



DISCOVERY— INDIGENOUS RESEARCHERS DEVELOPMENT

Guidelines for applicants

for funding commencing in

2003

Australian Research Council
Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development
Guidelines for Funding Commencing in 2003

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Acronyms

The following acronyms are used throughout these guidelines.

APD	Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship
APDI	Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship (Industry)
ARC	Australian Research Council
EAC	Expert Advisory Committee
GAMS	Grant Administration Management System
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council

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1 Introduction

Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development is a special programme within the ARC's application based *Discovery* scheme.

The *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* programme provides support for Indigenous Australian researchers to undertake research projects which may lead to an advance in the understanding of a subject or contribute to the solution of an important practical problem.

2 Objectives

Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development aims to:

- develop the research expertise of Indigenous Australian researchers to a level competitive with mainstream research funding;
- support fundamental research and research training by Indigenous Australians individuals and teams;
- provide Indigenous Australian researchers with experience in the preparation of research grant applications; and
- expand Australia's knowledge base and research capability.

3 Description

3.1 Key information for applicants

Who can apply?	Indigenous researchers of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, who identify and are accepted as such by the community in which s/he lives or has lived. Indigenous Researchers enrolled in higher research degrees may apply for a grant to fund a research project that forms part of their current research towards a graduate degree.
Duration of Grant	1-3 years
Level of Funding	Minimum grant size \$10,000 per annum.
Closing Date	Friday 17 May 2002 Applications received after close of business (AEST) 17 May 2002 will not be considered for funding.

3.2 Type of research supported

Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development provides support for research projects by Indigenous Australian researchers in the biological, mathematical, physical, chemical, engineering, earth and applied sciences, and the humanities and social sciences, which are likely to lead to an advance in the understanding of a subject or to contribute to the solution of an important practical problem; and

4 Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for a *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* grant, a researcher must be of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent and must:

- identify as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and
- be accepted as such by the community in which s/he lives or has lived.

4.1 Indigenous Australians not eligible

- Indigenous Australian researchers are not eligible to apply for a grant if they:
- live permanently overseas or are employed out of Australia at any time during the term of the grant;
- are undertaking an undergraduate degree or an undergraduate diploma;
- currently hold or have held, a nationally competitive grant or Fellowship from the ARC or the NHMRC;
- derive more than 50 percent of appropriated salary from a research organisation outside the higher education sector that is funded primarily for research from State/Territory or Commonwealth Government sources, for example:
 - Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO);
 - Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO);
 - Australian Geological Survey Organisation (AGSO);
 - State/Territory Research and Development (R&D) organisations; and
 - NHMRC block-funded institutions.

4.2 Investigator Roles

There are four applicant roles available under *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development*:

- Chief Investigator (CI)
- Mentor (M)
- Supervisor (S)
- ARC Research Cadetship—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (RC-ATSI)

All Chief Investigators and RC-ATSI applicants must be Indigenous Australians. To be eligible for consideration, an application must have at least one CI or RC-ATSI applicant.

4.2.1 Chief Investigators

Applicants must have completed successfully a research degree or demonstrate equivalent research capacity and experience in their applications, to the satisfaction of the Expert Advisory Committee. Researchers who are enrolled in higher research degrees may apply for a research grant, where the project forms part of their current research towards the degree. In this case, applicants will still need to demonstrate research capacity and experience.

4.2.2 Mentors and supervisors

As *Discovery—Indigenous Researcher Development* aims to develop the research expertise of successful applicants, the strength of the research environment and support for the applicant plays an important role in assessing applications. In particular, it is strongly recommended that a Mentor (who does not need to be an Indigenous Australian) be associated with the proposal to provide specific expert advice on the subject of the research.

If the proposed research is part of the research towards a higher research degree, it is strongly recommended that the applicant's Supervisor be consulted on the preparation of the application and be associated with the proposal. The roles of Supervisor and Mentor can be filled either by the same individual or by separate persons, and applications may nominate both a mentor and supervisor.

