Guidelines for Extensions to the University of Auckland Doctoral Scholarships (Domestic and International)

The University of Auckland Doctoral Scholarships provide support for up to 36 months of study. In December 2005 it was announced that a further six months of scholarship funding, subject to Scholarship Sub-Committee (SSC) approval, might be available to scholarship recipients (refer to Regulation 8 and Note viii of The University of Auckland Doctoral Scholarships’ regulations).

In addition, the University of Auckland may award extensions of up to six months funding under Category B, below, to domestic and international students who have held at least 24 months and no more than 36 months of funding from another source (excluding foreign government funding), provided the student held a first class academic record (i.e. a GPA or GPE of 7.0 or above (in their most recent qualifying programme) at the time of admission to the doctoral programme). To be eligible for an extension of funding, the annual value (including stipend, fees and any other payments) of the former source of funding held by the student must be at least 80% of the annual value of a University of Auckland Doctoral Scholarship.

Note: Doctoral students enrolled in 360 point doctoral programmes are not eligible to apply under Category B but may apply under Category A if they consider their situation would meet the criteria.

This document outlines the ways SSC handles requests for extensions.

1. Extension Request Category A: ‘Extenuating and Unforeseeable Circumstances’

If a student believes that their progress has been delayed by ‘extenuating and unforeseeable circumstances’ they can apply to SSC for an extension of up to 12 months (i.e. 36 months of standard tenure + up to 12 months additional tenure). A 12 month extension will only be granted in the most exceptional case. If a student is funded for 48 months they will not be eligible for a further six months extension (Extension Request B). Students will need to demonstrate they expect to submit their doctorate within 48 months of active registration.

Note: Students must contact the University of Auckland and apply to suspend both their doctoral enrolment and their scholarship if the circumstances they face mean that they cannot apply themselves to any study for the foreseeable future. If the circumstances are such that students can continue to study during the affected period they must inform the Scholarships Office in advance as to why the circumstances would lead to a Category A scholarship extension application (i.e. within 3 months of scholarship end date).

Examples of ‘extenuating and unforeseeable circumstances’:

- unforeseeable family or medical crises, such as a serious accident
- research circumstances that prevent any activity being carried out on the doctorate

The following are foreseeable circumstances and thus are not grounds for a request:

- supervisor away on field work or sabbatical
- work overload due to other (paid) employment
- work on conference presentations and publications
- pre-existing medical conditions
- family commitments
- financial commitments

If a student believes they meet the criteria for an extension they must contact the Scholarships Office and provide SSC with the following:

- a personal statement outlining the basis of their request (max. 500 words), signed off by their main supervisor
- supporting documentation, such as a letter from an appropriate medical practitioner
- a timeline indicating plans and dates for completion of all outstanding doctoral work, from date of request until submission
• the planned submission date
• the supervisor’s signature and date on the timeline and their specific confirmation that the
  planned thesis submission date is feasible.
• a signed and dated statement of support from their main supervisor
• endorsement of supervisor’s statement by relevant Head of Department

Notes:
(i) All applicants must complete a new payment form (which will be provided by the
Scholarships Office)

(ii) Application for an extension must be within three months of scholarship end date and
will be considered in conjunction with any previously submitted documentation around the
nature of the exceptional circumstance

SSC will not consider applications that cover extenuating and unforeseeable circumstances
that occurred more than six months before the time of the request (unless SSC is notified
of the circumstances previously).

2. Extension Request Category B: Additional Six Months Funding

Scholarship recipients who have received 36 months of scholarship or who have received
36 months of scholarship and no more than an additional six months of funding due to
extenuating and unforeseeable circumstances may apply for up to six months additional funding.
SSC will award extensions to students who they believe will submit their doctorate
within 48 months of active registration (i.e. SSC will take into account suspensions from the
doctoral programme) based on the student providing the following:

• a personal statement outlining the basis of their request (max. 500 words), signed off by
  their main supervisor
• a timeline indicating plans and dates for completion of all outstanding doctoral work, from
date of request until submission.
• a signed and dated statement of support from their main supervisor
• endorsement of supervisor’s statement by relevant Head of Department
• the planned submission date
• the supervisor’s signature and date on the timeline and their specific confirmation that the
  planned thesis submission date is feasible.

Notes:
(i) All applicants must complete a new payment form (which will be provided by the
Scholarships Office).
(ii) Application for an extension must be within three months of scholarship end date. SSC
will also consider the student’s most recent Doctoral Annual Report in making its decision.