HDR Support Scheme | Guideline

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Faculty of Science and Engineering HDR Support Scheme is to provide consistent monetary support to HDR students in all Departments and Schools of the Faculty of Science and Engineering.

The scheme provides funding to assist with activities directly related to conducting a thesis project and presenting a research paper at a reputable domestic conference related to the thesis topic.

**HDR Allocation**

From 1 January 2018, the standard total limit of Department/School level PhD support on operating funds for a standard length PhD candidature of 3 years shall be $4,500; and for the 2nd year of a standard MRes candidature shall be $1,500.

These standard limits are inclusive of:

i. desktop or laptop computers; and

ii. domestic conference travel and registration fees

For the purpose of the conferences section of this guideline, New Zealand is considered domestic travel. Note that the MQ Travel Policy/Procedure/Guideline considers New Zealand to be international travel, and students travelling to New Zealand must adhere to requirements as specified in those documents.

**Computers**

**Standard computing**

New PhD students (as of 2018) who require a standard computer will be provided with a laptop (with external screen and keyboard if required) or desktop purchased out of their HDR allocation.

At the discretion of the Department/School, the standard computer provided to a PhD student will be considered disposable at the end of the student’s candidature and may be taken by the student; or else retained and re-purposed by the Department/School. If a standard computer is provided to an MRes student it will be retained and re-purposed by the Department/School at the conclusion of the MRes candidature.

**Non-standard (high spec) computing**

Students who require a non-standard (i.e. high spec) computer, will need to justify the purchase of an alternative computer to the value of $2,000 (from the HDR allocation). A group of students can combine their allocation to purchase a higher value computer (from the HDR allocation) with Supervisor approval. All non-standard computers will be retained by the Department/School.

**Other costs**
The HDR Support Scheme can be used for a range of other activities depending on the research been undertaken, including, but not limited to:

- METS labour and materials costs
- Minor equipment: scanners, technical software, small components etc.
- WHS/Safety at work items for instance, work station related items as assessed via Risk Online Active Reporting
- Facilities access e.g. Clean room time
- Domestic conference registration fees
- Domestic conference travel (airfares, accommodation, meals, transport – costs only)
- Thesis preparation costs

In addition:

- an allowance may be available for lab consumables and sample analyses (sourced/provided by the Department) for MRes Yr 2 and PhD HDR Students in the Departments of Earth & Environmental Sciences, Molecular Sciences and Biological Sciences. Contact the Department Administration team for details.
- an allowance may be available for fieldwork (using MQ processes and preferred suppliers) for MRes Yr 2 and PhD HDR students in the Departments of Earth & Environmental Sciences, and Biological Sciences. Contact the Department Administration team for details.

**Domestic conferences**

PhD HDR students can allocate up to $1,500 of their HDR Support Scheme allocation towards the costs of attending a maximum of two domestic conferences to present a paper or poster (towards the end of their candidature?). Funds can be used to pay for conference registrations, airfares/transport, accommodation and incidentals.

**International conferences**

For International conferences, funding is available via the Macquarie University Postgraduate Research Fund (PGRF) Scheme. In general HDR Support Scheme funds cannot be used for international conference registration or travel expenses other than (i) if a PGRF has been awarded but there is a need to top-up the PGRF funds received because the costs of the international conference registration and travel end up exceeding the amount of PGRF funds awarded then HDR support scheme funds can be used towards the cost of the international conference registration costs only (in which case that top-up amount comes out of the students $1,500 allocation to attend a domestic conference(s) as well), or (ii) except for the Department of Computing (should Maths and Stats be here to?) due to conferences being the primary venue for publication in the discipline.

**External research grants**

Opportunities may exist to obtain additional funding/travel scholarships from external organisations. Consult with your Supervisor for more information.

**Unspent Balances**

In general funds will cease to be available for use from the date of degree completion. However, attendance at a conference scheduled within 3 months of thesis submission, to present a paper that
is directly related to the thesis, may be permitted if adequate funds remain in the students’ allocation.

**Process**

Students should only budget/request funding for items that are *necessary* to complete their projects. Preparing and justifying a project budget is a transferable skill relevant in academia and other work environments.

1. HDR students use the **HDR Project Budget** site to provide:
   a) Budget request
   b) Full justification
   c) Supervisor approval

2. Review the financial policies and procedures of Macquarie University – **MQ Travel Policy; MQ Purchasing Procedure**

3. Complete an **Absence on Duty form/request**. Please note that absence on duty needs to be approved by the supervisor and the Head of Department/School before any travel bookings are made.

4. Review future budget needs during Annual Progress Review. Students need to report on how the funding was spent and the outcomes at the Annual Progress Review. Further funding is conditional upon satisfactory research progress. If the budget is revised substantially it must be resubmitted for approval by the supervisor and Head of Department / Dean of School and forwarded to the Department/School Finance and Staff Administrator.

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<th>Implementation Officer</th>
<th>Faculty General Manager, Faculty of Science and Engineering</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1 November 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date for Review</td>
<td>May 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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