

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman			
Guideline Title : GUIDELINE ON RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME			
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1. **Preamble**

The guideline covers the terms of reference for Research Scholarship Scheme (RSS) funded under the UTAR Research Fund (UTARRF) and Research and Development (R&D) grants from external agency/institution/organisation.

2. **Objectives of Research Scholarship Scheme**

- (i) To provide researchers of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) a platform to source students' assistance in research work.
- (ii) To provide financial support and opportunity for students to be involved and assist in research projects and thus enhancing their exposure and experience in research.

3. **Condition:**

The RSS holder funded under UTARRF or R&D grant from external agency/institution/organisation must be a full-time UTAR postgraduate student (by research or mixed mode), and their thesis/dissertation must be related to the project.

4. **Operation Cost**

- (i) The operation cost can be from research projects funded from the following sources:
 - (a) UTAR Research Fund (UTARRF);
 - (b) R&D grants from external agency/institution/organisation which fund is credited to UTAR accounts.
- (ii) The principal investigator (PI) of the project is fully responsible for ensuring the specification of appropriate duration and purpose of engagement and the availability of sufficient operation cost for such purpose.

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5. Stipend

- (i) The RSS holder shall be given a monthly stipend according to the recommendation of the PI and the rate specified by the University, with the approval from the Director of IPSR
- (ii) The following monthly stipend applies for the RSS holder and subject to the approved amount:
 - (a) For Master's student: shall not exceed RM2,500.00 per month.
 - (b) For PhD student: shall not exceed RM3,300.00 per month.
- (iii) In the event the maximum stipend for the RSS holder of R&D grants from external funding agency/institution/organisation is lower than the monthly stipend specified in Section 5 (ii), the PI of the project may apply for:
 - (a) For Master's student: top-up stipend up to RM700.00 per month within the duration of the project.
 - (b) For PhD student: top-up stipend up to RM1,000.00 per month within the duration of the project.

The total stipend amount after top-up shall not exceed the maximum amount stated in Section 5(ii).
- (iv) The RSS holder is allowed to be engaged as Student Assistant (SA) for another Research Project with the following conditions:
 - (a) The RSS holder must be a registered postgraduate student in UTAR.
 - (b) The combined maximum hours of engagement are 40 hours per week.
 - (c) The combined stipend/salary amount for the RSS holder and SA is as follows:
 - (1) For Master's student: shall not exceed RM2,500.00 per month.
 - (2) For PhD student: shall not exceed RM3,300.00 per month.
 - (d) The applicant is responsible to declare his current scheme that was awarded to him.
 - (e) The applicant has not been awarded the top-up stipend as mentioned in Section 5 (iii).

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6. Tuition Fees Support

This Scheme may support tuition fees (Technical Unit Fee and Research Component Fee) payment for postgraduate programmes by research mode only.

The fund for the tuition fees shall be from the approved amount of the RSS under UTARRF or external agency/institution/organisation funding body.

A student who opted for this option and whose tuition fees had been paid is not allowed to withdraw from this arrangement for the maximum period of one (1) year. In the event the student is awarded another scholarship and his tuition fees have not been paid under this Scheme, or he was granted an extension of his RSS, the student may apply to the Director of IPSR to cancel this option. The decision of the Director of IPSR shall be final.

7. UTAR Education Foundation Tuition Fee Scholarship

- (i) UTAR Education Foundation Tuition Fee Scholarship may be given to the RSS holder of a postgraduate programme by research mode only, subject to the following criteria:
 - (a) For Master's student: applicants must have graduated with a good Bachelor's degree with CGPA of 3.5 and above or equivalent qualification;
 - (b) For PhD student: applicants must have obtained a Master's degree and a good Bachelor's degree with CGPA of 3.5 and above or equivalent qualification.
- (ii) Terms & Conditions
 - (a) The application of this scholarship is only allowed at the commencement of study or in the first year of study.
 - (b) Covers Technical Unit Fee and Research Component Fee for the normal duration of the study.
 - (c) Does not apply to Other Fees i.e. Registration fee, Activity & Service fee, Resource Centre fee, Exam & Facility fee, Caution Money, Medical & Health Insurance Premium as well as research expenditure, recurring fees, thesis examination fee, etc.
 - (d) For Conversion of Candidature from Master's to PhD Programme, does not cover Processing Fee, Conversion Fee and Other Fees i.e. Activity & Services Fee, Resource Centre Fee, Exam & Facility Fee, Dissertation/Thesis Examination Fee.

