2009
RMIT PhD Scholarships
Conditions of Award

AIM HIGHER
For information on the RMIT PhD Scholarships contact:

Graduate Research Office
Research & Innovation Portfolio
RMIT University, City Campus
Building 91, Level 2, Room 17
110 Victoria Street, Carlton, Melbourne

Tel.  +61 3 9925 8355
Fax:  +61 3 9925 4089
Email: gro@rmit.edu.au

For information on other RMIT scholarships please contact the individual portfolio (see page 3 of these Scholarship Conditions)
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1. Introduction

RMIT has approved approximately $1.5 million to award 16 new RMIT PhD Scholarships in 2009. These scholarships will be strongly aligned to the themes of four RMIT Research Institutes outlined below.

Design
• Customising Space
• Rapid Manufacture
• Intervention Through Art
• Geoplace Knowledges
• Urban Liveability

Global Cities
• Climate Change Adaptation
• Globalisation and Culture
• Community Sustainability
• Urban Infrastructure
• Human Security
• Learning Cities

Platform Technologies
• Nano Materials and Devices
• Security and Safety
• SportzEdge
• Intelligent Industrial Information Technologies

Sustainable Health & Well-Being
• Lifestyle Approaches to Sustainable Health
• Electromagnetic Fields: Bioeffects and Therapeutic Advances
• Chinese Medicine
• Evidence-Based Health Policy and Practice

Additional information about RMIT’s Research Institutes is available at: www.rmit.edu.au/research/institutes

These scholarships will provide a stipend of approximately $25,500 a year for three years with the possibility of an extension of up to six months, relocation allowance up to $1485 and thesis costs up to $840.

This booklet is designed to give information to potential applicants and explain the conditions of award. All potential applicants are advised to refer to the Policy and Procedures for Higher Degrees by Research available at: www.rmit.edu.au/research/gro

Applicants with dependent children should check with Centrelink and the Family Assistance Office to see if they are eligible for other benefits.
Further information can be obtained from Schools:

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<th>Contact</th>
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<td><strong>Business</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Accounting &amp; Law</strong></td>
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<td>Prue Lamont</td>
<td>9925 5598</td>
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<td><strong>Graduate School of Business</strong></td>
<td>Ms Tina Katselos</td>
<td>9925 0102</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Management</strong></td>
<td>Ms Sally Wong</td>
<td>9925 1536</td>
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<td><strong>Design and Social Context</strong></td>
<td>Fiona Nolan</td>
<td>9925 3283</td>
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<td><strong>Applied Communication</strong></td>
<td>Angelo Tardio</td>
<td>9925 3722</td>
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<td><strong>Architecture and Design</strong></td>
<td>Brian Eckersley</td>
<td>9925 3505</td>
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<td><strong>Art</strong></td>
<td>Joy Hirst</td>
<td>9925 1947</td>
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<td><strong>Creative Media</strong></td>
<td>Angelo Pietrobon, Debra Dameron</td>
<td>9925 5206</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>Louise Prentice</td>
<td>9925 7877</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fashion and Textiles</strong></td>
<td>Wendy Vella</td>
<td>9925 9116</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Global Studies, Social Science and Planning</strong></td>
<td>Dean Coldicott</td>
<td>99253590</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Property, Construction &amp; Project Management</strong></td>
<td>Sarah Alam</td>
<td>9925 3450</td>
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<td><strong>Science, Engineering and Technology</strong></td>
<td>Helen Young</td>
<td>9925 3949</td>
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<td><strong>Aerospace, Mechanical &amp; Manufacturing Engineering</strong></td>
<td>Lina Bubic</td>
<td>9925 6110</td>
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<td><strong>Applied Sciences</strong></td>
<td>Kaarina Liind</td>
<td>9925 1751</td>
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<td><strong>Civil, Environmental &amp; Chemical Engineering</strong></td>
<td>Sharon Taylor</td>
<td>9925 3778</td>
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<td><strong>Computer Science &amp; Information Technology</strong></td>
<td>Beti Dimitrievska</td>
<td>9925 2287</td>
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<td><strong>Electrical &amp; Computer Engineering</strong></td>
<td>Caitlin Raynor</td>
<td>9925 1027</td>
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<td><strong>Health Sciences</strong></td>
<td>Julie Barnett, Julie Plateo</td>
<td>9925 7096, 9925 7361</td>
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<td><strong>Mathematical &amp; Geospatial Sciences</strong></td>
<td>Emma Read, Petra Siskos</td>
<td>9925 2827</td>
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<td><strong>Medical Sciences</strong></td>
<td>Josie Smith</td>
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2. How to apply for an RMIT PhD Scholarship

Applications for a Higher degree by Research (HDR) commencing in 2009 at RMIT are now open. With this application you may also choose to apply for an RMIT PhD Scholarship.

