

# University of Waikato Research Masters Scholarship – 2026



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WAIKATO**  
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

The University of Waikato Research Masters Scholarship (formerly the University of Waikato Masters Research Scholarship until 2017) was established in 1997 as part of the University's commitment to graduate research. The Scholarship supports students undertaking a master's thesis at the University of Waikato. The number of scholarships offered each year is based primarily on the total pool of funding available. There are two rounds each year closing on 31 October and 30 April and successful applicants must enrol in their thesis paper within 6 months of those closing dates. Applicants who are enrolled part-time or have already started their thesis may apply but will receive a reduced-value scholarship.

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Scholarship provides financial support for excellent students undertaking a master's thesis in any discipline at the University of Waikato.

## 2. Eligibility and Selection Criteria

### 2.1. To be eligible, applicants must:

- 2.1.1. be enrolled in or intending<sup>1</sup> to enrol full-time in their first master's degree including a 593 (90-point thesis) or 594 (120-point thesis)<sup>2</sup>;
- 2.1.2. have had contact with a potential University of Waikato master's thesis supervisor (the potential supervisor may be asked to confirm their involvement with the applicant's research).
- 2.2. The Scholarship is open to NZ Citizens, NZ Permanent residents, NZ Resident Class Visa holders or Australian Citizens/Permanent Residents domiciled in NZ, and international students. **International students must** have completed at least 120-points of study at a New Zealand university (by the closing date of the round in which they are applying). Applications from international students who are due to complete 120 points of study at the end of the relevant trimester at the time of application will be considered.
- 2.3. Applicants who have already begun their thesis may apply. However, if they are successful, the stipend value will be adjusted based on the number of months of thesis enrolment remaining after the date of the offer.
- 2.4. Applicants enrolled, or intending to enrol, part-time may apply, but will receive a lower value scholarship (see clause 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5).
- 2.5. **Applications will be deemed ineligible** where applicants:
  - 2.5.1. have been considered previously for the Scholarship (i.e., only one application will be considered).
  - 2.5.2. are employed by the University of Waikato. Fixed term or casual employment as a sessional assistant or other role (e.g. research assistant) is permitted but recipients must not be employed on a permanent basis **and/or** at more than 0.4 FTE.

<sup>1</sup> Acceptable proof of intent to enrol may include a course selection confirmation or official timetable indicating selected classes for the upcoming term, a degree planner, or a formal letter or email from the supervisor confirming acceptance and eligibility to enrol

<sup>2</sup> Zero-point enrolments do not qualify. Before applying for this Scholarship, please seek programme advice from your Division/Faculty/School.

- 2.5.3. have submitted an incomplete application.
- 2.6. **Selection is based on:**
  - 2.6.1. Academic merit, with an expected minimum grade average of 'A-' for their most recent 240-points of study. Where applicable, the Selection Panel may pay particular attention to results from 400- and/or 500-level papers.
  - 2.6.2. Other factors possibly taken into consideration are the experience of the applicant (e.g., references, prior research and work experience, publications), knowledge of Mātauranga Māori and/or Pacific knowledges, alignment with the research priorities of the Divisions/Faculties/Schools and/or Research Institutes, financial hardship, and the strategic objectives of the University.
- 2.7. Preference will be given to applicants who have not yet commenced their master's thesis enrolment and who do not have any other scholarship funding.
- 2.8. **To maintain eligibility recipients must:**
  - 2.8.1. enrol in a thesis paper of 90-points or more<sup>3</sup> within six months of the closing date of the round in which they applied. To be clear:
    - a. Those who apply in the 31 October round must commence their thesis paper enrolment by 30 April in the year following application.
    - b. Those who apply in the 30 April round must commence their thesis paper enrolment by 31 October in the year of application.
  - 2.8.2. have a confirmed University of Waikato supervisor in place for their master's thesis.
  - 2.8.3. not be employed by the University of Waikato (see clause 2.5.2).

