

Graduate Researcher Academic Associate FAQs

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General Matters

How many GRAAs will we recruit in this round?

- At this time we estimate that 45 roles will be available across the Faculty in 2026.

Are all Arts GRAA roles Education Focussed?

- In 2026 The Faculty of Arts will trial a small number of Research only GRAA roles. These roles will be advertised separately to the Education Focussed roles, likely in early January 2026.

The recruitment dates and PD will be uploaded to the [Work with Us](#) page in mid November.

What if I need to go to a conference during the year?

- You should mention any time that you expect to be absent when you are interviewed for the GRAA role. If you are appointed you must discuss absences with your employment supervisor in order to plan workload around this period and take annual leave or leave without salary for the period that you are away.

Where can I find more information about the Professional Development available?

- There are a number of University options listed on the GRAA SharePoint <https://unimelbcloud.sharepoint.com/sites/GRAARoles/SitePages/Professional-Development.aspx>

You can also speak to your employment supervisor if you would like something different.

Can I do professional development related to my PhD rather than teaching?

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- No. The professional development provided as part of this employment contract must be related to the employment contract.

Is there a possibility that this role could become an ongoing role?

- This role has been designed in accordance with clauses 1.15.123 and 2.17.2 in [the 2024 Enterprise Agreement](#). It is only available to current Graduate Researchers. The role is exempt from fixed term conversion rules and will not become ongoing.

Why is this role 1 year only?

- The Faculty of Arts is offering 1-year roles at this time. We will review the program and decide whether to offer roles of a longer duration in 2027. In some cases GRAAs appointed in 2025 may be extended throughout 2026.

Why would a Graduate Researcher want a GRAA role?

- GRAA roles are designed to provide academic and career development, increased employment security and stability through longer fixed-term roles, and paid professional development opportunities related to their academic role.

Can I apply for casual work instead of a GRAA?

- We anticipate that there will be casual work available in some areas in 2026 but cannot guarantee that there will be work in all areas. Casual tutoring work is dependent on student enrolment numbers and these may vary year to year.

If I have a GRAA contract, what happens if I need to finish it early?

- GRAAs can resign from their contract at any time just like any other staff members.

Does a GRAA role have any impact on my Scholarship?

- No

Who is Eligible

Can I apply if I am on a student visa?

- Yes

Can I apply if I'm doing a joint PhD?

- Yes, if you will be based at Parkville for the duration of the contract.

I am part-time and would like to apply, should I move to full-time now to apply?

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- Part time Graduate Researcher can apply without moving to full-time, when applying you will need to agree that you will be full-time when the role commences (2/2/2026).

Can I apply if I am not yet confirmed?

- If you are on track for confirmation by March 2nd 2026 you can apply. Successful applicants who are not yet confirmed will be given an offer conditional on confirmation and will not be confirmed in the GRAA role if they have not been confirmed in their candidature.

Can I apply if I am commencing the fourth year of my candidature?

- You can apply and we will review your application.

Am I able to apply for a GRAA role in a School other than the school in which I am completing my Thesis, is this possible?

- Yes, you can apply for any GRAA role advertised in the Faculty of Arts. Note however that to be appointed you would need to have the appropriate knowledge / qualification to teach in the area that you have applied for. If you are interested in applying for a role in a school that you are not based in, we recommend speaking to the Discipline / Program head in that area.

Can I apply for a role if I am going to be on fieldwork for part of the year?

- You can apply but you will need to make this clear in your application. If the area that you are interested in has roles in one semester only they will consider your application. In this situation, the GRAA will only be paid for their employment as a GRAA when they are on site and able to work, where they are on fieldwork they would be placed on Leave Without Salary or take annual leave.

I am enrolled in a Master of Arts by Research, can I apply?

- The Faculty is inviting applications from full time Graduate Researchers who are going to be eligible and available to undertake the role for 12 months from February 1 2025. Our assessment was that full time Masters students may not have sufficient time between confirmation and completion to take on this role. However, we accept that there may be some circumstance where a Masters student may be eligible for the full period of the role, so we have now asked that Masters student's applications be accepted. You are able to apply and we will review your application.

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Is there a candidature Expected Completion Date (ECD) cut off date which guarantees eligibility and vice versa? For example if I intend to submit in May 2025 am I ineligible? If I intend to submit in November, am I eligible?

- If you are in your final year and uncertain about your completion date you can apply for the role. If you are successful please discuss your plans for submission with your employment supervisor so that the program/discipline area can make appropriate plans. Considerations when assessing your application will include:
 - The Faculty is inviting applications from full time Graduate Researchers who are going to be eligible and available to undertake the role for 12 months from February 1 2025.
 - If you do complete your Degree during your GRAA role, you can continue with the contract to the end of the calendar year when you finished your PhD. You will not be able to continue the role into the following year.
 - Submitting your thesis is not completion, if you submit your thesis in November, you are still treated as an enrolled graduate researcher for the purposes of a GRAA role whilst you are under examination.

Recruitment

I don't have a link to apply for a GRAA role

- The link has been sent to the Graduate Researcher Canvas Community page, please make sure that you have switched on your notifications. When you go into your LMS module, search for GRAA.

Will applicants with teaching experience have preference in the recruitment of these roles.

- No preference will not be given to applicants with experience.

What is the interview process?

- Schools will review and short list applications and conduct light touch interviews during the fortnight commencing 17/11/2024. There is not a single process that will be followed by all schools, interviews may be in person, on zoom or via a phone call.

Candidature

What if I pass my PhD before the end of the contract?

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- If you wish, you can continue with the contract to the end of the calendar year when you finished your PhD. You will not be able to continue the role into the following year.

