A Quick Reference Guide for 2012 APA/UPA Holders

This guide is prepared for reference by domestic students (IPRS students should refer to the Information Sheet issued by the International Office). You should read your Conditions of Award carefully and check them when you have any queries. You should also keep a file on all information pertaining to your award, including the offer letter, Conditions of Award, any related correspondence and documents.

Advanced Standing
If you have already commenced candidature towards the degree, or your candidature has been upgraded from a Research Masters to a Research Doctorate before you receive an APA/UPA, all such periods of enrolment will be deducted from the maximum tenure of your award. The Scholarships Office will confirm the period of advanced standing in writing after you have commenced your award.

Candidature Details
You must notify the Faculty and the Scholarships Office promptly of any changes in your candidature such as change of department, change of attendance pattern, suspension, leave of absence, withdrawal, and course transfer. If the award holder does not provide notice of the changes identified above the University may require repayment of any overpaid stipend.

Commencement Date
This is the date that your Head of Department states on your Scholarships Commencement Form to indicate that you are enrolled in the Department and have commenced full-time research. If you have enrolled in the degree prior to 2012, please note that the APA/UPA payments can only commence from 2012. If you are commencing your candidature in 2012, your formal enrolment date in the degree, as recorded by the University, is the earliest possible date for commencement of APA/UPA payments.

Commencement of Payments
To formally accept the award you must return the original signed Conditions of Award. To commence payments you must enrol in the degree and provide the Scholarships Office with a completed Scholarships Commencement Form and Scholarships Payment Authority Form (unless otherwise advised in your APA/UPA offer letter).

Frequently Asked Questions
To view a list of frequently asked questions for current scholarship recipients, visit the FAQ page at http://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/faq.shtml

Forms
Forms for research scholarship recipients can be downloaded from http://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/psa_forms.shtml. All forms referred to in this quick reference guide can be obtained from this website.

Maternity Leave
A maximum of twelve weeks during the tenure of the award. An application supported by a medical certificate, must be lodged at the Scholarships Office at least four weeks prior to the expected date of birth. You must remain enrolled during period of paid maternity leave, which is added to the tenure of your award. Paid maternity leave is not available during the first twelve months of an award although unpaid leave can be accessed through the suspension provisions. To apply for maternity leave, use the Research Scholarships Leave Application Form.

Part-time Study
Only permitted for students with significant caring commitments or a medical condition which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study. You must apply to the Scholarships Office in writing, with an accompanying supporting letter from your supervisor, endorsed by your Head of Department. Evidence of your carer commitments or medical condition must be attached. Stipends for part-time award holders are NOT tax-exempt and are subject to the same restrictions on employment as full-time award holders.

Part-time Work
Award holders are permitted to undertake up to 20 hours of part-time work per week (evening, weekend and holiday work included) if not employed by the University. If employed by the University, the appointment must not exceed half time or 50% of a full time position. Work must not interfere with your research and progress. Income from part-time work will not be tax-exempt.
Relocation Allowances (VCRS and APAs only)
APA holders relocating their place of residence in Sydney in order to take up the APA may be eligible for the relocation allowance in accordance with the University’s APA Relocation Allowance Policy (available online- see the ‘Forms’ section of this guide for the web link). The value of the allowance is up to $515 for each eligible adult and $255 for each eligible child. The absolute maximum value of relocation expenses that a student may receive is $1,485. The amount for VCRS holders is up to $5,000 and includes any eligible claims under the APA.

Research Overseas
Award holders may undertake up to 12 months (18 months for students of Anthropology and other special cases) of their research overseas. However, students may not normally conduct research overseas within the first six months of an award.

You need the approval of your supervisor and Head of Department on the Application to Hold Postgraduate Award Overseas form. Permission will only be granted if the research is essential to the completion of your degree. Students must remain enrolled at the University and receive approval for permission to count time away from their Faculty. Progress reports must be submitted to the University at three-month intervals during the period overseas.

Scholarships Office
Located on Level 5, Jane Foss Russell Building G0 2 and open from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday. Telephone: 02 8627 8112, Fax: 02 8627 8485, E-mail: research.training@sydney.edu.au, Web Site: http://sydney.edu.au/scholarships/research/.

Sick Leave
Up to 10 working days sick leave each year and this may be accrued over the tenure of the award. Students with family responsibilities, caring for sick children or relatives, may convert up to five days of their annual sick leave entitlement to carers leave on presentation of medical certificate/s. Students taking sick leave must inform their supervisor as soon as practicable. Students may receive additional paid sick leave of up to a total of 12 weeks for medically substantiated periods of illness where the student has insufficient sick leave entitlement as described at the beginning of this paragraph. You must remain enrolled during periods of additional paid sick leave, which are added to the tenure of your award. To apply for sick leave, use the Research Scholarships Leave Application Form.

Stipend
The 2012 rate is $23,728 pa for full-time awards and is tax-exempt. The part-time rate is $12,898 pa and is NOT exempt from taxation. The rates are indexed on the anniversary of the commencement date of the award. If APA/UPA holders have suspended the award or claimed additional paid sick or maternity leave, the stipend rate will be indexed on the adjusted anniversary date, taking into account periods of their suspension or paid leave.

Suspensions
You cannot suspend your award within the first six months. You may apply for up to 12 months suspension during the award period. You must submit an Research Scholarships Suspension Form, approved by your Supervisor and Head of Department, to the Scholarships Office at least two weeks prior to start of the intended suspension. You must also suspend your candidature (or apply for leave of absence) as periods of study undertaken towards the degree during suspension of the award will be counted as advanced standing and deducted from the maximum period of award tenure.

Tenure of Award and Application for Extension (PhD students only)
Research Masters: up to two years, no extensions are possible.
Research Doctorate: up to three years with the possibility of an extension of up to six months subject to satisfactory progress, provided the grounds are related to study, are beyond the control of the candidate and are not of a personal nature. To apply for an extension, see the ‘Forms’ section of this guide, use the link to download the Research Scholarships Extension Application Form, and follow instructions on the form.

Termination
The award will be terminated upon submission of the thesis or at the end of the award, whichever is earlier. Awards will be terminated before this time if you have not carried out the course of study with competence and diligence or in accordance with the offer of the award, or fail to maintain satisfactory progress, or have committed serious misconduct. Stipend payment will need to be suspended throughout the duration of the enquiry/appeal process.
Thesis Allowance
Reimbursement of up to $420 for Masters candidates and up to $840 for Doctoral candidates will be made for eligible claims for direct costs of producing a thesis in accordance with the University’s thesis allowance policy. The claim must be lodged with the Scholarships Office within one year of submission of the thesis and no more than two years after termination of the award. Refer to the Thesis Allowance Claim Information document (available online- see the ‘Forms’ section of this guide for the web link).

Top-up Scholarships
Award holders may receive a concurrent award or scholarship from other sources to undertake their research higher degree if such award or scholarship provides a benefit less than 75% of the base APA/UPA stipend rate. The APA/UPA will be terminated if this limit is exceeded.

Transfer (APAs only)
APAs are allocated to universities based on their research performance and students who change from one university to another may continue to receive their APA only if their new university agrees to its continuation and subject to the new university having APA grant amounts available.