



How to apply for postgraduate research scholarships including Australian Postgraduate Awards and University Postgraduate Awards

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What will we cover today?

- The system is complicated.
- There are substantial opportunities to improve the scores for applicants
- “Improving” the score may be achieved by:
 - Making sure that all possible credit is identified (all publications, abstracts, patents, government reports, etc are included)
 - Making sure you provide the evidence to substantiate your case for eligibility
- Entry of professionals e.g. experienced doctors, nurses etc is possible, but requires planning and careful presentation of the case
- Nitty gritty of substantiating your claims to maximise your chances



Higher degrees available

Degree name	Duration	Degree code	CRICOS code
Doctor of Philosophy	3–4 years full time 3–8 years part time	KB000	006455J
Master of Philosophy	1–2 years full time 2–4 years part time	KC083	057895G
Master of Surgery (Research)	2–3 years full time 3–4 years part time	KC000	012841D



How are local research students funded?

- Local research students are HECS-exempt – i.e. no fees
- Many research students receive a tax-exempt stipend scholarship (to support living expenses) of \$20,000 - \$25,000 pa for 3.5 years
- Many research students also work part-time, either teaching, in their profession or in an unrelated minor job (eg shop assistant)
- First \$6,000 earned after the scholarship stipend is tax-exempt (then 15% tax between \$6,000 and \$25,000)
- Full-time postgraduate students can only undertake work outside their research for a **maximum of 20 hours per week** if on a scholarship
- Full time postgraduate students are expected to work at least 35 hours per week on their research and only get 4 weeks annual leave per year – no more long holidays!

Types of scholarships available (local students)

External - Federal Government Funded

- Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) ~\$23,000 per annum
- Australian Postgrad Awards (Industry) (APAI) ~\$25,000 “
- NHMRC Postgraduate Scholarship ~\$23,000 – \$34,000 pa (depending on qualific.)

Internal - University funded

- University Postgraduate Award ~\$23,000 per annum
- VC Research Scholarship Top-up APA/UPA + top-up (1st yr \$5,000, 2nd / 3rd yrs \$12,000)
- Merit Award Top-up APA/UPA + top-up (\$5,000 pa)
- Faculty & Departmental scholarships varies (usually UPA rates)

External – Privately funded

- Private Foundation Scholarships eg:
 - National Heart Foundation ~\$23,000 per annum
 - Cancer Council varies (usually UPA rates)

Note – International students (~\$20,000)

- International Postgraduate Research Award (DEST)
- University of Sydney International Scholarship (USydIS)
- World Scholarships (International Office, Univ Sydney)
- Federal Govt Endeavour Program (amount and duration varies)



How do you win a scholarship?

- It depends on the scholarship source
- Requires an application form (separate from candidature application form) which needs to be filled out carefully
- Criteria vary between the different sources

Which scholarships are allocated by the university Postgraduate Awards Sub-committee (PGASC)?

• APAs	~330	}	Local scholarships (Aust and NZ citizens and Aust permanent residents)
• UPAs	~60		
• Merit awards	~40		
• VCRS	~10		
• IPRS	~50	}	International scholarships
• USydIS	~20		

Note that there are two rounds per year, but only newly commencing students can apply in the mid-year round

The PGASC also makes recommendations on **VCRS**, but final decision is made by VC independently of the PGASC



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CRICOS 00026A

**Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA)
University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards (UPA)**

Information for 2012 Applicants

(This document is available from http://www.sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/postgraduate_awards.shtml)

Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) and University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards (UPA)
Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA) are awarded to students of exceptional research potential to undertake a higher degree by research at an Australian university. The scholarships are provided to assist with general living costs. In 2011, 3,270 APA places were available from the Commonwealth Government and the allocation to The University of Sydney was 329. In addition, the University awarded 60 University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards (UPA) that are similar to the APA in terms of tenure and benefits. Eligible APA applicants will be automatically considered for these awards.

The number of APA and UPA available in 2012 is expected to be similar to that offered in 2011. The University awards these scholarships twice a year - applications for the 2012 Semester one round opens in late August 2011 and applications for the 2012 Semester two round will open in mid May 2012.



What are the criteria used to award APAs and UPAs?

