

Victoria University

Scholarship Application Guide 2015 (Domestic Students ONLY)

Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Scholarship (VC)
Australian Postgraduate Award (APA)
Victoria University Post Graduate Research Scholarship (VUPRS)
VU Diversity Graduate Research Scholarship (Diversity)
VU Indigenous Graduate Research Scholarship (Indigenous)

This guide relates to applications for Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Scholarship, Australian Postgraduate Award (APA), the Victoria University Postgraduate Research Scholarship, the VU Diversity Graduate Research Scholarship and the VU Indigenous Graduate Research Scholarship. Applicants should submit only one application to be considered for all four schemes listed in this guide. The University will determine the applicant's eligibility for each of the scholarships. Applicants should note that the application process for all scholarship types is very competitive.

Applicants for the Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Scholarship must be undertaking a research project one of Victoria University's areas of research focus. With the other scholarship types, priority will be given to applicants who pursue a research degree in one of Victoria University's areas of research focus. Further information on the areas of research focus can be found here: <http://www.vu.edu.au/research/research-focus-areas>

Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Scholarships

Vice Chancellor's Graduate Research Scholarships are awarded to postgraduate doctoral researchers on the basis of academic merit, research potential and fit within one of Victoria University's areas of research focus. Subject to the availability of funding, Victoria University expects to offer up to five Vice Chancellor's Scholarships in the year 2015.

Eligibility

To be eligible, applicants must:

- ◆ Be Australian citizens, or have been granted permanent resident status
(This includes New Zealand citizens who are granted permanent residency status on arrival)
- ◆ Have completed at least four years of tertiary education studies at a high level of achievement. For example:
 - a four year undergraduate degree (e.g. Engineering or Law)
 - a three year degree and an Honours year
 - a three year degree and a postgraduate diploma
- ◆ Have achieved First Class Honours
- ◆ Be undertaking a doctoral research degree in 2015.
- ◆ Enrol as a full-time student
(Part-time awards may be available for compelling social or medical reasons)
- ◆ Be pursuing a doctoral degree in one of the University's areas of research strength
- ◆ Be awarded an APA scholarship in the 2015. scholarship application round

You are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for a Vice-Chancellor's scholarship if you:

- ◆ Have already completed a doctoral degree
- ◆ Have held any Victoria University Postgraduate Research Scholarship previously unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits
- ◆ Are receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the proposed program
(“equivalent” stipend is regarded as more than \$17,000 per annum)

Australian Postgraduate Award (APA)

Australian Postgraduate Awards are awarded to postgraduate researchers on the basis of academic merit and research potential.

Eligibility

To be eligible for an APA, applicants must:

- ◆ Be an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen, or an Australian permanent resident
- ◆ Have completed at least four years of tertiary education studies at a high level of achievement. For example:
 - a four year undergraduate degree (e.g. Engineering or Law)
 - a three year degree and an Honours year
 - a three year degree and one year of a higher degree
 - a three year course and one year of a Masters preliminary or other qualifying program
 - or a three year degree and a postgraduate diploma
- ◆ Have achieved First Class Honours or equivalent results
- ◆ Be undertaking a Masters by Research or Doctoral research degree in 2015
- ◆ Enrol as a full-time student
(Part-time awards may be available for compelling social or medical reasons)
- ◆ Have had their enrolment into the proposed degree approved by the institution

You are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for an APA if you:

- ◆ Have already completed a degree at the same level as the proposed candidature or at a higher level
- ◆ Have held an APA or APA (Industry) previously unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits
- ◆ Are receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the proposed program
(“equivalent” stipend is regarded as more than \$17,000 per annum)

Priority

Priority will be given to applicants who are pursuing research in one of Victoria University's areas of research focus.