### 3. Value and Tenure

- 3.1. The Scholarship has a value of **up to \$15,000** with the value dependent on enrolment status (full time or part time), thesis enrolment status and start date, and the number of points of the thesis
- 3.2. **Full-time thesis study.** Where a recipient is enrolled in 90 points of a 593 thesis paper or 120 points of a 594 thesis paper over a 12-month period for the duration of their Scholarship. Due to the structure of some Masters-level programmes of study, this enrolment will sometimes include taught papers. **\$15,000** is allocated to those studying full-time and completing a 120-point thesis. **\$12,000** is allocated to those studying full-time and completing a 90-point thesis. Payments are as follows:
  - 3.2.1. \$5,500 credited directly to the tuition fees (not including the Student Services Fee) of the master's programme as soon as practicable after enrolment in the thesis paper has been confirmed.
  - 3.2.2. The remaining funds (i.e., \$6,500 for 593 papers; \$9,500 for 594 papers) is paid directly into the recipient's bank account in monthly instalments over a 12-month period. with the final instalment withheld and paid after submission of the master's thesis, noting:
    - a. The final instalment will lapse if the thesis is not submitted by the due date of the thesis paper enrolment at the time the scholarship payments are applied.

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<sup>3</sup> Zero-point enrolments do not qualify. Before applying for this Scholarship, please seek programme advice from your Division/Faculty/School.

- b. The final payment date may be extended for up to three months after the original thesis due date; extensions of the final instalment date will be applied automatically and will only be applied when the thesis submission date is formally granted by the University through the relevant Division/Faculty/School.
- c. For clarity, the final instalment payment is made after submission of the thesis and will only be released up to 3 months after the original thesis due date - or the payment will lapse.

3.3. **Full-time study, part time thesis study.** Where a recipient is enrolled in at least 90 points over a 12-month period during the tenure of the scholarship. Due to the structure of some Masters-level programmes of study, this enrolment will include taught papers alongside their thesis paper. **\$15,000** is allocated to those studying full-time and completing a 120-point thesis and **\$12,000** is allocated to those studying full-time and completing a 90-point thesis. Payments are as follows:

- 3.3.1. \$5,500 credited directly to the tuition fees (not including the Student Services Fee) of the master's programme as soon as practicable after enrolment in the thesis paper has been confirmed. This payment will be split over two calendar years. i.e., \$2,750 each year.
- 3.3.2. The remaining funds (e.g. \$6,500 for 593 papers; \$9,500 for 594 papers) are paid directly into the recipient's bank account in equal monthly instalments over a 24-month period. The final instalment is withheld and paid after submission of the master's thesis, noting:
  - a. The final instalment will lapse if the thesis is not submitted by the due date of the thesis paper enrolment at the time the scholarship payments are applied.
  - b. The final payment date may be extended for up to three months after the original thesis due date; extensions of the final instalment date will be applied automatically and will only be applied when the thesis submission date is formally granted by the University through the relevant Division/Faculty/School.
  - c. For clarity, the final instalment payment is made after submission of the thesis and will only be released up to 3 months after the original thesis due date - or the payment will lapse.
  - d. If recipients complete their study prior to 24 months, they will receive a larger final payment.

3.4. **Part-time thesis study.** Where a recipient is enrolled in fewer than 90 points total over each 12-month period (including any taught papers being studied concurrently with their thesis) they are considered part-time and will receive a **maximum \$5,500**. Payments are as follows:

- 3.4.1. \$5,500 credited directly to the tuition fees (not including the Student Services Fees) of the master's programme as soon as practicable after enrolment in the thesis paper has been confirmed. Any unused balance can be carried over to the next year if the student's Masters enrolment spans multiple years.

