ITEM FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL HELD ON TUESDAY, 8 MARCH 2005

6. REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE GRADUATE RESEARCH CANDIDATE TRAVEL AWARD SCHEME

Members had before them a draft of a change of the Regulations Governing the Graduate Research Travel Awards Scheme. Members recalled that the current Regulations stipulate that, unless the Board of the Graduate Research School permits otherwise, candidates will be eligible for only one University Travel Award during enrolment in one or more research higher degree programmes at this institution. Thus, a candidate who had completed a Master degree by Research, and had received a Travel Award during enrolment in that degree, would not normally be entitled to receive another Travel Award during subsequent enrolment in a PhD.

This stipulation was perceived as somewhat inequitable, and its logic was unclear. A candidate who had commenced a PhD at UWA after completion of a Master degree by Research in another University could receive a Travel Award, notwithstanding that they had previously received one during their Master degree, but a candidate commencing a PhD after completing a Master degree by Research at UWA could not receive an additional award without special permission. At its February meeting the Board agreed that the Regulations be changed to clearly entitle a candidate to receive a Travel Award notwithstanding that they may have received one during enrolment in a previous degree, which they had completed.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- The amounts of the Awards should be increased. This should be addressed in the next budget round.
- The funds currently set aside for the Travel Awards should be disbursed to schools, who should then be expected to ensure that every graduate research candidate is provided with the resources to attend a conference outside Western Australia. This would remove the current onerous process of applying for Travel Awards.
- There would be no particular objection to this from the Graduate Research and Scholarships Office, for whom such a change would represent a task devolved from them to the schools. However, it would be a problem to calculate accurately how these funds should be disbursed, year by year.
- The funds could be retained in a central account, from which Heads of School could draw when necessary.
- Unfortunately, this would amount to all Heads of School having drawing power on a central account, which would not be workable.
- The current system for applying for Travel Awards is not onerous. All candidates are eligible, and if they apply and are supported by their Head of School they receive an Award.
- Heads of School are subject to many budgetary pressures, and it may be difficult to retain the ability of all candidates to access travel funding if the funding for the Awards were to be disbursed to schools.
- The current system ensures that the funds remain within the control of the Board of the Graduate Research School, who can ensure that all candidates have the same opportunity to receive an Award.

The Board

RESOLVED – 05/24

to recommend to the Research Committee that the attached change to the Regulations Governing the Graduate Research Travel Awards Scheme (Attachment C) be adopted.
ATTACHMENT C

Regulations Governing the Graduate Research Candidate Travel Award Scheme

1. The Board of the Graduate Research School, on the recommendation of the head of School concerned, may grant a candidate for a research higher degree, an award for travel within Australia or overseas directly relevant to the candidate’s research work, including fieldwork, conference attendance and travel to gather research data.

2. (a) Travel awards will normally be granted to candidates during their candidacy.

(b) In exceptional circumstances and with the written support of the supervisor and Head of School, an award may be granted in the period up to three months after submission of the thesis for examination.

Eligibility

3. The awards are available to full-time and part-time candidates.

4. Externally enrolled candidates may apply for an award, but applications for assistance to travel to UWA to satisfy residency requirements as set out in the University General Rules for Academic Courses will not be supported.

5. A member of the academic staff of this or any other higher-education institution, or a person in employment which provides access to travel subsidies who is enrolled for a research higher degree, is not normally eligible for an award.

6. An applicant’s research proposal must be approved by the Board of the Graduate Research School prior to approval of a travel award.

Number of Awards

7. (1) Unless the Board of the Graduate Research School permits otherwise, a candidate will be eligible for only one travel award during enrolment in a research higher degree programme at this institution.

(2) A candidate who has received an award and who subsequently completes their degree programme is eligible to receive another award if they later enrol in a further research higher degree programme at UWA.

(3) Candidates who have received an award and who subsequently transfer to another UWA research higher degree programme, at the same or a lower level will not be eligible for a second award.

Application

8. (1) Although applications will normally be processed approximately three to six months prior to the intended date of departure, earlier applications may be considered.

(2) Awards are not offered retrospectively.

9. (1) Candidates who wish to travel overseas, or who wish to be away for more than four weeks, must –

(a) obtain approval from the Board of the Graduate Research School and, if they hold a scholarship or an award, from the Scholarships Committee; and

(b) attach to the application form evidence of the approval granted.

(2) A candidate who holds a scholarship or other award and fails to seek approval as
required in paragraph (1)(a) may forfeit the relevant scholarship or award.

Award Amounts

10. (1). For travel within Australia, awards provide up to a maximum of $505\(^\ast\), inclusive of fares and subsistence.

(2). For externally enrolled Candidates, for travel within the country in which they are recorded as studying, awards provide up to a maximum of $450\(^\ast\), inclusive of fares and subsistence.

11. For overseas travel, awards provide up to a maximum of $1 520\(^\ast\), inclusive of fares and subsistence.

12. Each Graduate Research Candidate who receives a travel award must submit a written report on the form provided, outlining the perceived benefits of the award to the graduate Candidate's research and thesis.

13. The Report must be submitted through the research supervisor and head of School within one month of returning from the travel for which the award was granted.