4.2.3 Research Cadetship—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Applicants for RC-ATSI Cadetship must:

- be researchers who have been awarded a PhD, or equivalent research doctorate, since 1 January 1999, or have not yet submitted their PhD but will do so before 31 December 2002. If an RC-ATSI fellowship is offered, it will be contingent upon receiving official confirmation that the thesis has been submitted by 31 December 2002. The cadetship cannot be taken up until formal advice has been received that the PhD thesis has been awarded. If these conditions have not been satisfied, the offer will be withdrawn.
- not have previously held an ARC Research Fellowship or a national competitive grant; and
- work full-time on the project.
- Applicants who apply for a RC-ATSI may apply for both a postdoctoral Cadetship, which provides a salary, and for a research project grant. Applicants who apply for RC-ATSI but not for a research grant must demonstrate how their research will be supported.

The Appendix provides further information for RC-ATSI applicants.

4.3 Number of applications/grants

4.3.1 Limit on the number of applications

In any one year, the ARC will consider no more than two initial applications to *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* from any one researcher. Applicants must ensure that they do not exceed the limit for *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* grants (refer to paragraph 4.3.2). If two applications are submitted by any one researcher, at least one of these must involve collaboration with another Chief Investigator.

Submitting initial applications that contravene the above limits will result in the automatic exclusion of all applications involving that researcher as a Chief Investigator.

Only one application to the *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* may be submitted in respect of a single project in the same year, regardless of any variation in the proposed administering institution. Submitting similar or duplicate applications will result in automatic exclusion of all applications.

4.3.2 Limit on the number of grants

Researchers may hold a maximum of two *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* grants at any one time as a Chief Investigator. At least one of these grants must have more than one Chief Investigator.

5 Funding

5.1. Level of funding

The minimum grant size is \$10,000 per annum. This level refers to the average annual amount that the ARC deems necessary for the project over the full period of the grant (not the average amount applied for, nor the amount sought in the first year).

5.2 Duration of funding

Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development grants may be awarded for one to three years. The ARC may award grants for a duration different from that requested.

5.3 Areas of investigation/work not supported

Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development does not support the following work:

- clinical medicine and dental research and training and public health research and training that are covered by the NHMRC
- activities leading solely to the creation or performance of a work of art, including visual art, musical compositions, drama, dance, designs and literary works, for which Commonwealth Government support is provided through the Australia Council for the Arts.
- scholarly investigations which, while important in themselves, do not lead to conceptual advances or discoveries, or to practical outcomes or applications. Such projects as uncritical biographical compilations and purely descriptive catalogues or editions that do not involve original research are not funded;
- production of teaching materials, even though some research may be involved in their production;
- compilation of data, unless an integral part of a project, in which case applicants must provide a statement indicating the research objectives to which the data would contribute; and
- development of research aids and tools (including computer programmes), unless they form an integral part of a project, in which case applicants must provide a statement indicating the research objectives to which these activities would contribute.

5.4 Budget items not supported

Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development does not support the following budget items:

- Salaries of Chief Investigators: the Commonwealth will not provide support, in whole or in part, to meet the salaries of Chief Investigators. Salaries for RC-ATSI are provided.
- Special Studies Programmes: funds are not provided for travel or other expenses for researchers when on a Special Studies Programme. Travel to special facilities away from the base where a researcher is conducting his/her study is seen as part of the normal costs of a Special Studies Programme
- Research support outside Australia: funding will not be granted for research assistance outside Australia.
- International students' fees and Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) liability: funds are not provided to pay the fees of international students or HECS liabilities for Australian students. A postgraduate student with a scholarship funded from a *Discovery—Indigenous Research Development* grant and engaged as part of a project is deemed not to be the holder of an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA).
- Computer facilities for molecular analysis: applicants for projects involving molecular biology should be aware that the ARC supports the Australian National Genomic Information Service which provides access to a range of databases and a large suite of analysis programmes. As this service is available at modest cost, proposals seeking funding for computer facilities to undertake molecular analysis will have to justify such needs very thoroughly.
- Basic facilities: the host institution must certify its agreement to provide the following basic facilities which will not be funded under *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development*:
 - accommodation (eg. laboratory and office, suitably equipped and furnished in standard ways);
 - access to workshop services (eg. machine tools and qualified technicians available to each member of staff, according to need, for research);
 - access to a basic library collection;
 - adequate computing time (excluding access to high-performance computers);
 - standard reference materials or funds for abstracting services;
 - basic computing, word processing and microfilm reading facilities;
 - use of photocopiers, telephones, mail, fax, email and Internet services; and
 - transcription services where the project is linked to higher degree studies.
- Publication costs, including page costs, are not funded under *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development*.