Will I get an extension to my candidature because of this fixed-term contract?

- No. This scheme has been designed specifically to enable you to work while progressing your candidature. If for any reason you may need an extension, discuss this with your PhD supervisor.

If I am studying full time when I apply, would I be permitted to drop back to part time during my GRAA appointment if I needed to?

- This scheme has been designed specifically to enable you to work while progressing your candidature. *Taking on a GRAA role is not a reason to move from full-time to part-time candidature or to extend candidature, or to take a leave of absence.*
- We recognise that there may be reason, unrelated to employment, that might mean that a GRAA may need to change to part time candidature, take leave from study or extend candidature, and in some cases these reasons may not effect employment. In these cases you will be able to continue the GRAA in the period that you take leave or reduce your candidature to part-time.

FTE

If I start at 0.2 FTE, can I later increase to 0.3 FTE?

- This is possible but must be discussed and agreed by the School. With the agreement of both GRAAs and employment supervisors, we expect that FTE will vary during this role. Schools may set general expectations from a minimum of .2 up to a possible .8 during busy periods (e.g., assessment). Overall the role will average at .3 or lower. Note that at no time can a GRAA be moved to 1 FTE, these roles must remain part time in accordance with the University's Enterprise Agreement.

If the hours fluctuate during the semester how are they recorded?

- All GRAAs will have a set number of hours across the fortnight in which to complete their work and they will be automatically paid for those hours. A GRAA should not work for more hours than they are scheduled to work in a fortnight. If a GRAA finds that they need more time to complete allocated work they should discuss with their employment supervisor without delay. This is not a casual role and FTE should not be changing every week.

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What is my work hours are too high?

- The GRAA cannot work over .3 FTE averaged across the year, if it seems likely that a GRAA's work may exceed .3, the School will look at alternative measures for managing that work, such as other staff or additional casual support.

Supervision

I know that my primary thesis supervisor cannot be my employment supervisor, I am in a small program can other members of my supervisory team be my employment supervisor?

- The University has set rules to ensure that primary supervisors are not employment supervisors, this is to manage potential conflicts of interest. It may be the case, especially in smaller programs, that someone related to your candidature must be an employment supervisor. It is also recognised that although your primary supervisor cannot be your employment supervisor, you may need to teach into a subject coordinated by them. Your employment supervisor does not change throughout the year, but you will also have a separate supervisory relationship with the subject coordinators whose subjects you teach into.

If a GRAA role is 0.2 FTE and the time fraction needs to increase temporarily for a planned peak in workload, how can I ensure the role doesn't go over the cap of 0.3 FTE total for the year?

- The difference between a 0.2 and 0.3 FTE role is 26 days. As long as any temporarily time fraction increases result in less than a total of 26 additional work days through the year, the cap will not be exceeded.

Work Questions

Are GRAAs expected to work across the week (e.g., answering student emails)

- No GRAAs must only work on their 'working day/s'. We recommend that an 'out of office' be used directing urgent student queries to the LMS or another member of the teaching team on non-working days.

Can I take on another casual contract during my GRAA contract?

- No, you can only have one employment relationship with the University at a time.

Can I apply if I already have a casual job at the University?

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- You can apply but you will not be offered a GRAA role if you will not be able to continue with both your casual work and the GRAA role. You will not be able to be onboarded as a fixed term employee when you have an active casual role.

Can I take on additional fixed term tutoring alongside a GRAA role?

- No, these roles are designed at a maximum of .3 to enable you to work while progressing your candidature. Applicants must be aware that they cannot take on additional roles at the University whilst holding a GRAA position.

Can I take on work outside the University?

- The University has no control over whether or not a GR takes on work outside of the University and we recognise that this may be necessary for some students. We do encourage all GRs to consider their studies when making employment choices.

What does Education Focussed mean?

- Education-focused means that the activities planned for the role are focused around delivery of education programs to students, and could include tutorials, marking, student consultation, developing LMS materials and other activities relating to delivery of a subject.

What will GRAAs do in the non-teaching period?

- Each GRAA has 30 hours of paid professional development which can be scheduled for non-teaching periods. In addition, activities could include preparing for semester teaching, revising subject reading lists and/or LMS sites. Leave can also be taken during the non-teaching period.

Some GRAAs may teach a Summer or Winter intensive in place of a semester subject, this would be planned with your employment supervisor and school.

When will I know what subjects I will teach into?

- Successful GRAAs will find out what subjects they will be teaching into for the year when they meet with their employment supervisor early in the role. If this changes you will be advised as soon as possible but changes in subject allocations will be rare.

Do GRAAs do performance reviews like other academic staff?

- GRAA roles are designed to include academic experience and career development. An important part of this process is discussing career goals,

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setting performance objectives and regular check ins with their employment supervisor.

Leave

When can GRAAs take annual leave?

- GRAAs should discuss their annual leave dates with their employment supervisor, leave can be taken at a time mutually agreed by the GRAA and the supervisor. We would not normally expect a GRAA to take leave during teaching however as already noted, where a GRAA has planned to attend a conference it may be possible to arrange a short period of leave during teaching.

Can I take personal leave?

- If you are unwell or in other unplanned situations, you can take personal leave. This is the case even if you are scheduled to teach. Please let your employment supervisor know in advance of any scheduled teaching if possible.

What type of leave is available to GRAAs?

- GRAAs have the same leave entitlements as other fixed term employees, see <https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1343/> .

What is the process for submitting a leave application?

- Follow the instructions in [this Knowledge Base Article](#).

Can I apply if I am on a leave of absence from my Thesis?

- You can apply whilst on a leave of absence but we expect that eligible candidates will have an enrolled status by 2nd February 2026.