

Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy informs staff of the conditions and procedures when applying for the Research Awards Program for Academic Staff following Parental Leave and should be read in conjunction with the [Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Procedure](#).

(2) In line with the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework, the Australian Catholic University (ACU) is committed to the ongoing support of academic staff members who are primary carers and resume work at ACU following a period of approved parental leave, in association with the birth of an infant or adoption of an under-school age child. These Awards are designed to assist academic staff to re-establish their research profile consistent with the strategic directions of the University and the individual academic staff member's career pathway.

Section 2 - Policy Statement

(3) The University will make available at least three (3) Research Awards per annum (valued at up to \$12,500 each) to academic staff who return to the University following a period of approved leave in association with the birth of an infant or adoption of an under-school age child. Eligible academic staff can apply for a Research Award within the period of two (2) years from the date of their return to work at ACU from such leave.

Section 3 - Application of Policy

Scope of the Awards

(4) At least three (3) research awards, valued at up to \$12,500 each, may be granted annually to academic staff members who meet the eligibility criteria under this Policy.

(5) Awards will not be granted for a staff member to complete doctoral or other postgraduate studies.

Eligibility

(6) Academic staff who return to work on a full-time or part-time basis following a period of approved leave in association with the birth of an infant or adoption of an under-school age child may apply for a Research Award within the two-year period following resumption of duty. Applicants may claim interruptions to extend their eligibility.

(7) The granting of the Research Award will be directed towards establishing / re-establishing a staff member's research profile, and thus facilitate continued advancement of the staff member's academic career pathway.

(8) The research proposal will normally be consistent with the research profile of the School / Faculty / Institute / Directorates within which the staff member is located and be supported by the staff member's National Head of School, Institute Director or Dean, and Executive Dean.

Section 4 - Procedures

(9) The application, assessment, administration and reporting requirements for Research Awards are set out in the [Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Procedure](#).

Section 5 - Revisions made to this Policy

(10) The revision table includes revisions up until this document was migrated into the current policy platform. Any later changes will show in the Status and Details tab.

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description
11 July 2016	Major	Updated to incorporate the provisions of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2013 – 2017.
14 September 2018	Minor	Updated to include new ACU brand template, application procedure and other minor editorial updates.
14 September 2018	Major	Updated to include an additional Assessment Criteria item in relation to whether the applicant was in receipt of the Research Award in the previous year.
17 September 2019	Editorial	Minor editorial change to section 4.1.
24 August 2020	Minor	Amendments to section 4.1 Application Process requiring applicants to identify a mentor with a track record of research excellence and amendment to mentor description in section 4.5.
22 September 2021	Minor	Increase in number of awards available, editorial changes to ensure consistency across research awards, and updates to nomenclature.
8 November 2023	Editorial	Updated to incorporate the provisions of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025. Updated Human Resources to People and Capability.

(11) The University will develop a process for reviewing the effectiveness of the Research Awards for Academic Staff established by this Policy. Where applicable, the review will take account of necessary changes to other relevant University policies and procedures. Any staff member wishing to suggest improvements to this Policy is invited to forward their suggestions to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

Section 6 - Further Assistance

(12) Staff members who require further assistance in understanding this Policy should refer to the [Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Procedure](#) or consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further information or advice be required staff should visit [Service Central](#).

Section 7 - Associated Information

(13) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	28th September 2026
Review Date	28th September 2031
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	16th September 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Abid Khan Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
Responsible Manager	Phil Parker Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)
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