



## MIC Thurles Scholarship Scheme Information Sheet AY2024/25

### INTRODUCTION

The terms and conditions of the Mary Immaculate College Thurles Scholarship Scheme are approved by the College's Executive Team (ET). Through the Thurles Scholarship (TS) Scheme, the College makes provision for the appointment of a number of registered postgraduate research students (PGRS; MA by research & thesis and PhD only) as Thurles Scholarship Awardees (TSAs). TSAs benefit from the financial support afforded to them and gain valuable experience through teaching and working with academic colleagues. TSAs in turn make a valuable contribution to the academic activities of Departments, Research Institutes, Faculties, and the College in general.

The Scheme is managed by the Research and Graduate School (RGS) on behalf of the College's ET, including management of appointment contracts, annual renewal and discontinuation of Thurles Scholarship Awards.

Selection of TSAs, induction, definition and apportionment of duties, monitoring and evaluation are the responsibility of the School of Education (Post-Primary) at MIC Thurles.

### 1 Overview of the MIC Thurles Scholarship Scheme

One new TS Award per annum is available to the School of Education (Post-Primary) at MIC Thurles. TS Award contracts are annually renewable for up to 4 years (2 years for MA by research & thesis students) subject to satisfactory performance as determined by the Head of School. Each TS Award is offered by open and publicly advertised competition. All eligible current and prospective PhD and MA (research & thesis) students may apply for a TS Award, but the Award can only be taken up by PGRS once they are registered in MIC.

A TS Award currently provides for a stipend of €6,900.00 per annum (AY2023/24) along with a fee waiver for a maximum of four years within the normal duration of programme for PhD students. MA (research & thesis) students who receive a TS Award are entitled to a stipend of €6,900.00 (AY2023/24) with a fee waiver for a two-year period. A fee waiver consists of a contribution to defray tuition fees for a student for the normal duration of their programme (4 years for a PhD student; 2 years for a Research Masters student). Students outside of the normal duration of their programme may not avail of a TSA.

The amount of a fee waiver is at the discretion of MIC and it is not guaranteed that a fee waiver will defray the full fees in the case of all programmes. Stipend instalments are normally paid monthly beginning in September and ending in May (9 instalments per academic year).

TSA's are required to provide up to a maximum of 120 hours of assistance to their home department across the academic year or an average of 5 hours per week per semester. TSA's may not exceed 10 hours duties in any given week during the semester.

In compliance with the Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2018, the allocation of these duties must be recorded by the Head of School on a Contract Request Form AY2023/24. This form must be deposited with the RGS before TS contracts can be processed.

## **2 Thurles Scholarship Awardee Roles and Responsibilities**

TSA's may be required to provide:

- Tutoring on timetabled tutorial sessions
- Preparation for tutoring/seminars/workshops
- Assistance with tutorial/lecture/seminar/workshop activities
- Recording of lecture/seminar/workshop attendance
- Supplementary lecture, seminar, and workshop activities
- Field work supervision and assistance with activities
- Research assistance
- Attendance at training sessions organised by the Research and Graduate School (RGS) and the Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Centre (LEAD).

Examples of work that TSA's may not be required to provide include:

- Curriculum design and review
- Selection of teaching styles and modes of delivery
- Any involvement in examinations
- Creation of unapproved teaching materials
- Covering / substituting for academic and professional staff
- Covering / substituting for academic office hours
- Supervision and/or management of TSA's

TSA's are required to work under the close and monitored supervision of the Head of School, and are not expected to have full responsibility for management, administration and / or control of any assigned task. The Head of School must maintain a record all duties conducted by TSA's on a week to week basis and make these available to the College on request.

## **3 Selection and Recommendations for Thurles Scholarship Awardees**

Through its Postgraduate Awards Committee (PAC), the School of Education (Post-Primary) at MIC Thurles will select TSA's annually. Minimally, each PAC will be composed of the Head of School and two

other members of the College community. All offers must be approved by ET via the RGS.

The receipt of recommendations is normally required by the RGS by the deadline for the last ET meeting of the Academic Year.