VU Postgraduate Research Scholarship (VU)

Victoria University Postgraduate Research Scholarships are awarded to postgraduate researchers on the basis of academic merit and research potential.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a VU Postgraduate Research Scholarship, applicants must:

- ◆ Be Australian citizens, **OR** have been granted permanent resident status
(This includes New Zealand citizens who are granted permanent residency status on arrival)
- ◆ Have completed a four year undergraduate degree, or equivalent. For example:
 - a four year undergraduate degree (e.g. Engineering or Law)
 - a three year degree and an Honours year
 - a three year degree and a postgraduate diploma at an advanced level
 - a three year degree and one year of a higher degree

(Please note that competition for these awards is intense. Those awarded these scholarships in recent years have held degrees at First Class Honours level, or equivalent)

- ◆ Be undertaking a Masters by Research or Doctoral research degree in 2015
- ◆ Enrol as a full-time student
(Part-time awards may be available for compelling social or medical reasons)

You are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for a VU Scholarship if you:

- ◆ Have already completed a degree at the same level as the proposed candidature or at a higher level
- ◆ Have held any Victoria University Postgraduate Research Scholarship previously unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits
- ◆ Are receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the proposed program ("equivalent" stipend is regarded as more than \$17,000 per annum)

Priority

Priority will be given to applicants who are pursuing research in one of Victoria University's areas of research focus.

Victoria University Diversity Graduate Research Scholarship

The VU Diversity Graduate Research Scholarship provides living allowance support to promising researchers wishing to undertake a graduate research degree. It is designed to increase the diversity of graduate researchers at VU.

VU is committed to encouraging participation in graduate research of people whose educational opportunities have been disrupted or adversely affected by their life circumstances. To apply for a diversity scholarship you must be able to demonstrate that you have experienced one or more of the following that have disrupted or adversely affected your studies:

- ◆ Traumatic events beyond your control
- ◆ Significant illness and/or disability
- ◆ Socioeconomic and/or family circumstances

In addition to providing supporting evidence, you must submit a confidential statement of no more than one page, outlining how your circumstances have adversely affected your studies and academic career.

Applicants must meet the diversity eligibility criteria to be considered for this scholarship..

Eligibility

To be eligible for a Diversity Scholarship, applicants must:

- ◆ Be Australian citizens, **OR** have been granted permanent resident status
(This includes New Zealand citizens who are granted permanent residency status on arrival)
- ◆ Have completed a four year undergraduate degree, or equivalent. For example:
 - a four year undergraduate degree (e.g. Engineering or Law)
 - a three year degree and an Honours year
 - a three year degree and a postgraduate diploma at an advanced level
 - a three year degree and one year of a higher degree
- ◆ Be undertaking a Masters by Research or Doctoral research degree in 2015
- ◆ Enrol as a full-time student
(Part-time awards may be available for compelling social or medical reasons)
- ◆ Have had their enrolment into the proposed degree approved by the institution

You are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for a Diversity Scholarship if you:

- ◆ Have already completed a degree at the same or higher level as the proposed candidature
- ◆ Have held any Victoria University (Post)graduate Research Scholarship previously unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits
- ◆ Are receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the proposed program
(“equivalent” stipend is regarded as more than \$17,000 per annum)

Priority

Priority may be given to applicants who are pursuing research in one of Victoria University's areas of research focus.

The VU Indigenous Graduate Research Scholarship provides a living allowance support to a promising indigenous researcher wishing to undertake a graduate research degree.

VU recognises that indigenous Australians are under-represented in graduate research studies and encourages qualified indigenous applicants to undertake their research studies at VU.

If you are a prospective Indigenous Australian applicant, you are encouraged to submit a VU Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ASTI) Profile Information form in conjunction with your scholarship application: <http://www.vu.edu.au/sites/default/files/student-connections/pdfs/A124-ATSI-profile-information.pdf>

Eligibility

To be eligible for the VU Indigenous Graduate Research Scholarship, applicants must:

- ◆ Be able to demonstrate their Indigenous Australian heritage
- ◆ Have completed a four year undergraduate degree, or equivalent. For example:
 - a four year undergraduate degree (e.g. Engineering or Law)
 - a three year degree and an Honours year
 - a three year degree and a postgraduate diploma at an advanced level
 - a three year degree and one year of a higher degree
- ◆ Be undertaking a Masters by Research or Doctoral research degree in 2015
- ◆ Enrol as a full-time student
(Part-time awards may be available for compelling social or medical reasons)
- ◆ Have had their enrolment into the proposed degree approved by the institution

You are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for a VU Indigenous Graduate Research Scholarship if you:

- ◆ Have already completed a degree at the same or higher level as the proposed candidature
- ◆ Have held any Victoria University (Post)graduate Research Scholarship previously unless it was terminated within six months of the commencement of benefits
- ◆ Are receiving another equivalent award, scholarship or salary to undertake the proposed program
(“equivalent” stipend is regarded as more than \$17,000 per annum)

Priority

Priority may be given to applicants who are pursuing research in one of Victoria University's areas of research focus.

