaid leave during which the student’s stipend will be suspended. HDR students may apply for both paid and unpaid leave in line with the provisions of the Higher Degree Research Courses Policy.

For more information on leave entitlements, application requirements and processes, refer to the RTP Scholarship Guidelines.

14. Supervision and Resources
All HDR students, including RTP scholars, are entitled to the following:
• supervision as detailed in the Higher Degree Research Courses Policy and Research Code of Conduct
• resources described in the Higher Degree Research Courses Policy.
15. Placements
HDR students may undertake placements, internships and other activities that may enhance their learning and research experience. When undertaking placements, students are to comply with the provisions of the Work Based Learning Policy. Refer to the RTP Scholarship Guidelines regarding the possible impact of taking on placements on student’s eligibility for continued receipt of the RTP Scholarship.

16. Enrolment Variations
RTP scholars may vary their enrolment in accordance with the Higher Degree Research Courses Policy. A variation in an RTP scholars’ enrolment may result in a change in or termination of their scholarship unless in accordance with the Higher Degree Research Courses Policy.

16.1 Changes to the field of education
An HDR student must advise the University in writing of any change to their field of study. Approval is at the discretion of the University (via the Research Committee). Such a change will not impact their RTP Scholarship entitlement but cannot be used as grounds to extend the student’s RTP Scholarship.

16.2 Transfer to or from another provider
The University will provide an HDR student with information regarding their RTP Scholarship for enrolment at another University upon request. The student must contact Student Services.

An HDR student who has undertaken study towards an equivalent MPhil or PhD with another higher education provider will have that period of study deducted from the duration of the RTP Scholarship approved by the University.

16.3 Changing from full-time to part-time or from part-time to full-time
An HDR student seeking to change from full-time to part-time or vice versa must apply in accordance with the provisions of the Higher Degree Research Courses Policy. Approval is at the discretion of the University and if approved will not have an impact on the student’s total RTP Scholarship entitlement. The disbursement of RTP Stipend will have to be re-adjusted to meet the requirements of section 6.

16.4 Transferring from the Master of Philosophy (MPhil) to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or vice-versa
HDR students can apply to transfer from an MPhil to a PhD or vice versa in accordance with the Higher Degree Research Courses Policy. The maximum duration for the RTP Scholarship entitlements (RTP Stipend or RTP Fees Offset) of:

- an MPhil student who transfers to a PhD will be three (3) to four (4) years from the date the student commenced the MPhil.
- A PhD student who transfers to the MPhil will be two (2) years from the date the student started the PhD. If the RTP Scholarship has already been held for two (2) or more years, it will cease on the date of transfer.
17. Extension of RTP Scholarships
An HDR student receiving RTP scholarship can request a scholarship extension if extenuating circumstances exist. It is the responsibility of the student to provide evidence to support their request. The application is assessed and decided by the Research Committee and will not exceed beyond six (6) months.

18. Suspension and Termination of RTP Scholarships
RTP scholarships may be suspended or terminated under a number of circumstances. For details, refer to the RTP Scholarship Guidelines.

18.1 Suspension
RTP scholarships will be suspended if the student fails to meet the scholarship’s terms and conditions (including additional conditions) which includes, but not limited to, the following:
- if the student takes unpaid leave
- if the student is suspended based on a determination made under the Student Conduct Policy.

18.2 Termination
RTP scholarships will be terminated if the student fails to meet the scholarship’s terms and conditions (including additional conditions) which includes, but not limited to, the following:
- once the thesis has been approved for examination
- when the scholarship’s maximum period expires without an approved extension
- if the student fails to meet the progression requirements as per the Higher Degree Research Courses Policy and Research Student Progress Procedure
- if the student fails to re-enrol after a period of leave of absence
- if the student withdraws from the course, dies or is incapacitated
- if the student transitions to full-time employment
- if the student is excluded or expelled from the University based on a determination made under the Student Conduct Policy.

19. Complaints and Appeals
Students dissatisfied with decisions or outcomes made under this policy have access to the complaints and appeals process outlined in the Student Complaints Policy.

20. Reporting
The Vice-Chancellor will report to the Academic Board annually on RTP scholarships.

21. References
Commonwealth Scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017
Higher Education Support Act 2003, section 46-20 and subdivision 19-D of Part 2-1