

AUT SCHOLARSHIP PROCEDURES

1. PURPOSE

To provide guidance for the establishment and administration of AUT funded scholarships.

2. SCOPE

These are University-wide procedures for the approval and administration of AUT Scholarships. Separate protocols are available for the administration of Summer Research Awards and externally funded scholarships.

3. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of these procedures, unless otherwise stated, the following definitions shall apply:

Scholarship: A grant awarded to a student to support a course of study based on an approved set of regulations where the recipient is selected on merit or other defined criteria through a contestable process.

Stipend: Funds provided on a regular basis for living expenses in respect of a student's enrolment to enable a qualification to be gained. Stipends are exempt from tax where they provide for fulltime education of the recipient, and where no service is rendered (present or future) by the recipient to the funds provider.

University Scholarships Committee (the Committee): A sub-Committee of Academic Board that maintain an oversight of the development of a new Scholarship or Award as well as the monitoring of an existing Scholarship or Award. The Committee allocate the Scholarship or Award, based on approved regulations and eligibility criteria.

Faculty Scholarships Committee: A sub-committee of the University Scholarships Committee that maintains oversight of scholarships activity within the Faculty. The Committee allocate Faculty Scholarships or Awards, based on approved regulations and eligibility criteria.

4. ACTIONS

A) AUT Funded Scholarships

Regulations must be approved by the AUT Scholarships Committee for all AUT Scholarships. AUT Scholarships are awarded under an approved set of AUT Scholarships Regulations in the following categories only.

- AUT Entry Level Scholarships
- AUT Undergraduate Scholarships
- AUT Postgraduate Scholarships (coursework)

- AUT Masters by Research Scholarship
- AUT Doctoral Scholarships
- AUT Summer Research Scholarships
- AUT Doctoral Submission Scholarships

Full regulations for approved AUT scholarships are available from the AUT Scholarships Office.

An AUT scholarship funded by a School/Faculty can be identified by the funding unit e.g. AUT Research Masters Scholarship (Communication Studies), AUT Postgraduate Scholarships (Business and Law), AUT School Leaver Scholarship (Engineering).

Establishment of a new AUT scholarship

The establishment of an AUT Scholarship is to be approved by the AUT Scholarships Committee and would support an area of strategic importance to the University.

Additional scholarship support will be considered in the following circumstances only.

- Supplementary support to a primary scholarship provided as a means of attracting high calibre students to a particular programme of study or research. Supplementary support would normally be provided as a lump sum payment.
- To provide continuity of funding for a student for a limited period following the expiry of the primary Scholarship or Award.

Availability of Funding

Prior to funding an AUT Scholarship the budget must be approved by the faculty finance manager who will confirm that there are sufficient funds to support the Scholarship for the full period of tenure.

A fees scholarship must include full fees i.e. tuition fees plus compulsory student levies.

A contribution to fees must be at the level stated in the relevant scholarship regulations..

Stipends must be awarded at the level stated in the relevant AUT scholarship regulations.

Research scholarships must support the student for the minimum candidature period of the degree programme. Annual renewal will be on satisfactory progress in the qualification or other criteria specified in the Regulations. Students on an AUT funded full doctoral scholarship must submit their PGR9 to the University Postgraduate Board within twelve months of provisional admission.

Once the budget has been approved, the Scholarships Office will advertise the availability of the AUT scholarship. ; When a scholarship is co-funded (external/AUT) the minimum value and conditions of the scholarship will be equivalent to the relevant AUT Scholarship.

Eligibility

Recipients of an AUT Scholarship will be enrolled, or eligible to be enrolled, in a qualification at AUT.

It is expected that AUT Scholarships normally support full-time study only. The rationale behind any decision to provide scholarship support to a part-time student and the conditions of award must be clearly documented at the time of award.

Although Scholarship may be allocated prior to enrolment, no payment will be made unless the recipient has been accepted into the programme of study and has completed enrolment requirements. If the Scholarship includes a fees component this will be paid directly into the student's AUT fees account by the Scholarships Office.