Successful applicants will receive a full guide to the conditions and benefits of these scholarships at the time of offer. The following is a summary of the main benefits and conditions.

Scholarship Allowance

Vice Chancellor's scholarship stipends are paid at the rate of \$30,000 per annum, inclusive of an APA award (2014 rate). APA scholarship stipends are paid at the rate of \$25,392 per annum (2014) rate. VU Postgraduate Research and Diversity scholarship stipends are paid at the rate of \$25,392 per annum (2014 rate). VU Indigenous scholarships are paid at the rate of \$30,000 per annum. All new full time APA, and VU scholarships are indexed annually as per agreed Government rates and are currently tax-exempt. Please note that the Vice Chancellor's stipend remains capped at a top-up to \$30,000 total per annum, irrespective of any change in the APA rate in future years.

The part-time rate (only applicable in approved exceptional circumstances) of \$12,696 per annum (2014 rate for APA, and VU) are also indexed annually but are NOT tax exempt.

Holders of Vice Chancellor's, APA, and VU scholarships may:

- Be in receipt of minor award, allowances or other earnings which are supplementary to a scholarship, or derived from part-time work within the guidelines set out by Victoria University
- Receive stipend top up funding from industry, or obtain from a non-Commonwealth source, provision for fieldwork, equipment and other such expenses not covered by the scholarship. Funds towards overseas travel costs may be obtained from Commonwealth awards or other sources

Research Training Scheme (RTS) place

In addition to the scholarship allowance provided for any of the above scholarships, each scholarship holder will receive an RTS Place. This will exempt the scholarship holder from paying tuition fees for the duration of the scholarship. Successful recipients will still have to pay the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) every semester.

Intellectual Property

Applicants should note that they may be required to assign intellectual property they create while working on certain research projects to the University through a formal agreement.

Duration of the Scholarship

For applicants commencing their enrolment in a research degree, the scholarship is normally for three years for Doctoral studies and two years for Masters by research studies.

For applicants who are currently enrolled in the Masters or Doctoral degree for which they are seeking the scholarship, the period of enrolment already completed in the degree will be deducted from the duration of the scholarship. This includes prior enrolment in a Masters degree where a Masters enrolment has been converted to a Doctoral enrolment.

A scholarship extension of up to six months may be granted to Doctoral candidates where the University is satisfied that the extension is based on grounds which are beyond the control of the candidate and are related to the research rather than of a personal nature. Scholarship extensions are not possible for Masters by research candidates. All students are expected to complete their study in the minimum time for their degree.

Employment

Students are paid to study on a full-time basis and are only permitted to undertake a strictly limited amount of employment. Students are not permitted to undertake additional paid work for than a maximum of 15 working hours on average in any one week. Employment must not interfere with the student's progress.

Commencement

All successful applicants are expected to commence study by 31 March 2015.

A late commencement, up to 30 August 2015, may be granted where employment commitments or circumstances beyond the applicant's control prevent the applicant from commencing by 31 March 2015. Approval for a late commencement must be sought in writing by the applicant, providing full details of the reasons for the request, before 31 March 2015.

If an applicant cannot start by 31 March 2015, and approval has not been obtained for late commencement prior to 31 March 2015, the scholarship will be withdrawn. If an applicant has not commenced by 30 August 2015, for any reason whatsoever and whether or not approval for late commencement has been obtained, the scholarship will be withdrawn.