- Applicants ranked on a single, university-wide list
- Scholarship applicants are ranked based on “Merit”, a complex numerical formula that uses:
 - Undergraduate marks (WAM)
 - Honours result or equivalent
 - “Research Potential Indicators” (RPI) - publications, research experience, etc – **every RPI point counts!**
- All courses are judged equally (except some minor adjustments for Vet, Pharmacy and Engineering)



Simple summary of the categories:

- Category 1: A recent Hons 1 graduate or equivalent
- Category 2: A non-recent Hons 1 graduate or equivalent
- Category 3: Masters by research graduate (ZERO COURSEWORK!)
- Category 4: Professional candidate – graduate of greater than 5 years with 4 year degree but without Hons 1, who has worked in a relevant profession for more than 5 years
- Category 5: Not Hons1 but performing well as a Higher Degree Research student (eg multiple publications, great reports)
- Anomalous case: Applicants of VERY HIGH merit, but do not fit into any other category (usually applicants who have substantial experience and many research publications etc)
- Applicants may fit into more than one category, in which case their highest score is the one that is used
 - Evidence for Cat's 3 – 5, Hons 1 equivalence and anomalous case applicants has to be **clear and rock solid**



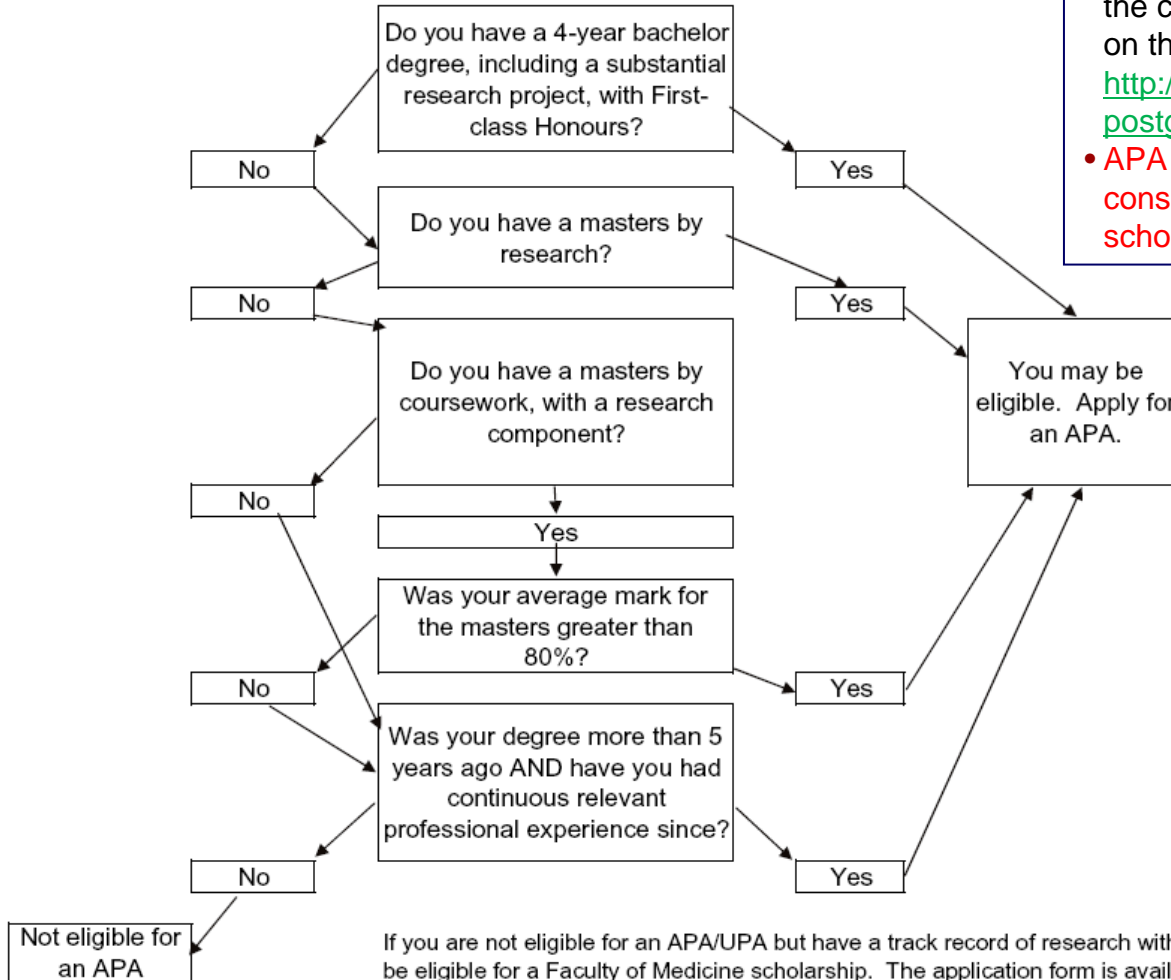
What is Honours 1 equivalence?