5.5 Cross scheme eligibility

If a funding request for any project, salary or equipment is being submitted to any other funding body, the *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* application must provide details of the additional funding application. Applicants must indicate the level of funding obtained, or being sought, from all other schemes and list all existing research funding from all sources.

The ARC may liaise with other funding agencies to discuss any overlap between applications in order to avoid duplication of funding.

6 Application process

As the application is the prime source of information available to the selection committee, it must contain all the information necessary for assessment of the project without the need for further written or oral explanation, or for reference to additional documentation, including the World Wide Web, unless requested by the committee. All details in the application, particularly concerning any successful grants, must be current when submitted.

Applications under *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* consist of two parts:

- | | | |
|---|------------------|---|
| 1 | Application form | to be completed in Grant Application Management System (GAMS) |
| 2 | Additional text | Section B10 'Research Record Relative To Opportunities'; Sections C2 and C3, 'justifications of funding requested from the ARC' and 'details of non-ARC contributions'; Part E, 'Project Description'.
If applicable, add supporting documentation:
Section A7.2, 'additional detail' for any participants associated with a Commonwealth Government-funded Centre
Section D2, 'reports on ARC grants' |

6.1 Application format

All documents must be written in English and must comply strictly with the format and submission requirements.

All pages should be in black type, use a single column and 12 point font size on white A4 paper, printed on one side only and unbound, with at least 2 cm margins on each side. As applications are scanned electronically, applicants must use a highly-legible font type, such as Arial, Courier, Palatino, Times New Roman and Helvetica. Variants such as mathematical typesetting languages may also be used. References may be reproduced in 10 point font size. Colour graphs or colour photographs may be included but they will be reproduced in black and white.

6.2 Application form and instructions to applicants

The application form is produced by the ARC's web-based GAMS at www.arc.gov.au.

Applicants should note that a separate document, *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development Instructions to Applicants for Funding Commencing in 2003*, is available from www.arc.gov.au to assist in preparing applications.

6.3 Number of copies

An original and **one identical** hard copy only are required. The application must be clipped with NAL clips, not stapled. The application form should be submitted with the additional text, including supporting documentation, interleaved appropriately and the pages numbered consecutively (see *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development Instructions to Applicants for Funding Commencing in 2003*).

6.4 Closing date for applications

Paper originals of the applications for *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* must be received by the ARC, and the application form completed using GAMS must be submitted by close of business (AEST) **Friday 17 May 2002**. Applications may be withdrawn but may not be changed after submission. Additions, deletions and modifications will not be accepted after submission. Applications received after close of business (AEST) 17 May 2002 will not be accepted.

6.5 How to complete and submit applications

Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development application forms are produced using the ARC's web-based GAMS. Applicants should submit their applications through the Research Office by the university's closing date. University Research Offices have access to GAMS and will allocate GAMS UserIDs and passwords to enable applicants at their university to access the system and create application forms. If an applicant has previously been allocated access to GAMS, his/her UserID and password should still be current. Applicants who require an alternative means to submitting the form on-line should contact their university's Research Office.

