

## PReSS Account FAQs for doctoral students

### **Question** What are *PReSS* accounts?

**A:** The purpose of the *PReSS* (Postgraduate Research Student Support) scheme is to assist postgraduate research students to undertake their research and complete in a timely manner. Doctoral candidates are provided an annual research fund and *account* to assist with their study. The stipend is intended to help cover direct research costs and the amount is dependent on the doctoral subject area.

### **Question** How do I find out my PReSS account balance?

**A:** You can access a report showing your PReSS account balance by logging onto [Student Services Online](#) (SSO). You will see a link under “My Finances” (bottom left hand corner). The report is updated monthly.

### **Question** Why don't I have a PReSS account or why haven't I received my latest allocation or when will I get my next allocation?

**A:** Some possible reasons you do not have a PReSS account, or have not yet received your next allocation are that you:

- Are not yet enrolled; or
- Have unpaid fees; or
- Have not submitted an annual report; or
- You are beyond your last year of allocations; or
- Your account is yet to be created – accounts are created within one month of first enrolment; or
- You are not yet at your enrolment anniversary date – new allocations are made around the anniversary date.

### **Question** I think my PReSS statement is incorrect

**A:** Some possible reasons your statement may appear incorrect are:

- Statements are refreshed on the 8<sup>th</sup> working day of each month. Allocations and expenditure after this date will show on the next month's statement.
- Allocations and adjustments to allocations that are made in the current financial year will appear on the statement in current year column, even if they apply to previous year's enrolments. For example:
  - If you have upgraded your Masters thesis to a PhD and have received an allocation for both the previous and current years, they will appear as one allocation under the current year; or
  - If you have a suspension back-dated to the previous enrolment year, the adjustment will appear on your statement under the current financial year.

### **Question** What can I use my PReSS account for?

**A:** For information on what you can use PReSS accounts for, please view the [PReSS Account Policy, Procedures and Guidelines](#).

Please note that the following are commonly requested, but are definite exclusions:

- Publishing costs;
- Oral examination costs;
- PhD tuition fees;
- Travel for supervisory meetings;
- Stationery/Office supplies.

Approval *must* be obtained from the Dean of Graduate Studies for the following items:

- the cost of third party editing
- childcare fees
- purchase of minor pieces of equipment essential and specific to the research.

### **Question** How can I start spending the money?

**A:** When the candidate and main supervisor have agreed on the use of the funding, the candidate should approach the Academic Unit's Group Service Coordinator who will either advise or arrange for the purchase using appropriate means and in compliance with standard University procedures

- Travel should normally be arranged through the University's preferred travel agent
- In all cases, expenditure through PReSS accounts must be approved by the main supervisor.
- In the following cases Dean of Graduate Studies approval must first be obtained:
  - the cost of third party editing
  - childcare fees
  - purchase of minor pieces of equipment essential and specific to the research.
- Ensure you are familiar with the [PReSS Account Policy, Procedures and Guidelines](#).

**Question** What happens if I spend more than is available in my PReSS account this year?

**A:** Your account **cannot go** into deficit. When your account is in credit, you may be reimbursed for approved expenditure incurred in the previous year.

**Question** How long does my PReSS account funding last?

**A:** PReSS account funding is available for a maximum of four years for full-time doctoral candidates, and is pro-rated for part-time candidates

If the doctoral programme has a three year duration, only three years of funding will be available  
Candidates will not receive funding for any period of time during which they are suspended

**Question** How can I be reimbursed for expenses that I have incurred and paid for?

**A:** Expenses already incurred may, with the agreement of the main supervisor and if they meet PReSS regulation, be reimbursed. All claims for reimbursement must be accompanied by the official GST receipts and a claim form. Your Group Service Co-ordinator can assist you in locating this form. Your supervisor will need to approve this.

**Question** Does the unspent allocation that I have in my PReSS account 'expire' at the end of the year?

No. The unspent allocation will be carried over to the following year.

**Question** Can I access funds in my account after submission of the thesis?

**A:** After submitting the thesis for examination, approved expenditure from the PReSS account is restricted to:

- the cost of third party editing
- the cost of printing and binding the final hard-bound copies of the thesis
- the cost of childcare where warranted by conference attendance or the scale of revisions required by the Board of Graduate Studies
- the costs associated with conference presentations that take place between first submission and oral examination

Note: conference presentations need to be planned prior to first submission, and primary expenditure (e.g. air travel costs) should have occurred prior to first submission

After submission of the hard-bound thesis:

- You may access remaining funds after submission of the hard-bound thesis in order to be reimbursed for payment of approved expenses that can be shown to have been incurred before the submission date
- All such claims must be made within one month of the submission of the hard-bound thesis.

**If you have any other questions about your PReSS Accounts please visit [Ask Auckland on the University's website](#).**