Part-time Scholarships

Part-time scholarships may be available to those who are unable to study full-time for all or part of their candidature. Part-time scholarships can only be approved only in the following specific instances:

Where the scholarship holder has:

- A medical condition which limits the capacity to undertake full-time study (supported by medical certification), OR
- Care responsibilities for a pre-school child, OR
- Care responsibilities for a school aged child as a sole parent with limited access to support, OR
- Care responsibilities for an invalid or disabled spouse, child or parent

Part-time scholarships are NOT available to applicants who wish to study part-time in order to undertake full or part-time employment. Part-time scholarship holders are subject to the same restrictions on employment as full-time scholarship holders. Applicants wishing to be considered for a part-time scholarship must meet the criteria listed above. Applicants must provide evidence of the reason(s) they are unable to study full time. They also require the agreement of the supervisor and the University to the part-time arrangements.

Scholarship Selection Procedures

Applications are assessed against the eligibility criteria for each of the scholarships available. Those deemed eligible are forwarded to College committees for further assessment and ranking. Colleges are required to rank applications on the basis of academic merit.

Due to increased competition in recent years applicants are requested to provide transcripts with actual marks wherever possible. These marks may be used to distinguish between applicants of high academic merit if necessary.

Only First Class Honours applicants will be ranked for the Vice Chancellor's scholarships. Only First Class Honours or equivalent applicants are ranked for the APA. First Class Honours is not an eligibility requirement for the VU scholarship, however those awarded VU scholarships in recent years have held degrees at First Class Honours level or equivalent.

Students with the following qualifications are automatically classed as First Class Honours applicants:

- *Australian and New Zealand Bachelors Degree with First Class Honours*
- *Australian and New Zealand Research Masters Preliminary formally graded as First Class Honours*
- *Australian and New Zealand Research Masters Degree formally graded as First Class Honours*

Where an applicant does not hold one of the above qualifications, but the College believes that the applicant has qualifications and/or research experience equivalent to First Class Honours, an assessment of equivalence is determined. The following are examples of qualifications requiring assessment:

- *Bachelors Degree with 2nd class honours as the highest qualification*
- *Research Masters Preliminary without a formal First Class Honours grade*
- *Research Masters Degree without a formal First Class Honours grade*
- *Coursework Masters Degree*
- *Graduate Diploma*
- *All overseas qualifications (except New Zealand)*
- *Other non-standard H1 Bachelors qualifications*

To assist Colleges in the process of assessing H1 equivalence, the following information should be included in or attached to the application:

- *Details of research projects/minor thesis for the highest qualifying degree. Include overall grade of research component, percentage of research in the program and examiners' reports (if available)*
- *Relevant research work experience*
- *Publications – including percentage contribution of applicant, whether accepted for publication, or published, and nature of publication (e.g. refereed journal article, report, conference abstract, etc)*
- *Relevant employment experience*
- *Any tertiary prizes, awards or scholarships*

For the Vice Chancellor's Scholarships, applicants **must** be undertaking research in one of Victoria University's areas of research strength. For the other scholarship types, priority will be given to applicants who fit into one of Victoria University's areas of research focus as outlined on the following webpage: <http://www.vu.edu.au/research/research-focus-areas>

A University Ranking Committee reviews the College Order of Merit lists to determine a University-wide Order of Merit based on academic merit and research potential. Vice Chancellor's Research Scholarships are allocated first, followed by APA scholarships. The procedure is repeated for the selection of the VU scholarships until all scholarships have been allocated.

Applicants should note that the application process for all scholarship types is very competitive.

The final ranking and scholarship allocation is completed in the second week of December. All applicants will receive written notification of the result of their scholarship application after 11 December 2014.

Appeals

Appeals can only be lodged against process issues and not against Committee decisions or ranking. Appeals against the outcome of scholarship applications must be made in writing to the Chair, Scholarship Ranking Committee within 14 days of the applicant being notified of the outcome. Applicants must explain the basis of their appeal and provide relevant documentation and evidence to support the appeal. The appeals process will be carried out by an independent Senior University Officer who is not a member of any College or University Scholarship Ranking Committee that has considered the scholarship applications in a particular year. The Senior University Officer appointed will consider the appeal and advise the applicant of their decision in writing.