The application form for research degrees can be found at www.rmit.edu.au/research/gro The application form for scholarships is attached to this form. To indicate that you are applying for a scholarship you must tick the box at the top of the first page of your application for research degree admission and fill out the additional application pages at the rear of the document. To find the application form on the Graduate Research Office (GRO) homepage (link above), click the link “Degree Application”, and the application form can be downloaded from ‘step 4’.

Completed forms should be sent to the Graduate Research Office:

Graduate Research Office
Research & Innovation Portfolio
GPO Box 2476V
Melbourne VIC 3001
Australia

All RMIT PhD Scholarship applications must reach the Graduate Research Office by no later than Friday 31 October 2008.

Academic Referee report forms can be downloaded from www.rmit.edu.au/research/rmit_phd

The full procedure for enrolment and accreditation can be found in Section 8 of Policy and Procedures for Higher Degrees by Research (2007).

Applicants must also ensure all documentation—eg. certified photocopies of citizenship papers, birth certificate, relevant pages of a passport, academic transcripts, testamur and statements of completion—are attached to the application form. The last day for submitting outstanding results is 1 December 2008.
3. Applicant eligibility

3.1 Citizenship requirements
To be eligible for an RMIT PhD Scholarship in 2009, an applicant must be an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen or an Australian permanent resident. Applications from applicants currently seeking permanent resident status are permissible but any offers of awards will be conditional upon gaining this status before 2 March 2009.

3.2 Academic requirements
To be eligible for an RMIT PhD Scholarship in 2009, an applicant must meet all the following requirements:

(a) have completed at least four years of tertiary education studies at a high level of achievement, for example:
   - a four-year degree;
   - a three-year degree and an Honours year;
   - a three-year degree and one year of a higher degree;
   - a three-year degree and one year of a Masters preliminary or other qualifying program; or
   - a three-year degree and a postgraduate diploma;

(b) have obtained First Class Honours or equivalent results;

(c) be undertaking a doctoral degree at RMIT University in 2009 with a project is strongly aligned to one or more themes of the RMIT Research Institutes;

(d) be enrolled as a full-time student upon commencement of their award or, in exceptional circumstances, be granted approval by RMIT University for a part-time award in line with the criteria detailed in Section 4.11

(e) have discussed their proposed research topic with the relevant School, before submitting an application and before being ranked for an offer of an RMIT PhD Scholarship. It is not acceptable for an institution to make an offer to a student who then has to find a place in a portfolio or School and an appropriate supervisor.

Applicants are ineligible for an RMIT PhD Scholarship in 2009 if they:

(a) are currently receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the research higher degree, providing a benefit greater than 75% of the base RMIT PhD Scholarship stipend rate.

(b) Hold an Australian Doctorate by research degree or equivalent.

(c) Have previously held an RMIT PhD Scholarship, unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits.
3.3 Selection Procedures

Timeline for the application and selection period for a PhD Scholarship.

October 2008
31 October. Applications close 5 pm.

Students without an Honours 1 undergraduate degree are required to be assessed for H1 equivalence. Please contact the School.

November 2008
2 November. Last day for submitting referee report forms.

December 2008
1 December. Last day for submitting outstanding results for attachment to applications. Without these results the applicant is at a disadvantage when ranking takes place.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor of Research & Innovation Portfolio confirms final RMIT ranking for RMIT PhD Scholarships. RMIT PhD Scholarships applicants ranked and quota awards offered.

5 December. Notification sent to all applicants by this date.

19 December. Last day for acceptance of first round offers.

January 2009
Remaining quota awards offered.

February/March 2009
RMIT PhD Scholarships acceptances and commencement dates finalised.

2 March. Last day for submitting evidence of gaining Permanent Resident status to the Graduate Research Office in order to take up the award.