Applications should be sent to—

by **mail**, to

Director
Programme Coordination Section
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601

by **courier**, to

Director
Programme Coordination Section
Australian Research Council
AGSO Building
cnr Jerrabomberra Drive and Hindmarsh
Avenue
SYMONSTON ACT 2609

7 Selection and approval process

7.1 Selection criteria

Primary criteria in considering applications are:

- the quality of the research project being proposed;
- the quality of the researcher(s) proposing the research project; and
- the quality of the research environment and/or mentor.

Other considerations may be:

- the probable impact of a successful outcome for the research project; and/or
- the extent to which the successful completion of the research project will train and equip the researcher to compete for mainstream research funding.

If an application is judged to be outside the scope of the *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development*, it may be referred for consideration under other ARC programmes.

7.2 Selection procedure

Assessment of applications is undertaken by a selection committee comprising two or more members of the ARC Expert Advisory Committees. The selection committee may:

- exclude ineligible applications;
- assign independent readers/assessors to review the applications;
- seek applicants' comments on assessors' reports;
- rank each application relative to the others on the basis of the application, the assessors' reports and applicants' response to these assessments;
- assess and recommend budgets; and
- prepare funding recommendations that are submitted to the ARC Board for endorsement and then to the Minister for approval.

The ARC has procedures for declaring conflicts of interest and for members to withdraw from considering particular applications.

7.3 Assessment

7.3.1 *Exclusion of ineligible applications by the selection committee*

The attention of all applicants is drawn to the major reasons for which applications are excluded on the grounds of eligibility:

- failing to submit the application through the appropriate Research Office/Chief Executive Officer for certification;
- not meeting the eligibility criteria for a Chief Investigator;
- exceeding limits on the number of applications permissible;
- incomplete or misleading information; and
- designating the application as 'commercial-in-confidence'.

7.3.2 *Assignment of assessors*

Each application not initially excluded will be assigned to one or more Australian-based readers who will be asked to read and rank assigned applications. Although an effort will be made to obtain one or more assessments, the ARC reserves the right to make decisions based on any number of assessments or solely on the expert assessment of the selection committee.

Applicants may name any person whom they do not wish to assess the application. Detailed written justification must be submitted through the institution's research office, in a separate letter, and it **must not** accompany the application. The letter must be received before the closing date for applications and be sent to

Director
Programme Co-ordination Section
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601

7.3.3 Applicant rejoinders

The readers' textual comments will be provided to the administering institution allowing the opportunity for a one-page rejoinder to the comments. To ensure impartiality, the readers' names are not provided to the applicant. At the same time, the selection committee may add questions to the assessments sent to the applicants for rejoinder. Applicants have at least 10 working days in which to submit a response to the ARC.

7.3.4 Recommendations

The selection committee may make final checks on eligibility. The committee ranks each application relative to the others on the basis of the application, the readers' reports and the applicants' rejoinders to these assessments. The committee assesses and recommends budgets. The committees' funding recommendations are submitted to the ARC Board.

7.3.5 Ministerial approval

A recommendation from the ARC Board is sent to the Minister for his/her consideration. The Minister determines which applications will be offered funding.

7.4 Offer of grant

Following the Minister's approval, the successful administering institution will be informed by the ARC in a letter of offer that will indicate the funding to be provided and include the Conditions of Grant.

The successful administering institution will be notified in a letter of offer that will indicate the funding to be provided and will include any special conditions.

A project may not begin, nor grant funds be expended, until the administering institution and each collaborating institution have entered into a written agreement, a copy of which must be forwarded to the ARC. The agreement must cover the role of the Institutions in the project including:

- contributions by the institutions;
- payment of salaries for ARC Fellows;
- intellectual property arrangements; and
- an undertaking by the institutions to abide by the Conditions of Grant.

7.4.1 Funding Contract

Applicants should familiarise themselves with the Funding Contract. This will be available on the ARC website (www.arc.gov.au). The grantee must accept the Funding Contract and the administering institution must sign the Funding Contract before grant payments can be made.

7.4.2 Commencement of projects

Projects must be commenced by 31 July in the first year of the grant. Failure to do so will result in termination of funding.