How to complete the Scholarship Application Form

- Please type or use **BLACK** pen and write clearly
- Include all attachments where instructed
- Ensure all document copies are certified (refer to Checklist section of application form for details)
- Please provide the completed application form plus attachments clipped together (no staples, spiral binding, folders etc will be accepted)
- Incomplete applications will not be considered
- Late applications will not be considered

Applicant Details

Please provide all details in full. If there is any change to your address details after lodgement of the application, it is your responsibility to advise the Scholarships Coordinator of these changes.

Residency Details

Please tick the correct box and attach documentation as instructed.

These scholarships are available **ONLY** to Australian Citizens or Permanent Residents. If you were born in Australia or have become an Australian Citizen, you must provide a certified copy of documentation showing your citizenship – a Birth Certificate, Citizenship Certificate, or Passport.

If you have been granted Permanent Residency Status you must have been granted permanent residency before 31 October 2014. You must provide a certified copy of the pages of your passport showing relevant visas and entry and departure dates.

Scholarship Eligibility Checklist

Please respond to ALL four questions. If you have answered YES to question 1, you may not be eligible for some categories of scholarship. If you have answered YES to questions 2, 3 or 4 you are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for any of these scholarships.

Proposed Research

Please ensure that you attach a typed Research Proposal to your application. This proposal should not exceed 2 typed A4 pages, and should include a brief statement addressing each of points A to F as listed on the application form.

Qualifications

- Where undergraduate or honours degrees include a work experience or industry placement, fieldwork, practicum or similar, applicants **MUST** provide evidence of satisfactory completion of this placement. Applications without evidence of satisfactory completion will be ineligible for consideration.
- Attach a separate statement listing any prizes or distinctions gained in your academic career that are not listed in the official transcripts.

- All listed qualifications must be supported with certified copies of academic transcripts, including a key to result codes. Your application may be disadvantaged if the University is not able to fully assess your academic performance. You need to include a transcript with actual marks where possible.
- If any degree was completed in a country other than Australia, you will need to provide a certified copy of the original academic transcript (including a key to result codes), and an English translation if necessary. You need to include a transcript with actual marks where possible.
- Any supporting documents submitted in languages other than English, will require an official certified translation into English, in addition to the certified copy of the document.
- Applicants with academic records from overseas may be disadvantaged if the Scholarships Ranking Committee is unable to make a comparison with this University's standards. Applicants with overseas qualifications should obtain assistance from the following organisations for assessment of their qualifications:

<p>National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) Postal Address: AEI-NOOSR, International Education Group, DEEWR GPO BOX 1407, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia Telephone: +61 3 8341 3611 from overseas Telephone: 1800 363 079 (free call within Australia) Email: noosr@dest.gov.au https://aei.gov.au/services-and-resources/pages/aeinoosr.aspx</p>	<p>Overseas Qualification Unit GPO Box 4509 Melbourne, VIC, 3001 1800 042 745 in Australia Email: oku@employment.vic.gov.au Website: http://www.liveinvictoria.vic.gov.au/employing-overseas-talent/settle-and-retain-new-workers/the-overseas-qualifications-unit</p>
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Research Experience

- The information you provide in this section, together with your academic results, is used to assist the Ranking Committees to assess your academic merit, research experience and potential.
- Please list any details that you think are relevant to your application or your proposed research. This information may also be used to assess Honours 1 equivalence if you do not have a First Class Honours degree and you wish to be considered for an APA.

Academic Referees

- The referee reports play a very important role in the scholarship selection process. Choose referees who have a good knowledge of your academic background, ability and potential.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that your referees return their reports to the Scholarships Coordinator by Friday 31 October 2014. Late or missing referee reports will not be pursued. Applications without referee reports will not be considered.

Declaration

Please read, sign and date this section to complete your application.

Please note that any information provided in your application may be provided to the Commonwealth Government for the APA scholarships.

Checklist

- Please refer to the checklist to ensure you have attached all required documentation to your application. Procedures for having document copies certified are explained in the checklist section.
- Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Application Submission

Applications close at 4.00 pm on **Friday 31 October 2014**. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

SEND YOUR APPLICATION AND ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION TO:
 EMAIL: researchscholarships@vu.edu.au

Further Assistance and Enquiries

Further enquiries can be made to the Research Scholarships Coordinator via email: researchscholarships@vu.edu.au