3.4 Selection Criteria

Applicants for RMIT PhD Scholarships must have discussed their proposed research topic with the relevant School before submitting an application and before being ranked for an offer of an RMIT PhD Scholarship. RMIT needs to ensure that adequate facilities and appropriate supervision are available for the applicants to undertake the program.

RMIT University ranks applicants by academic merit, work experience and/or research potential. The applicant’s ranking on the order of merit list is not affected by their age, or their having applied to another institution. In allocating scholarships preference will be given to students studying in one of RMIT’s Research Institutes.

Schools are required to rank their applicants for the awards by DEEWR criteria; portfolios are asked to repeat this process with ranked applicants from Schools to produce portfolio ranked lists. These lists then form the basis of the final RMIT University offer and reserve lists. These lists are produced by the PVC Research & Innovation in consultation with the Deans of Research & Innovation of all three academic portfolios, and the Directors of the Research Institutes. Portfolio lists are used as guides only, rather than rigid rankings.
3.5 Enrolment

3.5.1 Procedures for Research Students

Enrolment and Accreditation

The full procedure for enrolment and accreditation can be found on pages 23 – 24 of Section 8 of the Policy and Procedures for Higher Degrees by Research.

RMIT PhD Scholarship recipients are normally required to enrol into the School that ranked their RMIT PhD Scholarship application. Students are required to have their research proposal approved by their School (by 31 May for semester 1 commencements, and 31 October for semester 2 commencements). They are also required to have their candidature confirmed (for doctoral candidates within 12 months after the census date closest to commencement). Failure to have the research proposal approved and/or pass confirmation of candidature constitutes unsatisfactory progress and may result in the Scholarship being withdrawn.

3.5.2 Postgraduate Entrance Requirements

The normal entrance requirements to PhD candidature are an approved tertiary qualification from a recognised Australian tertiary institution or its equivalent. In addition, applicants must satisfy any prerequisite or employment requirements as specified in the individual program brochures.

3.6 Staff and Student Responsibilities

RMIT must:

(a) ensure that adequate facilities and appropriate supervision are available for each student undertaking a HDR: and

(b) establish, make publicly available, and abide by, a code of supervisory practice for students undertaking a HDR

The responsibilities of HDR candidates at RMIT and their supervisors are outlined in Sections 8 and 9 of the Policy and Procedures for Higher Degrees by Research.
4. Conditions of Award

4.1 Benefits

4.1.1 Award Stipend Entitlements

An RMIT PhD Scholarship provides a stipend at a rate of approximately $25,500 a year (full-time) in 2009. This stipend will be indexed annually and is tax exempt. All award holders will be allocated an RTS place.

The part-time stipend rate in 2009 will be approximately $12,750 a year. Part-time awards are not exempt from taxation and are indexed annually (refer to Section 4.11 – Part-time Award for further information on part-time awards).

RMIT PhD Scholarship holders are permitted to seek additional funding from sources other than the PhD Scholarship for the following:

• Fieldwork, equipment or other expenses not covered by the award,
• Funding for overseas travel costs from other Australian Government awards or any other source; and
• Receive income derived from part-time work undertaken within the conditions set out in sections 4.5 and 4.6 below.

4.1.2 Relocation Allowance

For students relocating their place of residence to take up their RMIT PhD Scholarship, the following payments will be made upon production of receipts:

• Travel expenses up to a maximum amount equivalent to the economy class of student airfare for the RMIT PhD Scholarship holder, spouse and any dependants to the new city; or
• Travel by car, for which they will receive a per kilometre allowance as determined by the institution up to the equivalent airfare costs. Students cannot claim for accommodation or meal costs if they elect to travel by car; and
• Relocation expenses up to the approved maximum amounts.

For the purposes of relocation entitlements, a dependant is defined as a person who moves residence with the RMIT PhD Scholarship student. A spouse who transfers employment to the city of the institution may be regarded as a dependant; a child continuing to reside at the former city and not intending to live on a permanent basis with the RMIT PhD Scholarship student at the new location cannot be regarded as a dependant.

Travel expenses will reimburse up to $515 per adult and $255 per dependant child. The maximum amount of relocation and travel expenses will be $1485.
4.1.3 Thesis Allowance

• Up to $840 for PhD thesis/project

Paid upon production of original receipts. The allowance must be claimed within one year of submission of the thesis/project and no more than two years after termination of the award. The amount paid will be up to the maximum rate applicable at the time of submission of the thesis/project. The allowance is a contribution to the costs of production of the thesis/project and does not include costs such as the purchase of computer equipment.