- University has a complex set of criteria for Honours 1 equivalence (H1E):
 - Masters 100% by research (MPhil)
 - Fellow of professional College where Faculty considers extra training equivalent to H1
 - Masters by coursework with substantial research (e.g. 25% of one year) + WAM \geq 80
 - Overseas qualifications assessed as equivalent
- See item 5.2 of the APA Guidelines for full details



APA Eligibility Flowchart

- This flowchart is provided as a guide only
- It is the responsibility of applicants to check the criteria in the Information for Applicants on the Scholarships Office website: http://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/postgraduate_awards.shtml
- **APA applicants will automatically be considered for Sydney Medical School scholarships**



If you are not eligible for an APA/UPA but have a track record of research with publications, then you may still be eligible for a Faculty of Medicine scholarship. The application form is available on <http://www.medfac.usyd.edu.au/scholawards/postgrad/index.php>.



What is RPI?

- RPI = research potential indicators
- Extra research degrees on top of honours 1
- Publications – scholarly books or book chapters, refereed journal articles, conference papers or abstracts, published research report, patents etc
- Arts, music and law specific items
- Relevant professional experience at responsible level or direct research experience **since graduation, but not training situations** (e.g. for medical doctor does not include residency or registrar training)



Points awarded for RPI?

Every point counts!

For example:

1 first author conference abstract could increase your ranking by 10% and 1 first author original research article could increase your ranking by 30%.

NOTE: **Special categories of applicants** are awarded more highly weighted (absolute RPI):

- **Category 4 – Professional candidates**
- **Category 5 – Currently enrolled HD students**
- **Anomalous cases**

To be considered for a scholarship these applicants need to demonstrate research potential through publications and/or professional experience. To be competitive applicants would need, for example:

3 co authored original research publications or 2 first author publications or 8 first author abstracts or a combination of publications and at least 2 years professional experience.



What do I need to substantiate my case?

Qualifications:

- H1 degree from Aust/NZ/UK or a Masters 100% by research:
 - Your transcripts (unless from Univ Sydney)
 - Include any explanation of marking eg on back of transcript
- Any other 4 year bachelors or Masters by coursework:
 - Transcript with substantiating evidence (letter from institution, website etc) making clear the contribution of research and the marks awarded.
 - Research should be about 25% of final year but see Item 5.2 of APA Information for Applicants for other standards for coursework Masters

No substantial research = not H1Equivalent.

Masters WAM < 80 = not H1Equivalent.



What do I need to substantiate my case?

Professional / research experience:

- Only counted if 2+ years following 4 year degree (or 3+1 year degrees back to back)
- Undergraduate research experience does not count
- CV should clearly outline sequence of employment since graduation
- Evidence of employment is required, eg letters from **each** employer showing you were employed (letter of offer, letter when leaving, references) or any other official document that demonstrates employment
- Evidence must make clear the period of employment and whether full-time or part-time
- Explain any gaps or periods not in full-time employment – parental leave or parental duties, caring for sick relatives etc.



What do I need to substantiate my case?

Publications (Part 1):

- CLEARLY list all publications, providing full details
- List research articles separately from conference presentations
- Only the last 5 years count (after 1 Nov 2006), but give a full list in CV
- Papers – must be in peer-reviewed journals*:
 - *In CV:* full author list in published order, year of publication, title of article, *full* title of journal, volume number, start and finish pages
 - *Attach (last 5 yrs only):* photocopy of 1st page of article or URL directly to the online version of the article
- Books and book chapters:
 - *In CV:* as above but include ISBN
 - *Attach (last 5 yrs only):* photocopy of front cover and page of copyright/publication details plus 1st page of chapter, if applicable

* The ideal benchmark for peer-review is listing in Thomson Reuter's Master Journal List or Ulrich's database (see section 5.3 of Information for Applicants)



What do I need to substantiate my case?

