Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Procedure

Section 1 - Governing Policy

(1) This Procedure is governed by the Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Policy.

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure sets out the processes, roles and responsibilities for implementing the Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Policy.

(3) All ACU staff involved in the administration, assessment, and management of Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave must comply with this Procedure.

Section 3 - Procedure Statement

(4) This Procedure describes the steps required to apply for, assess, administer and report on Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave.

(5) The Procedure applies to award applicants and recipients, and to ACU staff and committees responsible for administering and overseeing the awards.

(6) Actions under this Procedure are undertaken by the following roles and areas:

a. Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) (DVCRE)
b. Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) (PVCR)
c. Research Development and Associate Director, Research Operations, via the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) (ODVCRE)
d. People and Capability
e. Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Committee ("Committee")
f. National Head of School / Institute Director or relevant executive staff member for non-Faculty based staff
g. Faculty Executive Dean
h. Faculty Associate Dean, Research (ADR)
i. Finance and Planning
j. Award Applicants / Recipients.

Section 4 - Award Process

Award Applicants

(7) Applications for a Research Award for Academic Staff following Parental Leave must be submitted via Orion using

the approved Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Application Form.

(8) Applications must include:

a. A Research Project Proposal, including aims, methodology / approach, project plan, timelines (including any time required away from the University), expected research outcomes and outputs, and how this project will support ACU's Research and Enterprise Vision 2033: In Service of a Flourishing Humanity;
b. An indicative budget; and
c. Supporting documentation, including:
    i. Research track record
    ii. Profile of research background
    iii. Academic Career Pathway and Plans
    iv. Statements of support from the applicant's proposed mentor. (Note:Head of Unit and Executive Dean review in Orion)

(9) Applications will open in mid-October and close in early November each year. Official opening and closing dates will be advised by the ODVCRE via the Staff Bulletin and Viva Engage.

(10) Award funding may be used for activities that occur on return from and / or during leave, including:

a. Project-related travel within Australia (or, in exceptional circumstances, overseas);
b. Consumables for research;
c. Research assistance support.

Application Submission

(11) Completed application forms and supporting documentation must be submitted via Orion by close of business on the advertised closing date.

Selection Process

(12) Applications will be assessed on a competitive basis by the Committee, chaired by the DVCRE.

(13) The DVCREwill ensure consideration of diversity in Committee membership, with a focus on equitable gender representation.

(14) The Committee may, on a confidential basis, seek advice from relevant senior academic staff.

(15) A representative from People and Capability will be included in the Committee.

(16) The ODVCRE forwards applications received by the closing date to the Associate Director, HR Business Partnering and Talent Management for checking and verification of approved parental leave.

Assessment Criteria

(17) In assessing applications, the Committee will consider:

a. the quality and relevance of the proposed research project, including alignment with University strategy and the applicant's academic career pathway;
b. the contribution of the project to the research priorities of the School, Institute, Faculty or Directorate;
c. evidence of local support for the project;
d. the applicant's research track record and expertise, as recorded in ORION;

e. any career interruptions or special circumstances affecting the applicant's track record;
f. whether the applicant received a Research Award in the previous year, with a view to prioritising those who have not received it; and
g. endorsement from the Head of School / Institute Director and Executive Dean (or nominee) confirming that:
    i. the applicant has the capacity to undertake the project;
    ii. the project will provide clear career benefits to the applicant; and
    iii. the project will contribute to ACU's Research and Enterprise Vision 2033: In Service of a Flourishing Humanity.

Award Outcome

(18) Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application.

Establishment and Administration of the Award Funds

(19) Upon approval of an award, Finance and Planning will establish a project account code at the request of the Associate Director, Research Operations, ODVCRE.

(20) The Associate Director, Research Operations, ODVCRE will administer award expenditure in accordance with this Procedure.

(21) All expenditure must be supported by relevant receipts or invoices and align with the approved application budget.

(22) Travel and accommodation must be booked through FCM Travel, in accordance with the Travel Policy.

(23) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) must be nominated as the approver for award-funded travel.

(24) International travel requires an approved International Travel Application Form prior to departure.

(25) Award funds must be expended, and any related travel undertaken, within the year of allocation unless otherwise approved in writing by the DVCRE.

(26) Any unspent funds will be retained by the ODVCRE and cannot be carried forward to the following year in accordance with the ACU Financial Accounting requirements. All travel should be undertaken in the year of allocation. Travel cannot be booked in a subsequent year of allocation unless it is approved as part of the application process.

Obligations of Award Recipients

(27) Award recipients must:

a. Engage with their nominated academic mentor;
b. Complete the project within the agreed timeframe;
c. Complete the project to agreed standards; and
d. Submit a comprehensive report in accordance with Section 5 of this Procedure.

Section 5 - Award Recipient Reporting

(28) Award recipients must submit a comprehensive report within three months of project completion to the ADR and ODVCRE via EO.DVCR@acu.edu.au.

(29) The report must outline:

a. research outcomes and findings;
b. how the award supported research re-establishment;
c. grant applications submitted and/or funded; and
d. publications or outputs arising from the project.

Section 6 - Revisions made to this Procedure

(30) 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
14 September 2018	Major	Procedure updated to incorporate updated ACU template, administrative details and relevant University contact details.
17 September 2019	Editorial	Changes to submission email details (section 4.3) and Role of Human Resources (section 4.2).
24 August 2020	Minor	Amendments to sections 4.1 and 4.4 to ensure consistency with the governing policy. Other minor editorial amendments for consistency with governing policy and application form.
22 September 2021	Minor	Increase in number of awards available, minor editorial changes to ensure consistency, and updates to nomenclature.
8 November 2023	Editorial	Updated Human Resources to People and Capability. Updated to reflect provisions of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2022-2025, including title change.

(31) The University will periodically review the effectiveness of the Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave Procedure and corresponding Research Awards for Academic Staff following Parental Leave 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 procedure is invited to forward their suggestions to the PVCR.

Section 7 - Further Assistance

(32) Staff requiring assistance in interpreting or applying this Procedure should consult their nominated supervisor in the first instance. Further advice is available via Service Central.

Section 8 - Associated Information

(33) 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)
Enquiries Contact	Phil Parker Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)

This policy document may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Printed copies, or part thereof, are regarded as uncontrolled and should not be relied upon as the current version. It is the responsibility of staff printing this document to always refer to the ACU Policy Portal for the latest version.