8 Appeals process

Appeals will be considered only against process issues and not against committee decisions or assessor ratings and comments. Appeals must be made on the appeals form available from the ARC website (www.arc.gov.au).

The form must be lodged through the institution's Research Office and be received, **within 28 days** of the date on the letter notifying the outcome of applications, to:

The Appeals Officer
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601

9 Grant administration

9.1 Funding Contract

Administering organisations should note that the Funding Contract and post-award management cover the following matters.

9.1.1 Reporting requirements

Institutions are required to submit these documents to the ARC:

- *Exceptions Report* on grants that have financial exceptions, by 1 October in the calendar year for which they were granted
- *End-of-year Report* on the expenditure of grant funds, by 31 March in the year following each calendar year for which funding was provided
- *Progress Report* on the project, by 31 January in the year following the calendar year for which funds were granted (Recipients of one-year grants should only provide a progress report if they are requesting a carry over of funds.)
- *Final Report* on the project, within six months of the completion of the grant
- *Audited Financial Statement*, by 30 June of the year following the year of the grant, in accordance with the *Australian Research Council Act 2001* (www.arc.gov.au/about/act).

The ARC reserves the right to suspend payment of further instalments of any current grant until the appropriate reports have been received and assessed as satisfactory.

9.1.2 Failure to provide reports

Where an institution fails to submit satisfactory reports, or if those submitted are not satisfactory, as required, the Minister may determine that funds have not been used in accordance with conditions applicable to the grant, and that all or part of the grant must be repaid. In this case, the ARC may withhold the remainder of the institution's payments under the Programme for the current year or initiate recovery of grant money.

9.1.3 Varying the Funding Contract

Requests to vary the Funding Contract must be forwarded in writing by the institution's Research Office, or equivalent, to the ARC.

9.1.4 Financial management — payments

Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development operates on a calendar year basis. Subject to appropriations, payment of funds will be made to institutions in regular instalments, in accordance with approved payment arrangements made under the *Australian Research Council Act 2001* (www.arc.gov.au/about/act). Funds must be used only for purposes approved under *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development*, otherwise they must be returned through the usual payments system.

9.2 Privacy of individuals

Documents containing personal information are handled and protected in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy Act 1988*, which sets standards for the collection, storage, use and disclosure of, and access to, personal information. Personal information is disclosed only with permission of the individual to whom it relates or where the Act allows.

9.3 Freedom of information

The public may request access under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* to all documents created or held by the ARC for the purposes of managing *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development*. The Act contains several provisions which exempt certain categories of documents from release.

9.4 Confidentiality

Information contained in applications is regarded as confidential unless otherwise stated and will be received and treated as confidential by the ARC, institutions and assessors.

9.5 Intellectual property

Applicants must agree to comply with the *National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research* (available at www.arc.gov.au) and with the intellectual property policies and agreements of their research institutions.

Researchers may need to negotiate appropriate arrangements directly with Indigenous Australian communities where this is appropriate. While evidence that agreement on intellectual property has been reached will not be a precondition for applications to be considered, it is strongly suggested that such matters be settled at the outset.

9.6 Incomplete or misleading information

It is a serious offence to provide false or misleading information. If an application is incomplete or contains information that is considered misleading, it will be excluded from any further consideration for funding.

If the ARC believes that omissions or inclusion of misleading information are intentional, or if there is evidence of malpractice, the ARC will refer the matter for investigation with a view to prosecution under Commonwealth criminal law. The Commonwealth Government is committed to protecting its revenue, expenditure and property from any attempt, either by members of the public, contractors, sub-contractors, agents, intermediaries or its own employees to gain financial or other benefits by deceit.

Examples of malpractice include, but are not restricted to:

- providing fictitious track records
- falsifying claims in publications records (such as describing a paper as accepted for publication when it has only been submitted).

Grantees will be required to provide access to their premises, books of account and relevant documentation to officers of DETYA's National Investigations Unit (NIU), or such other persons authorised by the ARC, where there may be suspected breaches of the criminal law and to the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) in respect of the ANAO's statutory responsibilities.