Publications (Part 2):

- Conference presentations, full paper or just abstract:
 - *In CV:* full author list, year of publication, title of article, *full* title of conference including location and date (no abbreviations *please*), page number of abstract in abstract booklet and URL of conference, where relevant
 - *Attach (last 5 yrs only):* photocopy of front cover of abstract booklet and photocopy of whole page where abstract appears – don't cover up other abstracts on the page
- Published research report:
 - *In CV:* full bibliographic details including where and when published and by who, plus URL if possible
 - *Attach (last 5 yrs only):* photocopy of the page(s) that best substantiate what and where published. Web-based publishing acceptable but must be current, working URL

Note: If publication is accepted after submission of application then send details to Sydney Medical School Scholarships Officer (Jane Root) for possible inclusion in application



What do I include in my application?

- Application form, fully and legibly completed
 - Transcripts and substantiating documents, unless Univ Sydney qualifications
 - Clear CV showing qualifications, publications and professional experience since graduation
 - Substantiating documents for professional experience and publications
-
- Label substantiating documents so it is clear what is what
 - If really complicated, include a covering letter explaining what you have provided
 - Place the covering letter between the application form and transcripts



Don't forget to apply for candidature!

- You must apply for your PhD/MPhil by 31 October:
No application for candidature = ineligible for scholarship
- For information on how to apply for a research degree see:
<http://sydney.edu.au/medicine/future-students/postgraduate/research/index.php>
- Before you submit an application form for candidature you should:
 - find a research supervisor with expertise in the relevant field
 - define your research topic
 - ensure that appropriate research facilities are available
- The **Research Supervisor Connect** website can assist you in these steps, as can the postgraduate coordinator of the discipline you are interested in

Research Supervisor Connect can be found at:

<http://sydney.edu.au/research/opportunities/>



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POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH AT SYDNEY

Research Supervisor Connect matches your research interests to available research opportunities and supervisors. Research Supervisor Connect puts you in control of your future. The University of Sydney is one of Australia's premier research universities. Our research training prepares tomorrow's research leaders for the challenges ahead.

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Research at Sydney

Sydney's outstanding success in the latest rounds of research funding from the major Australian peer reviewed research bodies strongly confirms its position as Australia's leading research university.

Sydney researchers scored the "research double" topping both the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the Australian Research Council (ARC) for the number and dollar value of new, peer-reviewed, researcher-driven research projects commencing in 2009. This funding includes \$63.8 million for NHMRC Project and Program Grants, \$53.9 from ARC Discovery and Linkage Grants. Over the years, The University of Sydney has consistently outperformed other Australian universities in the measure of research performance used by the Commonwealth Government to allocate funds under its block grants. Sydney not only leads the Nation, it achieved a personal best by attracting record amounts of funding from both the ARC and NHMRC for research projects starting in 2009. The numbers are impressive, but what really matters is the research this funding supports. This exceptional outcome is testament to the breadth, depth and scale of Sydney's research enterprise and demonstrates the superior quality of Sydney researchers in the eyes of their research peers.

Working together

Great breakthroughs rarely occur in isolation. Through the interaction of research students with each other and academic researchers, the University offers more opportunity for collaborative endeavours that lead to innovation.

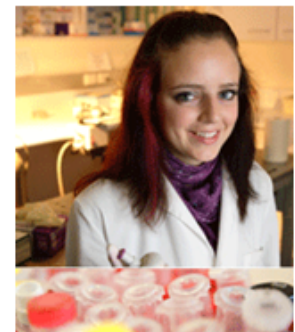
<http://www.sydney.edu.au/research/opportunities/>

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RESEARCH STUDENTS



KAT LEAVER

Neuroprotection and Parkinson's Disease



What have we covered today?

- The system is complicated
- There are substantial opportunities for applicants to improve their scores
- “Improving” the score may be achieved by:
 - Making sure that all possible credit is identified (make sure all possible publications, abstracts, patents, government reports, etc are included)
 - Ensuring all necessary documents are included in your application
- Entry of professionals eg experienced doctors, nurses etc is possible, but requires planning and careful presentation of the case
- We have discussed how to substantiate your qualifications, your professional or research experience and your publications
- Labelling and presenting your documents clearly will be beneficial to your application – we can find what we need easily



Final Message!

- If you MIGHT do a PhD, then you MUST apply for both candidature and a scholarship
- APAs close ~31 October
- Your final decision to undertake a PhD & accept a scholarship is only required after receiving an offer - approx mid December
- Cost to apply - zero! (local students)
- Can subsequently change project, supervisor and even Dept / Faculty!
- Due to applications for candidature now being done online through Sydney Student, there may be delays in processing your candidature, so please **apply early if possible i.e. NOW!**



Contacts and Acknowledgements

We are very happy to advise!

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