Students must not hold two Scholarships intended for the same purpose simultaneously. However, many major stipend scholarships will allow candidates to receive additional funds. Supplementary scholarship funding should not normally exceed 30% of the value of the primary scholarship. Eligibility to hold two awards should be approved by the Faculty and the AUT Scholarships Office.

AUT application forms

Application for all approved and regulated AUT funded scholarships is through the AUT on-line Scholarships Application portal CommunityForce.

Additional documentation may be requested as up-loads or appendices to the application form as stated in the Regulations. Application forms may be accompanied by instructions for their completion and submission if necessary although it is expected that this information is available within the CommunityForce application portal or the body of the AUT application form.

Reference statements required for approved and regulated scholarships will be requested through the on-line portal. All other reference statements must be submitted directly to the Scholarships Office on or before the closing date directly by the referee (email accepted).

An unofficial AUT academic transcript (Qualification Record) will be attached to the application form by the Scholarships Office when appropriate. Applicants other than those who have completed all of their study at AUT University must provide a certified copy of their academic transcripts from other institutions.

Advertising/Publicity

The Scholarships Office will undertake internal and external promotion via the AUT Scholarship Database, CommunityForce and Generosity/GivMe (the National Scholarships Database) via the University Scholarships website. Additional external advertising may be carried out by the funding unit but must be linked to the source of the master documentation i.e. the AUT Scholarships Database. The cost of additional advertising must be borne by the funding unit and must adhere to AUT publication standards and processes.

Where a Scholarship requires advertising, advertisements based on the approved Regulations should always contain the following information:

- Qualifications and experience required; including any special requirements;

- Any conditions of the Scholarship;
- The closing date
- The value and tenure of the Scholarship;
- Information on where to obtain further information;
- Brief details of the research project if appropriate;
- A statement that applicants are required to submit their applications directly to the Scholarships Office;
- The name of the Faculty contact person

Applicants who are not current AUT students must be advised that applying for a scholarship and applying for admission are two separate processes at AUT and also advised to commence application for admission.

<http://www.aut.ac.nz/study-at-aut/apply-to-aut> or <http://www.aut.ac.nz/study-at-aut/entryrequirements/postgraduate-and-graduate-admission-requirements>

B) SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Application for *all* AUT funded scholarships will be administered by, the Scholarships Office in the format advised in the Regulations. This will be through the AUT Scholarships application portal CommunityForce.

The Scholarships Office will check for eligibility, ensure all documentation is attached/uploaded, attach AUT unofficial transcripts if required and forward electronic copies or an appropriate CommunityForce link to the selection panel nominated in the Regulations. This will normally occur within five working days of the closing date unless this covers a University close-down period.

C) SELECTION PROCESS

Applicants for a centrally funded doctoral Scholarship will be shortlisted by the relevant Faculty and selected by a panel comprising members of the University Scholarships Committee. Recipients of an AUT School Leaver school-leaver scholarships will be selected by a panel including the Head of Scholarships and a representative of the AUT Scholar support programme.

Recipients of Faculty, School or Institute funded scholarships are selected by the relevant Faculty Scholarships Committee.

Responsibility for selection of scholarship recipients may be delegated to a Panel as stated in the scholarship Regulations. It is strongly recommended for transparency, that there is consultation with the University or Faculty Scholarships Committee and at least one member of the Faculty Scholarships Committee is present on the selection panel.

If the funding has been received through the AUT Foundation or an external funding body is involved, selection may be made by the AUT Foundation in consultation with the external funding body.

The Dean (or nominee e.g. Associate Dean or Head of School) must approve the awarding of any Faculty Scholarship or Award.

D) NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION OUTCOME TO THE SCHOLARSHIPS OFFICE

The outcome of any selection round must be notified to the Scholarships Office using the standard Scholarship Notification Form.

The unit submitting the Scholarship Notification Form are asked to provide;

- i. Details of the panel and the date of the selection panel meeting
- ii. The recipients of the scholarship or award
- iii. The type and value of the award iv. The full cost code to be debited
- v. The source of the funds i.e. External / Internal

E) APPLICANT NOTIFICATION

The Scholarships Office will notify all applicants of the outcome of application of an AUT scholarship. The Scholarships Office will not notify any recipient of a scholarship unless approved AUT Regulations clearly noting the conditions of the award are approved. **Letter of offer**

The letter of offer may include specific wording provided by the AUT budget holder if these are provided to the Scholarships Office *with* the Award Memo.