The allowance is payable for costs associated with the resubmission of a thesis/project, provided that the claim is made within one year of the resubmission date. The combined total of allowances for submission and resubmission must not exceed the approved maximum amounts.

In exceptional circumstances, students may apply to RMIT for a waiver of the relevant time limit on claiming the thesis allowance with any decision remaining at the discretion of RMIT. Any waiver of time limit must be approved by RMIT, subject to it being satisfied that the exceptional circumstances were beyond the student’s control and warrant an extension of the period in which a thesis allowance may be claimed.

4.1.4 Family Assistance

Successful applicants for full-time awards with families might be eligible for the Parenting Payment and need to apply at their nearest branch of Centrelink. Please check with the Family Assistance Office about eligibility for other types of assistance.

If any problems occur contact the Student Financial Advisor at Student Services Group, Building 14, Level 4, City Campus.

RMIT cannot be held responsible for any changes in government policy.

4.2 Duration of Award

A full-time RMIT PhD Scholarship may be held for three years.

A Doctoral candidate may apply for a maximum extension of up to six months subject to satisfactory progress, provided the grounds are related to study and are beyond the control of the candidate.

The maximum RMIT PhD Scholarship tenure will be reduced by any periods of study undertaken:

• Towards the degree before the commencement of the RMIT PhD Scholarship and/or;
• During suspension of the RMIT PhD Scholarship.

The duration of an RMIT PhD Scholarship will be increased by any periods of paid leave approved by RMIT.

The award holder must submit regular progress reports as required by RMIT. RMIT will terminate the awards of students who fail to maintain satisfactory progress.

Applications for an extension must be made to the Graduate Research Office between one and six months before the end date of the candidate’s award. Provision of an extension to an award is based on consideration of the candidate’s research progress.
4.3.1 Changing between Doctoral and Masters studies

Conversion from a Doctoral degree to a Masters degree renders the student ineligible to receive the RMIT PhD Scholarship.

4.4 Commencement Dates

A student must enrol at RMIT by 31 March in the year for which the Award is granted. Awards may be taken up from 1 January.

A late enrolment up to 31 August may be granted where employment commitments or circumstances beyond the student’s control prevent the student commencing by 31 March. Approval for a late commencement must be submitted in writing by the student to the Head of School, providing full details of the reasons for the request. Applications endorsed by the Head of School must be submitted to the Graduate Research Office for approval.

If a student cannot start by 31 March, and approval has not been obtained for late commencement before 31 March, the Award is withdrawn. If a student has not commenced by 31 August of the year of the Award for any reason whatsoever and whether or not approval for late commencement has been obtained, the Award will be withdrawn.

4.5 Employment

The award holder is permitted to undertake a limited amount of part-time paid employment, usually no more than 240 hours of employment a year during normal working hours (i.e. 9 – 5 Monday to Friday). Up to eight hours employment a week will be permitted. Anything over and above these hours must be approved by the senior supervisor and Head of School. RMIT cannot require the award holder to undertake employment.

If it becomes obvious that the amount of part-time employment has become detrimental to the candidate’s studies, this fact should be included in the next biannual progress report submitted to the RMIT Research Committee (See Section 10 of the Policy and Procedures for Higher Degrees by Research).

There is no limit on how much income an award holder can receive from part-time work that is unrelated to their research (refer to section 4.6 for limitation on income that is specifically in support of the research being undertaken by the candidate). However, this income will not be tax-exempt.
4.6 Eligibility for concurrent awards, scholarship or salaries

An RMIT PhD Scholarship holder may receive a concurrent award, scholarship or salary to undertake their research higher degree if:

- The concurrent award, scholarship or salary provides a benefit less than 75% of the base RMIT PhD Scholarship stipend rate; or
- The RMIT PhD Scholarship is suspended for the period of the concurrent award, scholarship or salary and the period of study undertaken towards the research higher degree during suspension of the RMIT PhD Scholarship is deducted from the maximum period of its tenure.

Income earned from sources unrelated to the course of study is not subject to the 75% rule.