9.7 Contact points

For further information, the institution's Research Office should be contacted in the first instance.

Enquiries about *Discovery—Indigenous Researchers Development* may be addressed to—

Director
Programme Coordination Section
Australian Research Council
GPO Box 2702
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Email: arc@arc.gov.au
Phone: 02 6284 6600
Fax: 02 6284 6638
Web www.arc.gov.au

APPENDIX

ARC Research Cadetship—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Research Cadetship Applicants

Applicants for an RC-ATSI must satisfy all the criteria for a Chief Investigator. They must also be a researcher who:

- either has been awarded a PhD, or equivalent research doctorate, since 1 January 1999, or has not yet submitted his/her PhD but will do so before 31 December 2002 (in which case the Cadetship cannot commence until the PhD has been awarded). If the PhD thesis is not submitted by 31 December 2002, any offer of grant for a project involving the RC-ATSI award will be automatically cancelled. An RC-ATSI cannot be taken up until formal advice is received that the PhD thesis has been accepted, within a maximum time limit of nine months, that is, by 30 September 2003. If these conditions have not been satisfied, the offer will be withdrawn;
- has not previously held an ARC Research Fellowship; and
- makes a full-time commitment to the project.

RC-ATSI are not eligible to apply for a second RC-ATSI. However, they may apply for an APD (Discovery) or APDI (Linkage) in the final year of their Research Cadetship.

Eligibility exemption on grounds of career interruption

In some circumstances, an applicant who is seeking an RC-ATSI may not satisfy all the required eligibility criteria due to research career interruption (including working in universities in non-research positions). If this is the case, an applicant may apply for an exemption from the eligibility criteria.

If, after reading these guidelines, a researcher is unsure whether he/she is eligible to apply for an RC-ATSI, he/she must consult the institution's research office in the first instance.

If the candidate does require an eligibility exemption, a request must be lodged in writing, through the institution's research office, with the Director, Programme Management Section of the ARC, between 31 January and 12 March 2002. The eligibility exemption request must include a statement justifying the applicant's special circumstances for an eligibility exemption. The applicant will be advised of the decision as soon as possible to allow time for a detailed application to be completed.

If an applicant seeking an eligibility exemption fails to meet the above deadline, his/her subsequent application will be deemed ineligible.

Duration of Cadetship

The RC-ATSI is one or two years' full-time employment on an approved project. Successful RC-ATSI applicants who hold continuing non-research positions must provide evidence that they have either resigned or been granted leave of absence from the substantive position before commencing the Cadetship.

Salary

The RC-ATSI salary is commensurate with current ARC APD salary rates.

Relocation allowance

The institution will make payments to an RC-ATSI for travel and removal expenses associated with relocating residence in order to take up the position, or for an approved transfer, on condition that the Research Cadet provides full particulars of mode and time of travel and the receipts for all other payments (for example, removal expenses) to the institution within six months of the expenditure being incurred. The ARC will reimburse the institution only as part of the end-of-year report, provided that the claim is submitted within a year of the expenditure having been incurred.

The ARC will reimburse in accordance with the Conditions of Grant the following relocation expenses:

- travel expenses, not exceeding the cost of the cheapest direct airfare, for the Research Cadet and his/her dependants. Where a Cadet elects to travel by car, the Commonwealth will provide a mileage allowance up to the maximum equivalent of the cheapest direct airfare. On completion of the Cadetship, the Cadet will be entitled to the same return fare provisions and removal expenses, provided that he/she has not obtained subsequent employment in Australia for a period exceeding twelve months.
- relocation costs for the Cadet and his/her dependants. For the purposes of relocation entitlements, a dependant is defined as a person who moves residence with the Cadet. A spouse/partner who transfers employment to the city of the institution may be regarded as a dependant; a child continuing to study at the former city and not intending to live with the Cadet, may not be regarded as a dependant.