Letters of offer should include the name of the successful applicant and the following details:

- the name of the scholarship;
- the programme for which the scholarship has been allocated;
- the timeline for acceptance;
- the value of the scholarship;
- the tenure and the commencement date (if applicable);
- a statement that the recipient must be enrolled prior to receiving any payment; • advice regarding the Postgraduate Scholarship Contract (if applicable);
- a request for bank details to be submitted.

A copy of the recipient's letter will be sent to the budget holder and/or the chair of the selection panel by the Scholarships Office.

Acceptance

A recipient must accept an offer of Scholarship within the AUT Scholarship Application portal CommunityForce

The recipient must be able to take up the offer within the timeframes outlined in the letter of offer or seek a deferral of the commencement date. Deferrals must be applied for in writing (email accepted) and must be approved by the funding unit.

Should the recipient not accept the offer, or should an application for deferment not be approved, the Scholarship may be offered to a reserve applicant (if available) or re-advertised.

Deferral

Any request for deferment of the Scholarship commencement date outlined in the letter of offer must be made to the Scholarships Office and must be supported by the School and supervisor.

Deferments of up to 12 months may be approved providing that supervision and resources will be in place at the time of commencement.

Postgraduate Scholarship Contract

The recipient of an AUT postgraduate research Scholarship that includes a monthly stipend of more than \$15,000, the primary supervisor and the Head of School or Programme must sign an AUT Postgraduate Scholarship Contract. This contract will be available on the recipients Dashboard within CommunityForce. The contract will reflect the conditions of the scholarship as outlined in the Regulations.

Payment will not commence until the contract has been signed.

F) SCHOLARSHIP OR AWARD PAYMENT

Payment will not occur unless the student has been accepted into the programme of study, is enrolled and all relevant documents, including computer generated bank details, have been received by the Scholarships Office.

It is the responsibility of the funding unit to ensure that the recipient is accepted into the degree programme specified.

Fees scholarships and contributions towards fees are paid by the Scholarships Office through Arion. If the fees have already been paid by Studylink or the student then the fees payment will be reimbursed either directly to the student's StudyLink account or back to the students bank account by the fees team. AUT stipends are paid monthly in advance for the tenure of the scholarship.

In the event that funding for a particular scholarship with an external component is withdrawn, the University shall not be liable for the provision of alternative scholarship support.

A recipient will be given a minimum of fourteen days' notice if a stipend payment is not made due to lack of progress, see **Termination of a scholarship (pg.12)**

G) POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP TENURE

The tenure of a Scholarship is as stipulated in the Regulations. Tenure is normally expressed as "up to" a maximum term.

If a recipient is already enrolled in their PhD the three-year tenure will be adjusted by deducting the number of months between first enrolment date and scholarship closing date plus a three-month grace period. Scholarship stipend payments will cease if enrolment is not current.

If a recipient submits the thesis for examination within the tenure of the Scholarship, stipend payments will cease no more than one month after submission. The recipient must advise the Scholarships Office of the intention to submit the thesis for examination. In cases where the stipend is paid monthly in advance a grace period of one month's funding post submission of the thesis will be permitted. The Postgraduate Officer (Examinations) will confirm a recipient's submission of thesis for examination to the University Postgraduate Centre to the Head of Scholarships.

Where a recipient of a Vice Chancellor's Doctoral Scholarship submits their thesis prior to end of the period of tenure, they may apply to the Committee to have the remaining funds allocated as a publishing stipend to continue financial support while they prepare publications resulting from their research. Scholars should contact the Scholarships Office for advice regarding their eligibility for a publishing stipend.

If a publication stipend is approved the recipient must retain access to resources and remain at AUT. They may not be employed at another institution or employed at AUT for more than the conditions stated in the terms of reference of the original scholarship and may not take up employment at another institution during the tenure of the publication stipend. The scholar will be expected to report on agreed outputs completed during the tenure of the publishing stipend.