### **Assessment Criteria**

The following assessment criteria are used to determine awards:

- **Applicant (45%), including:**

- o Track record and research potential of the applicant
- o Personal statement
- o Match between applicant's profile and the proposed research project

- **Project (45%), including:**

- o Clarity and coherence of the research
- o Quality and feasibility of the research design and methodologies
- o Consideration as to how the research will make a contribution to existing knowledge
- o Plans for dissemination of the research
- o Consideration of the relevant ethical issues

- **Career Training and Development Aspects of the Proposal (10%), including:**

- o Clarity and quality of training and career development plan
- o Capacity to acquire new knowledge and skills
- o Potential for the development of skills relevant to employment outside the traditional academic sector
- o Evidence of thought as to how the scholarship would impact on the applicant's career path

## **4 Call for Applications**

The Head of School seeks the widest field of applicants through promotion and advertising in the print and electronic media inside and / or outside MIC, in consultation with Strategic Communications & Marketing (SCM).

## 5 Application

Applicants make an application in writing directly to Dr Hannagh McGinley.

## 6 Offer of a Thurles Scholarship Award

Following ET approval, the Head of School may notify the successful and unsuccessful applicants.

Before November 30, the RGS will notify Student Academic Affairs, Information and Communication Technology, LEAD, and the Finance Office of the list of approved TSAs for the next academic year.

The duration of each TSA Award is for one academic year with the possibility that it may be renewed subject to satisfactory academic progress and satisfactory performance, as determined through the MIC Annual Research Student Progression and TSA Annual Review processes.

## 7 MIC Thurles Scholarship Award Contract

The TS Award contract includes information on all of the Terms and Conditions. Each Awardee must provide bank account and relevant tax certificate details before a payment cycle can be activated by the Finance Office.

Only MIC PGRS who have been accepted onto the MIC Postgraduate register and completed the registration process may benefit from these awards.

## 8 Discontinuation of a Thurles Scholarship Award Contract

In addition to unsatisfactory academic progress, a TS Award contract may be discontinued where any one of the following circumstances arise:

1. The TSA is awarded an Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship or similar.
2. The TSA decides to withdraw from their programme in consultation with their Research Supervisor.
  - On submission of the PGR Exit Form via the RGS, the Postgraduate Research Subcommittee (PRSC) notifies the Dean of Faculty, Head of School, SAA and the Finance Office, and payment is ceased. The TSA remains responsible for repayment of any outstanding fees.
3. The TSA completes and graduates from their programme.
4. The Head of School / Dean of Faculty / Graduate School Director, in consultation with Vice President Research, requests the discontinuation of the TS Award.
  - Discontinuation of a TS Award Contract must be dealt with in accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for dealing with disciplinary issues.

## **9 Annual Leave**

Requests for annual leave must be dealt with in accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for Annual Leave. Annual leave requests must be approved by Head of School.

## **10 Leave of Absence**

Requests for Leave of Absence must be dealt with in accordance with prevailing MIC Policies and Procedures for Leave of Absence. Leave of Absence requests must be supported by the Supervisor and Head of School and require approval from the Postgraduate Research Sub-Committee and Student Status committee.

## **11 Publishing and Dissemination of Research**

It is required all publications or disseminations of research on the thesis topic must acknowledge the financial support of MIC.

## **12 Support Services for Thurles Scholarship Awardees**

In accordance with the RGS's commitment to the professional development of TSAs, the following support mechanisms are made available:

- The RGS is committed to supporting postgraduate researchers to develop the skills they need to progress with their research and to plan for the next stage in their careers, whether in academia or elsewhere. Transferable Research Skills Seminars cover topics such as research skills development; career management; research ethics and integrity; communication skills; personal effectiveness; project management and applying for funding. In addition, regular seminars on Thesis Examination and 'Surviving the Viva' encourage students to plan and prepare for degree completion.
- The Head of School provides induction on how to perform and develop as TSAs.
- The Head of School provides written details of the tasks to be undertaken before work commences and ensures that TSAs fully and comprehensively understand their role and responsibilities. This must include a reasonable written estimate of the number of hours expected of the TSAs on each task, and the distribution of hours across each semester and the academic year.
- The Head of School keeps a record of the TSA's performance in relation to the duties performed.
- Both the Head of School and the TSAs are required to monitor and record total hours worked, along with any annual leave availed of, and ensure that agreed time commitments relating to the TSA's duties are not exceeded.

## **13 Thurles Scholarship Awardees Annual Review**

- The Head of School records the outcome of the Annual Review as satisfactory or not satisfactory.

- The outcome of the Annual Review should be sent in simple email message to the GSD, normally by the deadline for the last ET meeting of the Academic Year.
- Only TSAs with a satisfactory review outcome will be offered a contract in the forthcoming academic year.