4.7 Leave Entitlements

4.7.1 Recreation Leave

RMIT PhD Scholarship holders are entitled to up to 20 business days paid recreational leave each year of the award and this may be accrued (pro rata) over the tenure of the award. Up to 30 days may be accrued at any time. Candidates will forfeit any leave not consumed that exceeds a 30-day accrual. The candidate will forfeit any unused leave remaining when an award is terminated or completed. The student must obtain the supervisor’s agreement before leave is taken.

4.7.2 Sick Leave

RMIT PhD Scholarship holders will receive up to 10 days sick leave each year of the award and this may be accrued over the tenure of the award.

RMIT PhD Scholarship holders may also receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of 12 weeks during their award for medically substantiated periods of illness lasting longer than 10 days. Where an RMIT PhD Scholarship holder takes a period of additional sick leave, the tenure of the RMIT PhD Scholarship will be extended by that period.

Sick leave entitlements may also be extended to cover RMIT PhD Scholarship holders with family responsibilities caring for sick children or immediate relatives, subject to the usual practice of the institution in relation to students on similar awards.

4.7.3 Maternity Leave

Once RMIT PhD Scholarship holders have completed 12 months of their award, they are entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks paid maternity leave during the tenure of the award. Periods of paid maternity leave are in addition to the normal duration of the RMIT PhD Scholarship. RMIT PhD Scholarship holders who have not completed 12 months of their award may access unpaid maternity leave through the suspension provisions.
4.7.4 Parenting Leave

RMIT PhD Scholarship holders who are partners of women giving birth and who have completed 12 months of their award may be entitled to a period of paid parenting leave at the time of the birth, subject to the usual practice of the institution in relation to students on similar awards. Periods of paid parenting leave are in addition to the normal duration of the RMIT PhD Scholarship. RMIT PhD Scholarship holders who have not completed 12 months of their award may access parenting leave through the suspension provisions.

4.8 Research at other Organisations and Overseas

RMIT may give approval for an award holder to conduct substantial amounts of research at an organisation outside the higher education sector, but such approval will not normally be granted in the first six months of the award. In such cases RMIT will remain responsible for the award holder and ensure adequate support, supervision, training and research freedom. Overseas research may be approved for up to twelve months if the research is essential for completion of a degree, if there is adequate supervision and if the award holder remains enrolled at RMIT. While a student is overseas, any arrangements for the forwarding of money overseas will be the student’s responsibility.
4.9 Termination

The award will be terminated:

- If, in the opinion of RMIT, the course of study is not being carried out with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of the RMIT PhD Scholarship, and no suitable alternative arrangements can be made for continuation of the postgraduate degree;

- When the student ceases to be a full-time student and when approval has not been obtained from the RMIT Research Committee to hold the RMIT PhD Scholarship on a part-time basis;

- On completion of the course, or the death, incapacity, resignation or withdrawal of the student;

- If the RMIT PhD Scholarship 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 the RMIT PhD Scholarship holder fails to maintain satisfactory progress. The award holder must provide all reports required by RMIT including a biannual progress report submitted through the supervisor. If RMIT does not consider that progress is satisfactory, the award will be terminated or the award holder placed on probation (see Section 10 of the Policy and Procedures for Higher Degrees by Research); and/or

- If the RMIT PhD Scholarship holder accepts another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake their research higher degree providing a benefit greater than 75% of the base RMIT PhD Scholarship stipend rate and the RMIT PhD Scholarship holder does not comply with the requirements of Section 4.6 above.

- If the candidate takes Leave of Absence for more than 12 months continuously without the approval of the RMIT Research Committee.

- Two weeks after the thesis/project is submitted or at the end of the award, whichever is earlier.

If an RMIT PhD Scholarship is terminated, it cannot be re-activated unless the termination occurred in error.
4.10 Suspension of an Award

If the proposed suspension is to commence after the first six months of tenure and is of less than 12 months’ duration RMIT may, at its discretion, approve the suspension. Failure of the RMIT PhD Scholarship holder to resume study or to make arrangements to extend a period of suspension will result in the award being terminated.

If the proposed suspension is to commence within the first six months or if the accumulated period of suspension(s) is of more than 12 months’ duration, the student must apply to the RMIT Research Committee. The application will be considered only if there are exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the student.