Should the recipient cease working full-time on the agreed programme of research during the tenure of the scholarship or award the recipient will be required to reimburse the University for any Stipend Payment received after the decision to cease the programme of study.

Employment during tenure

For students on a postgraduate scholarship contract, the recipient must notify the Head of the Scholarships Office of the intention to hold paid employment during the tenure of a full postgraduate scholarship (stipend ≥ \$20,000).

Notification of employment will be through CommunityForce and support will be requested from the supervisory team. Consideration will be given to the following points:

- The nature of the employment;
- Whether the employment could be perceived to contribute to the recipient's research;
- Whether the recipient is able to continue to commit a minimum of 35 hours per week to their programme of research in addition to the employment hours; and
- The recipient's progress to date based on six monthly reports.

Approval will be granted for employment, preferably in an area that is directly related to the recipient's field of research, up to a maximum 600 hours in any one calendar year. During any sustained period of employment lasting more than one semester, employment should not exceed twelve hours per week over the full year or fifteen hours per week if employment is only during Semester 1 and 2.

From time to time recipients may request permission to take periods of full-time employment during the tenure of a postgraduate scholarship. This will be approved under the following conditions:

- The scholarship is suspended during the period of full-time employment;
- The period of suspension from full-time research has been approved in writing by the supervisor and the Associate Dean (Postgraduate) and the enrolment status adjusted in ARION; and
- The suspension is reassessed after six months and is not for a total period of greater than twelve months during the tenure of the scholarship.

Leave during tenure

For recipients on a postgraduate scholarship contract approval must be obtained from the Committee before any period of leave, other than reasonable annual holiday leave, is taken. This includes any period of more than one month that the recipient needs to spend overseas to undertake research relating to the approved programme of research.

Although a recipient is not considered to be an employee of the University, reasonable leave is considered to be a maximum of four weeks per annum as under the *Holidays Act 2003*.

The recipient may continue to receive stipend payments during an approved annual leave period of short duration. The leave can be taken at any time agreed between the supervisor and the recipient. The supervisor must record any leave taken by the recipient and provide this record to the Committee on request.

Requests for approval for leave for longer than one month must be made by the recipient to the Head of the Scholarships Office and be supported in writing by the supervisor and the Associate Dean (Postgraduate). Such leave will be considered on a case by case basis.

If a recipient takes extended leave of absence from full time study in the programme, they will be required to suspend their scholarship and may be required to reimburse the University for any payment made subsequent to the date of the suspension from full time study.

Scholarship suspension

Suspension of a scholarship will normally coincide with leave of absence from full time study.

The recipients may suspend their scholarship during the tenure on approval of the supervisory team and the University Scholarships Committee. Suspension may be approved for a minimum of one month and will be reassessed after six months. Approval will not be given for a total period of more than twelve months during the tenure of the scholarship.

In exceptional circumstances, recipients may apply for suspension beyond twelve months. Any suspensions beyond twelve months will be approved only if the Committee is satisfied that the exceptional circumstances are beyond the recipient's control and warrant a further suspension of the scholarship.

Any leave of absence from the programme of research must be requested on the appropriate form for a *Variation of Record (PGR6)*; <http://www.aut.ac.nz/being-a-student/currentpostgraduates/academic-information/postgraduate-forms>. If a recipient applies for a leave of absence at any time during the tenure of the scholarship, the Scholarships Office must be informed and the scholarship formally suspended.

The recipient must seek approval in the first instance from their Supervisor[s] and Head of School for a period of suspension and must advise the Scholarships Office immediately of any suspension of study or withdrawal from full time study in the approved programme of research and provide a copy of the PGR6.

As monthly stipends may be paid in advance, the Scholarships Office must be informed immediately should a recipient decide to suspend or withdraw from their research. The supervisor will be requested to confirm the date that the suspension or withdrawal was agreed to and the date which discussions about withdrawal began.

