

Guidelines – SABEL Doctoral Completion Grant

Purpose

SABEL Doctoral Completion Grants (DCG) are designed to support doctoral candidates in the final stage of candidature to achieve timely thesis submission. The scheme provides short-term financial assistance to strengthen structured supervisory engagement and support sustained progress toward submission.

The scheme is aligned with the Faculty of SABEL's commitment to supporting doctoral completion within a four-year equivalent full-time period (4.0 EFTSL) and is targeted at candidates approaching the end of standard candidature who are in a position to complete within a defined six-month timeframe. Supported through Research Training Program (RTP) funding, the scheme provides targeted, time-limited completion support designed to enhance HDR completion outcomes in line with Commonwealth and University objectives.

The scheme is intended to operate on an annual basis, subject to the availability of funding and Faculty priorities.

Grant Value and Duration

The DCG provides a total stipend of \$8,797 over a maximum period of six months. Funding is disbursed in three staged instalments as follows:

- Stage 1: \$2,200
- Stage 2: \$2,900
- Stage 3: \$3,697

Payments are not made automatically at the commencement of each stage. The first instalment will be released upon approval of the candidate's refined Completion Plan and confirmation of satisfactory initial progress. Subsequent instalments are released following assessment of milestone achievement at the end of each stage. All payments are contingent on demonstrated progress and supervisory endorsement.

Eligibility

To be eligible, candidates must:

- Be a domestic student currently enrolled full-time in a doctoral program within the SABEL Faculty (PhD, DCA, or EdD)—candidates studying part-time will need to transfer to full-time to be eligible;
- Not be in receipt of an RTP (or equivalent) scholarship during the six-month Doctoral Completion Grant award period;
- Be in the final stage of candidature, with a clear pathway to submission within 6 months, and must not have submitted their thesis prior to the commencement;
- Have an enrolment load between 2.5 and 3.5 EFTSL at the time of commencement of the scheme;
- Have the support of their Principal Supervisor; and
- Demonstrate that a substantial portion (min 60%) of the thesis is already completed.

Conditions of the Grant

Recipients of the SABEL Doctoral Completion Grant must submit their thesis within six months of the commencement of the grant and meet all milestone requirements associated with each stage.

Candidates are required to provide evidence of progress as specified in these guidelines and maintain active engagement with their supervisory panel.

Failure to meet these conditions may result in:

- Deferral, reduction, or withholding of one or more instalments;
- Withdrawal from the scheme where progress is insufficient or submission within the agreed timeframe is no longer considered feasible;
- Ineligibility for the final instalment where the thesis is not submitted within the required timeframe.

Milestones and Payment Requirements

Progression through the grant is contingent on the achievement of the following milestones:

Milestone Stage	Period	Milestone Requirements	Evidence Required
Stage 1	Months 1–2	Submission of a refined Completion Plan, developed in consultation with the Principal Supervisor and aligned with grant milestones	☐ Refined Completion Plan (1–2 pages) ☐ Draft material ☐ Supervisor endorsement
		At least 60% of thesis draft completed (or equivalent for practice-led work)	
		Clear identification of remaining tasks/chapters	
		Confirmation of supervisory endorsement of feasibility	
Stage 2	Months 3–4	Full thesis draft completed (or equivalent body of work)	☐ Full draft (or equivalent) ☐ Summary of revisions undertaken ☐ Supervisor confirmation
		Substantive revision phase underway	
		Evidence of integration and coherence across the thesis	
		Draft submitted for final supervisory review	
Stage 3	Months 5–6	Final thesis ready for submission	☐ Final thesis (or submission-ready version) ☐ Supervisor sign-off ☐ Evidence of submission
		All revisions completed and approved by supervisor	
		Formatting and compliance requirements completed (incl. required statements)	
		Thesis submitted within agreed timeframe	

The refined Completion Plan will form the basis for monitoring progress and assessing milestone achievement throughout the grant period.

Payment Conditions

All payments under the Doctoral Completion Grant are conditional on the satisfactory completion of milestone requirements and are made based on assessment of whether milestone requirements have been met.

- Stage 1 (\$2,200): released upon approval of the refined Completion Plan and initial progress
- Stage 2 (\$2,900): released following confirmation of milestone achievement

- Stage 3 (\$3,697): released upon confirmation of submission

Payments will be released upon confirmation that milestone requirements have been satisfactorily met. Where milestone requirements are not met, payments will be withheld.

Milestone Review and Payment Approval Process

At each milestone stage, candidates are required to submit evidence of progress, including relevant draft material and confirmation from the Principal Supervisor. Milestone submissions will be assessed at the Faculty level to determine whether the requirements of the relevant milestone have been satisfactorily met. The Associate Dean, Higher Degree Research and Honours, SABEL (or delegate), retains final authority for all determinations relating to milestone approval and the release or withholding of payments. Payments will only be released where milestone requirements have been satisfactorily met. The Faculty reserves the right to audit milestone submissions to ensure compliance with the requirements of the scheme.

Application Process

Applications for the Doctoral Completion Grant are made on a competitive basis and must be supported by the candidate's Principal Supervisor.

Applicants are required to submit:

- DCG Application Form
- DCG Supervisor Endorsement Form
- Supporting material evidencing progress (e.g. draft chapters or equivalent work).

The Application Form requires candidates to provide:

- A concise account of the current status of the thesis, including work completed and remaining components;
- A detailed Completion Plan outlining a structured pathway to submission within six months.

Supervisor endorsement must be provided using the prescribed Supervisor Endorsement Form and must include confirmation of the candidate's readiness for submission within six months, identification of any risks, and an indication of the supervisor's level of confidence in timely completion.

Full applications (including the completed Application Form and Supervisor Endorsement Form) must be submitted via email to the designated Faculty contact by the advertised closing date.

Applications will be assessed by the Faculty of SABEL HDR Board, which will determine outcomes based on eligibility, demonstrated progress, and the likelihood of submission within the grant period. Incomplete applications or applications not submitted using the prescribed forms will not be considered.