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- (e) The tuition fee scholarship award, tenable for the duration of the programme of study will be reviewed subject to the following conditions:
 - i. 'Satisfactory' progress as reported by the supervisor(s) in the Postgraduate 6-monthly progress report – scholarship continues to be in effect.
 - ii. 'Non-satisfactory' or 'Non-submission' progress – scholarship ceases. Once a scholarship has ceased, the RSS holder will not be able to regain the scholarship
- (f) The normal duration of study is:
 - i. two (2) years for Master's student;
 - ii. three (3) years for PhD student.
- (g) The tuition fee scholarship awarded will be automatically terminated at any time should the RSS holder withdraw from his programme of study and/or RSS engagement.

8. Duration of Research Scholarship

The RSS holder shall be engaged for the duration of one (1) year to a specific research project. An extension of the RSS may be granted for a second (2) year based on the criteria stated in Section 9(iv). RSS extension for the external grant will depend on the research project duration and funding availability.

9. Application and Approval

- (i) Application
 - (a) An Applicant may apply by completing the RSS Application form and submitting the form to the PI within his first year of study or earlier (applicable for UTARRF project only). In the event the applicant is a non-Malaysian, he is required to be a registered student for a Postgraduate Programme in UTAR before applying for UTAR RSS.
 - (b) The Applicant is to indicate his eligibility for tuition fee sponsorship or opt for tuition fees support.
 - (c) The PI shall complete the project details and ensure appropriate approval is obtained prior to the commencement of the assignment by the applicant. The PI is not allowed to engage the RSS holder if the remaining duration of the research project is less than three (3) months.

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- (d) The duly completed form shall be submitted to the Head of Department and Dean of Faculty concerned for a recommendation before forwarding to the Director of IPSR for approval.
- (ii) Offer letter
- (a) The offer letter for the successful applicant of RSS will be issued by the Director of IPSR.
- (b) The RSS holder offer letter shall contain the following information:
- Project details: title, vote number, PI
 - Engagement period
 - The amount payable per month
 - Amount of tuition fees support (if the RSS holder opts for Tuition Fee Support)
- (iii) Acceptance of Engagement
- (a) The applicant will have to confirm the acceptance by signing the Acceptance for RSS (UTAR-IPSR- RS-002) within two (2) weeks from the date of the offer letter.
- (b) The RSS holder will discuss with the PI and agree on the targets to be achieved in one (1) year. A copy of the RSS target setting form is to be submitted to the Director of IPSR, together with the acceptance letter.
- (c) The RSS holder is required to register for a postgraduate programme in UTAR within three (3) months from the start date of RSS appointment.
- (iv) Extension of the RSS holder's engagement period
- (a) The RSS holder who wishes to seek for an extension is required to make an application using the relevant form (Application for Extension of RSS Form) in which he/she reports on the achievement of his targets and submit the completed form to IPSR three (3) months before the end date of the RSS holder's appointment.
- (b) The approval of the extension application for a Master's student shall be subjected to the following:
- (i) Registration as a Master student in UTAR within three (3) months from the start date of the RSS holder's appointment
 - (ii) The RSS holder has obtained satisfactory grade in the proposal defence in the first attempt and within three (3) months upon registration into the Master's programme.