If a suspension is confirmed after a monthly advance stipend payment the recipient will be advised that there will be an equivalent delay in the reinstatement of stipend payments on their return to full time study or research. Scholarship recipients are required to advise the Scholarships Office of their return date fourteen days prior to the actual return from suspension so that payments can be recommenced.

H) WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Should the recipient of a scholarship withdraw from the programme of study or research they may be required to reimburse the University for part or all scholarship funds paid during the tenure of the Scholarship depending on the circumstances.

If the withdrawal is beyond the students control or *not* due to any breach of an AUT University rule or regulation, the recipient may be required to only repay a maximum of one month's stipend if relevant.

If there is a breach of a University Statute/policy/regulation the recipient may be liable to repay the full scholarship payments made to date at the discretion of the Committee.

The recipient will be required to reimburse the University for any stipend paid in advance by the University after the date of withdrawal from full-time study in the approved programme of research.

If the student is withdrawing from the programme and there is any delay in informing the Scholarships Office of this decision, the recipient may also become liable to repay all or part of the Scholarship at the discretion of the Committee.

I) TERMINATION OF A SCHOLARSHIP OR AWARD

The Committee may at any time suspend or terminate the scholarship if it determines the recipient is not diligently pursuing the programme of study or research or making satisfactory progress.

The Committee may at any time suspend or terminate the Scholarship if the recipient has failed to comply with any of the terms and conditions on which the Scholarship was given.

The Committee may at any time suspend or terminate the Scholarship for not fulfilling contractual arrangements regarding:

- timely submitting of reports;
- employment hours in excess of those permitted by the contract;
- the notification of suspension or leave;
- any change of enrolment status;

The Scholarship may also be suspended or terminated for any breach of AUT General Academic Regulations.

Any decision to suspend or terminate scholarship stipend payments will be given in writing to the recipient, copied to the supervisor and Associate Dean at least fourteen days prior to the following monthly stipend payment date.

The decision to terminate a Scholarship will usually be tied to termination of enrolment or lack of progress.

Breaches of the Scholarship Regulations and/or the Postgraduate Scholarship Contract are dealt with on a case by case basis and on the evidence presented by the parties involved.

J) PROGRESS MONITORING AND RENEWAL

Progress for all Scholarship recipients, is monitored through academic records and the relevant AUT sixmonthly report (PGR8). For centrally funded scholarships this monitoring will be carried out by the Scholarships Office.

Faculty/ School will monitor the progress of scholars funded through Faculty/ School funds and advise the Scholarships Office of the renewal or non-renewal of the scholarship.

Recipients of AUT entry level scholarships will be expected to meet regularly with the Scholar Support team during the first year of the scholarship tenure and complete regular on-line progress reports.

Recipient of AUT Fees scholarships with a tenure of more than one year must meet the conditions of their scholarship and maintain academic progress as outlined in the regulations to ensure annual renewal. In cases where there are compelling medical reasons or adverse personal circumstances for the lack of academic progress students will be advised of the appeals process. Any reinstatement of the scholarship as a result of this process will be conditional.

Postgraduate Research students holding a regulated scholarship and their supervisor will be required to annually complete and submit the Scholarships Renewal section through their CommunityForce Dashboard. Additional information may be requested by direct correspondence with the recipient and the supervisor if and when required. Research students are also required to submit the six-monthly reports (PGR8) on time and ensure it is forwarded to the Graduate Research School by the due date.

Any concern raised through these reports is addressed with the recipient, the supervisor and Associate Dean (Postgraduate), and the Scholarship record flagged for follow up.

5. POLICY BASE

AUT Scholarship Policy

6. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

AUT Scholarship Regulations, Forms and Contracts

7. FORMS AND RECORD KEEPING

Forms

AUT Scholarship Regulations

AUT Scholarship Application Forms

AUT Postgraduate Scholarship Contract (SCH1)

Scholarship notification memos

Sourced from

Scholarships Office

Scholarships Office

Scholarships Office

Scholarships Office

Record keeping - All documentation is managed and disposed of in line with any Records Policy and the General Disposal Authority for New Zealand Universities.

8. IMPLEMENTATION

The Policy and these procedures will be published on the University “Policy and Procedures” web page.