3.5. The tenure will be maximum 24 months.

#### 4. Awarding and Further Conditions

4.1. The Scholarship offer must be accepted by the date indicated in the offer, or the offer will lapse.

- 4.2. Recipients seeking to change their enrolment (e.g., suspension, part-time, reduction in thesis points) must seek approval via the [Variation Request form](#).
  - 4.2.1. Changes in enrolment may affect Scholarship eligibility, which could necessitate the University to recoup awarded funds or reduce the value of the scholarship.
  - 4.2.2. Recipients who increase their thesis points after the Scholarship has been offered are not eligible for an increase in scholarship value.
- 4.3. Recipients are not eligible to receive Scholarship funds during periods of suspension of enrolment for any reason including suspension related to parental, medical, or compassionate leave.
- 4.4. In accepting the Scholarship, the recipient will be deemed to have:
  - 4.4.1. read, understood, and accepted the conditions of the Scholarship and the [Scholarships Policy](#).
  - 4.4.2. agreed to participate in any publicity concerning the Scholarship arranged by the University of Waikato.

## 5. Application

- 5.1. The closing dates for applications are **31 October (for Round 1)** and **30 April (for Round 2)** annually.
- 5.2. As part of the online application process, each applicant must provide the name of their proposed University of Waikato Supervisor, and submit the following:
  - 5.2.1. As part of the online application process, each candidate must provide information on:
    - the applicant's motivation for enrolling in a research master's degree;
    - how many 500 level papers the applicant has completed towards their Masters degree at the time of application;
    - the proposed research topic;
    - future study and/or career plans;
    - any significant achievements; and
    - any other relevant details, such as financial hardship,
  - 5.2.2. There will be an optional field for applicants to inform the panel of any way that their research and/or study advances the University's commitment to supporting Mātauranga Māori and/or Pacific knowledges.
  - 5.2.3. A CV (maximum two A4 pages in length) detailing any prior research experience, employment history, and any publications (if applicable).
- 5.3. As part of the application process, the applicant must request one academic reference from either their (proposed) master's thesis supervisor **or** a member of the academic staff at the institution at which they obtained the qualification that defines their eligibility to enter the master's programme.

## 6. Selection Panel and Process

- 6.1. The Selection Panel is the University of Waikato Scholarships Committee.
  - 6.1.1. Applications are ranked by a pre-selection committee appointed by the relevant academic area and overseen by the Scholarships Committee representative for that academic area. All rankings are approved by the relevant PVC/Dean.

- 6.1.2. The Selection Panel considers the rankings and propose recipients at meetings held in **November/December (for Round 1) and June/July (for Round 2) each year.**
  - 6.1.3. The proposed recipients will then be ratified by the Scholarships Executive.
- 6.2. The Selection Panel may refrain from making any offers if it finds no applicant(s) of sufficient merit.
- 6.3. The Selection Panel's decisions are final, and no correspondence will be entered into following the selection meeting.

## 7. Other Conditions

- 7.1. The Scholarship may (rarely) be held in conjunction with the University of Waikato Taught Postgraduate Scholarship. It may also be held with any other scholarship or award, provided that the regulations of the other funding do not preclude this.
- 7.2. Should the recipient hold another fees scholarship for their master's thesis, the *University of Waikato Research Masters Scholarship* will pay the balance of any tuition fees (up to \$5,500); the recipient will forgo any unused balance of the tuition fees portion.
- 7.3. Recipients should seek independent financial advice about any tax implications of their Scholarship.
- 7.4. If, during the tenure of the Scholarship, a recipient's circumstances change in such a manner that their continued eligibility for the Scholarship may be affected, including accepting employment with the University (see clause 2.5.2), they must inform [scholarships@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:scholarships@waikato.ac.nz) immediately.
- 7.5. The Scholarships Committee may terminate a Scholarship at any time, and recoup any funds disbursed, if the holder withdraws from the University of Waikato during the tenure of the Scholarship, brings the Scholarship or the University into disrepute<sup>4</sup>, or is otherwise not complying with the regulations governing the Scholarship. The holder of a Scholarship will have the right to appeal to the Scholarships Executive against any decision to terminate the award.
- 7.6. The Scholarships Committee may vary these regulations from time to time, provided that there is no departure from the main purpose of the Scholarship.

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<sup>4</sup> See [Code of Student Conduct](#).