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- (iii) The RSS holder has passed the compulsory courses within one (1) year from the date of registration as a Master student in UTAR
 - (iv) The RSS holder has obtained full attendance in his/her “Meeting Log with Supervisors” without warning letter issued on his/her attendance
 - (v) The RSS holder has obtained satisfactory grade in the Research Progress Report in his/her Master study without warning letter issued for non-submission
 - (vi) The duration of extension requested shall not exceed twelve (12) months and the total engagement period of the RSS holder shall not exceed twenty-four (24) months.
 - (vii) The student and the PI may appeal by providing a strong justification, if sections 9(iv)(b)(i) - (iv) are not fulfilled, for consideration by the recommendation and approval committee.
- (c) The approval of the extension application for PhD Student shall be subjected to the following:
- (I) Criteria for extension – Second Year PhD Study:
 - (i) Registration as a PhD student in UTAR within three (3) months from the start date of the RSS holder’s appointment
 - (ii) The RSS holder has obtained satisfactory grade in the proposal defence in the first attempt and within six (6) months upon registration into the PhD programme.
 - (iii) The RSS holder has passed the compulsory courses within one (1) year from the date of registration as a PhD student in UTAR.
 - (iv) The RSS holder has obtained full attendance in his/her “Meeting Log with Supervisors” without warning letter issued on his/her attendance.
 - (v) The RSS holder has obtained satisfactory grade in the Research Progress Report in his/her PhD study without warning letter issued for non-submission.
 - (vi) The student and the PI may appeal by providing a strong justification, if sections 9(iv)(c)(I)(i)-(iv) are not fulfilled, for consideration by the recommendation and approval committee.
 - (vii) The duration of extension requested for Second Year PhD Study shall not exceed twelve (12) months
 - (II) Criteria for extension – Third Year PhD study:

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- (i) The RSS holder has obtained full attendance in his/her “Meeting Log with Supervisors” without warning letter issued on his/her attendance.
 - (ii) The RSS holder has obtained satisfactory grade in the Research Progress Report in his/her PhD study without warning letter issued for non-submission.
 - (iii) The RSS holder has presented one Conference Paper indexed by Clarivate Analytics Web of Science or Scopus (POL-IPSR-PSU-002 Policy on Publication Requirement to Graduate).
 - (iv) The RSS holder has submitted one Journal Paper indexed by Clarivate Analytics Web of Science, Scopus or other indices shown in the publication scoring system (POL-IPSR-PSU-002 Policy on Publication Requirement to Graduate).
 - (v) The student and the PI may appeal by providing a strong justification, if sections 9(iv)(c)(II)(iii)-(iv) are not fulfilled, for consideration by the recommendation and approval committee.
 - (vi) The duration of extension requested for Third Year PhD Study shall not exceed twelve (12) months.
 - (vii) Total engagement period of the RSS holder shall not exceed thirty-six (36) months.
- (III) The application for extension for PhD student previously sponsored under external funding shall be considered on case to case basis.
- (d) Recommendation and approval committee for the extension:
- (i) Recommendation by Faculty R&D and Postgraduate Committee (FRDPC).
 - (ii) Recommendation by the Faculty Board.
 - (iii) Recommendation by R&D and Commercialisation Committee (RDCC).
 - (iv) Approval by Senior Management Committee (SMC), in which the decision is final.

10. Termination

- (i) The RSS shall be terminated at the expiry of the engagement period or any time on the occurrence of any of the following:

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- (a) The RSS holder fails to perform his/her duties satisfactorily which includes obtaining satisfactory grade in the proposal defence within six (6) months upon registration into a Master's degree programme or within nine (9) months upon registration into a PhD degree programme.
 - (b) The RSS holder's services are no longer required in the project or the work assigned under the project has been completed
 - (c) The work for which the RSS holder is engaged to perform has been suspended or ceased.
 - (d) Any gross misconduct, insubordination and persistent absence from work without approval on the RSS holder's part.
- (ii) The RSS holder can terminate his/her RSS by giving two (2) weeks' notice in writing to the PI. The letter will have to be forwarded to IPSR for endorsement from Director of IPSR.
 - (iii) The PI can terminate the RSS by giving two (2) weeks' notice in writing to the Director of IPSR. The PI is advised to discuss with the RSS holder prior to any termination.
 - (iv) Upon termination, the University shall have no further obligation to the RSS holder.

11. Payment

- (i) IPSR will instruct UTAR Division of Finance to issue monthly RSS payment.
- (ii) The payment of RSS monthly stipend for UTARRF including the top-up stipend shall be discontinued if the RSS holder fails to:
 - (a) Register into a postgraduate programme within three (3) months of RSS appointment, or
 - (b) Obtain satisfactory grade in the proposal defence within three (3) months upon registration into a Master's degree programme or within six (6) months upon registration into a PhD degree programme, or
 - (c) Conduct the work completion seminar at least three (3) months before the end of the RSS extension period (for Master's degree only), or
 - (d) Conduct the work completion seminar at least three (3) months before the end of second RSS extension period (for PhD's degree only).
- (iii) The payment of RSS monthly stipend shall recommence once:

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- (a) The RSS holder registered into a postgraduate programme in UTAR, or
 - (b) The RSS holder has obtained satisfactory grade in the proposal defence within six (6) months upon the registration into a Master's degree programme or within nine (9) months upon registration into a PhD degree programme, or
 - (c) The RSS holder pursuing Master's degree programme has conducted the work completion seminar within twenty-four (24) months of the RSS appointment, or
 - (d) The RSS holder pursuing PhD degree programme has conducted the work completion seminar within thirty-six (36) months of the RSS appointment, or
 - (e) The student and the PI provide strong justification for not fulfilling either one of the items in section 11(ii) (a) and (b).
- (iv) The recommencement of payment of RSS monthly stipend will not be backdated to cover the period of discontinuity.
 - (v) The payment of RSS monthly stipend under UTARRF and the top-up stipend shall be discontinued upon completion of study (by submitting the thesis/dissertation for examination).

12. EPF and SOCSO

There shall be no contribution to EPF or SOCSO.

13. Benefits

The RSS holder is not entitled to any benefits accorded to the permanent staff of UTAR.

14. Personal Accident & Medical Benefits

- (i) The RSS holder does not qualify for medical benefits and any other benefits accorded to the permanent staff of the University.
- (ii) The RSS holder is required to obtain personal accident insurance coverage with/without medical benefits. The PI shall be responsible for ensuring this implementation.

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15. Parking

The RSS holder will not be accorded staff parking privilege.

16. Duties and Transfer

- (i) The RSS holder is required to perform his/her assigned duties diligently.
- (ii) The RSS holder may be required to serve the faculty in lab demonstration or administrative duties with the following conditions:
 - Maximum of eight (8) hours weekly.
 - The tasks are to be assigned by faculty with the consent of the supervisor.
 - Not permitted to assist in marking and/or keying in marks of examinations scripts, tutorial assignments, and lab reports.
- (iii) The University reserves the right to transfer, relocate, second or reassign the RSS holder to another department or faculty within the University.

17. Rules and Regulations

The RSS holder is required to comply with the University's policies, rules, and regulations (including any codes of conduct) currently in force and implemented from time to time. Failure to do so, the RSS holder may be subjected to disciplinary actions by the University at the University's absolute discretion.

18. Occupational Safety and Health Policy

The RSS holder is required to comply with the relevant provision of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994:

- (i) Take reasonable safety and health measure for himself and others.
- (ii) Cooperate with his superior or others in any duties assigned.
- (iii) Use and wear at all times, any protective equipment or clothing provided by the University.
- (iv) Comply with any instruction or measure on occupational safety and health instituted by the University.

19. Confidentiality

The RSS holder must keep in strict confidence all commercial and technical information in whatever form acquired, directly or indirectly from UTAR or the project in connection to

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his/her engagement with UTAR, hereinafter called 'Confidential Information' for any purpose other than those contemplated in your engagement. Further, the RSS holder shall not disclose any Confidential Information to any third party for any purpose without the prior written consent of UTAR.

20. Conflict of interest

Unless expressly agreed to by UTAR in advance, the RSS holder shall not seek out, embark upon or be engaged in any other business industry, enterprise or appointment of any kind.

21. Proprietary Rights

- (i) UTAR shall have the sole and exclusive right to all intellectual property rights that you gained and/or acquire while performing your duties during the engagement. The intellectual properties shall include discoveries, innovations, and inventions made and stored physically or electronically such as printed materials, computer software, presentation materials, etc.
- (ii) UTAR shall have the right to use these intellectual properties at its discretion in whatever form, manner or purpose.
- (iii) The RSS holder shall not use these intellectual properties for any purpose other than for serving UTAR and shall not use them for their own gain or for any other employer without the prior authorisation in writing from UTAR.

22. Return of University Property

The RSS holder who has been issued the University properties shall return such items to the PI concerned at the end of every day.

23. Prohibition of Press Statement, Speeches and Comments

The RSS holder is prohibited from making any press or public statements and from circulating any statements pertaining to the University or his duties. He/she should not publish, broadcast or in any lecture or tutorial or speech, comment on anything relating to the University or his duties.

24. Review of Rules and Regulations

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman at its sole and absolute discretion may vary, modify, add, delete or amend any of the above rules and regulations of the RSS guideline.