Please note: Periods of study undertaken towards the degree during suspension of the RMIT PhD Scholarship must be deducted from the maximum period of its tenure. Application for suspension must be submitted to the Graduate Research Office at least one month before the date of proposed suspension.

4.11 Part-time Award

RMIT may approve a part-time award where an applicant is able to demonstrate heavy care commitments or a medical condition such as:

- 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).

In approving a part-time award, RMIT must be satisfied that the award holder’s circumstances are such that it would not be reasonable to expect the student to study on a full-time basis. Part-time RMIT PhD Scholarships are not available to applicants seeking to undertake paid employment on a full-time, or on a substantial part-time basis, and recipients are subject to the same restrictions on employment as full-time RMIT PhD Scholarship holders.

A part-time RMIT PhD Scholarship holder is expected to progress at half the rate of a full-time RMIT PhD Scholarship holder and extensions are possible.

RMIT PhD Scholarship holders approved to study part-time may revert to full-time study at any time with the permission of RMIT. RMIT may also require award holders to convert to full-time if the compelling reasons that made them eligible for a part-time award no longer applies.

Candidates for part-time awards will be ranked by RMIT along with applicants for full-time study. They must be ranked sufficiently highly to be offered a full-time award. They must also have the agreement of the supervisor and RMIT to the part-time arrangements.

Stipends for part-time awards are not tax exempt.
4.12 Transfer of Award between Institutions.
RMIT PhD Scholarships are not transferable to other universities or institutions as these scholarships are RMIT funded, not government funded.

4.13 Specific Obligations of RMIT

4.13.1 RMIT Research Policy and Practice
RMIT has developed a research policy and set of guidelines for research practice at the University which applies to all researchers of RMIT University including staff, industry and community partners, students and visitors, whether in Australia or overseas. More information on the following codes of practice is available from your School, the Graduate Research Office, Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation):

- Data Storage, Retention and Confidentiality
- Authorship and Publication of Research Output
- Potential Conflicts of Interest
- Research Misconduct

4.13.2 Human Research
Research involving humans cannot commence without approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee or a Portfolio Ethics Sub Committee or by a properly delegated authority.

The primary role of the Human Research Ethics Committee is to ensure that research involving humans is conducted ethically. The Committee will consider the welfare and rights of participants and researchers, and ensure that research proposals conform to the requirements contained in the NH&MRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).

4.13.3 Animal Research
No research or teaching involving the use of animals can proceed at RMIT University without the approval of the Animal Ethics Committee.

The AEC operates according to the Australian ‘Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes’ (7th edition). This Code has been endorsed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC), the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), the Australian Research Council (ARC) and Universities Australia (formerly the AVCC). The AEC also operates according to Code of Practice for the Housing and Care of Laboratory Mice, Rats, Guinea Pigs and Rabbits 2006, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1966, amended December 2005, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 1997, amended February 2006.
4.13.4 Intellectual property

Intellectual Property is a broad term covering a number of areas such as patents, registered designs, trademarks and copyright.

RMIT University actively encourages and supports the securing of legal protection for the results of the work and research of its staff and students.

Any student with an enquiry about intellectual property should approach his or her research supervisor who will direct the student through the appropriate channels within RMIT University (see Section 19 of the Policy and Procedures for Higher Degrees by Research).

Further details about research policy and practice, human and animal experimentation, and intellectual property can be found at the RMIT website.

4.13.5 Appeals

Current 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 direct the student through the appropriate channels within RMIT University.

The University Appeals Committee at RMIT has the authority to hear appeals from applicants who consider that their application has been incorrectly assessed. Appeals can be heard only against process issues and not against committee decisions or assessor ratings and comments.

4.13.6 Research Training Scheme Places

All award holders are allocated an RTS place.

4.13.7 Change in Circumstances

An award holder must promptly notify RMIT of any changes in his or her circumstances which may affect eligibility to continue to receive payments under the award.

4.13.8 Overpayment of Award

If, in the opinion of RMIT, 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 reason whatsoever), the student shall repay the overpayment within 30 days of being requested to do so by RMIT.
www.rmit.edu.au/research/scholarships

RMIT PhD Scholarship
Conditions of Award – October 2008

Original Issue: March 2007, revised September 2008
Approved: Research Training Sub Committee
Effective September 2008
Graduate Research Office