

Advice and Information for Prospective Research Candidates

Why research study? Eg, PhD, Masters by Research M(Hons)

As a research candidate you are an independent learner working at a high level, taking initiative and actively directing your education. You will work independently and discover and communicate new knowledge. You will be encouraged to participate in national and international conferences and to publish your work as you progress. At graduation you will be highly trained in designing and applying research methodologies and you will be the foremost expert in your topic area.

Why UWS?

UWS research education focuses on contemporary social issues and scientific problems. Our research students are supported by a supervisory panel of two to three academic experts and we actively encourage associate supervisors from industry. Research candidates are important members of the university research community and are encouraged to participate in university research culture through conferences, workshops and seminars. UWS provides specific support for research education. There are internal scholarships, research seminars, workshops and funds to support your candidature.

Scholarships

Australian Postgraduate Awards (APAs), UWS Postgraduate Research Awards (UWSPRA), Endeavour International Postgraduate Research Awards (EIPRS)

UWS offers scholarships with very attractive stipends: up to \$30,000 per annum tax free. Scholarship rounds are competitive and applicants are ranked using a metric.

APAs and EIPRS are awarded on the basis of undergraduate GPA, Honours/postgraduate level of award and research output such as published books, referred publications and major creative works.

UWS Postgraduate Research Awards are awarded on the criteria listed above plus alignment of the project with a UWS Research Concentration and alignment with the UWS Research Plan.

There is one application form for RTS places, UWS awards, APA's and fee paying places.

APA's, UWS Awards and RTS places are allocated competitively, using a metric.

APA's are ranked on academic merit only- they provide the best opportunity for BHons students. UWS awards also take into account whether the student will be in a University Research Centre or Research Group and gives points for alignment with the University Research Plan, under strict guidelines.

Scholarship holders can undertake a limited amount of part time teaching, which can be a very good development opportunity.

Assessment of admission is different to scholarship ranking and has two aspects. The university must determine if:

- The applicant is well equipped to undertake independent high level research. This is judged by the applicant's undergraduate GPA, the level of BHons award, or other academic qualification or research training and research output (publications), if any.
- UWS can supervise the topic; do we have the academic expertise available? Is the project suitable for a PhD? Can UWS resource the candidature?

For these reasons it is very important that you discuss your topic before you apply - talk to academics, shop around, think of people whose work you admire. Bachelor honours applicants are preliminarily ranked on the assumption that they will be awarded an Hons 1 but this must be confirmed by the UWS final ranking day, held in the first week of December.

Hints for Applicants

- Make sure that you include a research proposal and that you have discussed it with an academic supervisor. The proposal should demonstrate that the topic is appropriate to the level of study you intend, your method is suitable, the results will be productive and you will make an original contribution (for doctoral level).
- You should include any relevant information about your research career, for example, have you been working on a research project, or been a member of a research team in a laboratory or written a literature review, or conducted independent research as part of your course? This is particularly important for applicants who do not have a Bachelor Honours degree or a research masters degree, whether they are from overseas or Australia.
- Read the instructions on the application form carefully and follow them exactly. The University will not allocate points against criteria if documentation is not presented correctly or is missing.
- Discuss the ranking metric with your potential supervisor. Ask questions about how you can maximise your points score.
- Make sure your documents are correctly certified. Follow the instructions on the form. If an item is incorrectly certified you will score zero points for it.
- Please ensure that your transcripts state the current status of the degree - i.e. Degree conferred, degree to be awarded, requirements for award met etc.
- Double check the application for missing documentation.
- Include evidence of publications with your application. A CV or publications list is not sufficient. The application form and metric both explain what evidence to provide. We must be able to determine who authored the

publication, who published it and whether it was refereed. The onus is on the applicant to provide this information.

Don't assume that others will be able to determine whether a publication is refereed. There are many instances where refereeing is called into question. Provide evidence of refereeing if possible.

- Include evidence of partnerships, commercialisation, collaboration, linkages. The evidence must be in writing and should include an agreement or letter from the partner/collaborating organisation explaining what resources and other input each party will provide. It is not enough to say that the partner is interested in the project - there must be a substantial contribution from each party. Eg - funding, physical space, participants, IP, hardware etc
- Signpost where you can. If you think the project has an interdisciplinary focus include an argument why.
- Make sure you read and address every item on the application form in the manner specified.
- The closing date is immutable. Allow plenty of time to get your application to the Research Office by close of business on the closing date. Evidence of postage by the due date is not sufficient. The application must arrive at the RESEARCH OFFICE by the closing date, not just on the grounds of the University.