



An Australian Government Initiative



RURAL & REGIONAL
ENTERPRISE
SCHOLARSHIPS

Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships: **Program Guidelines** including updates for Rounds Three and Four



Addendum for Round Three

On 12 November 2018, the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Education, announced an increase in support for students from rural and regional Australia through an expansion of the Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships (RRES) program. By increasing funding available through the program from \$24 million to \$58.1 million an additional 1955 scholarships will be made available, for a total of 3155.

Additionally, the eligibility criteria for the program have been changed to increase tertiary education opportunities for rural and regional Australians studying in any discipline. Accordingly, the Program Guidelines outlined in this document should be amended for Round Three as below.

1. **References to STEM.** For Round Three of RRES, references to STEM are removed.
2. **Section 5.1 Scholarship Applicant eligibility criteria.** The second dot point in this section is removed.
3. **Section 5.2**

“**Field of Study**” is removed from the first paragraph in this section.

Field of Study sub-section is removed entirely. Round Three of RRES allows applications for any course of study from Certificate IV to PhD.

Under **Section 5.2 Commencement Periods** (page 11). This section is replaced with the following:

Scholarships in Round Three are available to students who commence/d their study at any time during 2019.

Scholarships may not be deferred.

Previously successful RRES scholarship recipients

Please note, the Round Three Program Guidelines (including changes to eligibility) apply only to Round Three applicants and are not to be applied retrospectively to Round One or Round Two.

People who were awarded scholarships in a previous application Round must refer to the Round One/ Round Two Program Guidelines to determine their ongoing eligibility.

Addendum for Round Four

The Program Guidelines (as amended by the addendum for Round Three) outlined in this document are amended for Round Four as below.

1. **References to Department of Education and Training** throughout are updated to Department of Education.
2. **Section 5.2 Commencement Periods** (page 11).

This section is replaced with the following:

Scholarships in Round Four are available to students who commence/d their study at any time during 2020.

Scholarships may not be deferred.

3. **Section 7. Criterion 1: Financial Need.** In the row of the table titled “4. A person whose income documents demonstrate financial need in the ‘Evidence’ column, add the following sentence:

If your current circumstances are substantially affected by natural disaster such as bushfires, floods or drought and different from the previous year, please supply additional supporting information which may be taken into account.
4. **Section 8.3 How the Scholarship payment is paid.** Remove both paragraphs under the heading “Study assistance payment”, and replace with:
 - a. *Each study assistance payment is for one half-year period.*
 - b. *Once a Scholarship Agreement is received with all required supporting documents, the Scholarship Support Organisation will then verify a recipient’s enrolment information with the specified institution. This will occur after the institution’s census date, unless there are exceptional circumstances.*
 - c. *Once verification is confirmed by the Scholarship Support Organisation, payment will be made to the recipient.*

Previously successful RRES scholarship recipients

Please note, the Round Four Program Guidelines (including any changes to eligibility) apply only to Round Four applicants and are not to be applied retrospectively to Rounds One, Two or Three.

People who were awarded scholarships in previous rounds must refer to the Round One, Round Two, or Round Three Program Guidelines to determine their ongoing eligibility.

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1. About the Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships

The Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships are intended to improve access to and completion of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) tertiary education courses for students from a regional or remote area in Australia. The program objectives are to:

- increase the number of students engaging with STEM disciplines;
- increase the number of students able to undertake their preferred course of STEM study irrespective of their location; and
- increase program participants' rate of course completion relative to their peers.

The Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships will improve educational attainment and skills development opportunities for regional and remote students. Through studying STEM, Scholarship Recipients will obtain important occupational skills, as well as strengthening their foundational literacies, socio-emotional skills and higher-order cognitive skills. They will be better equipped to adapt to the changing nature of work in a technologically advanced economy.

The Program will support at least 1200 undergraduate, postgraduate and Vocational Education and Training (VET) students to undertake a STEM qualification, including in the fields of health and agricultural science. Scholarships will be administered through two rounds of applications for the 2018 and 2019 academic years, each for at least 600 Scholarships.

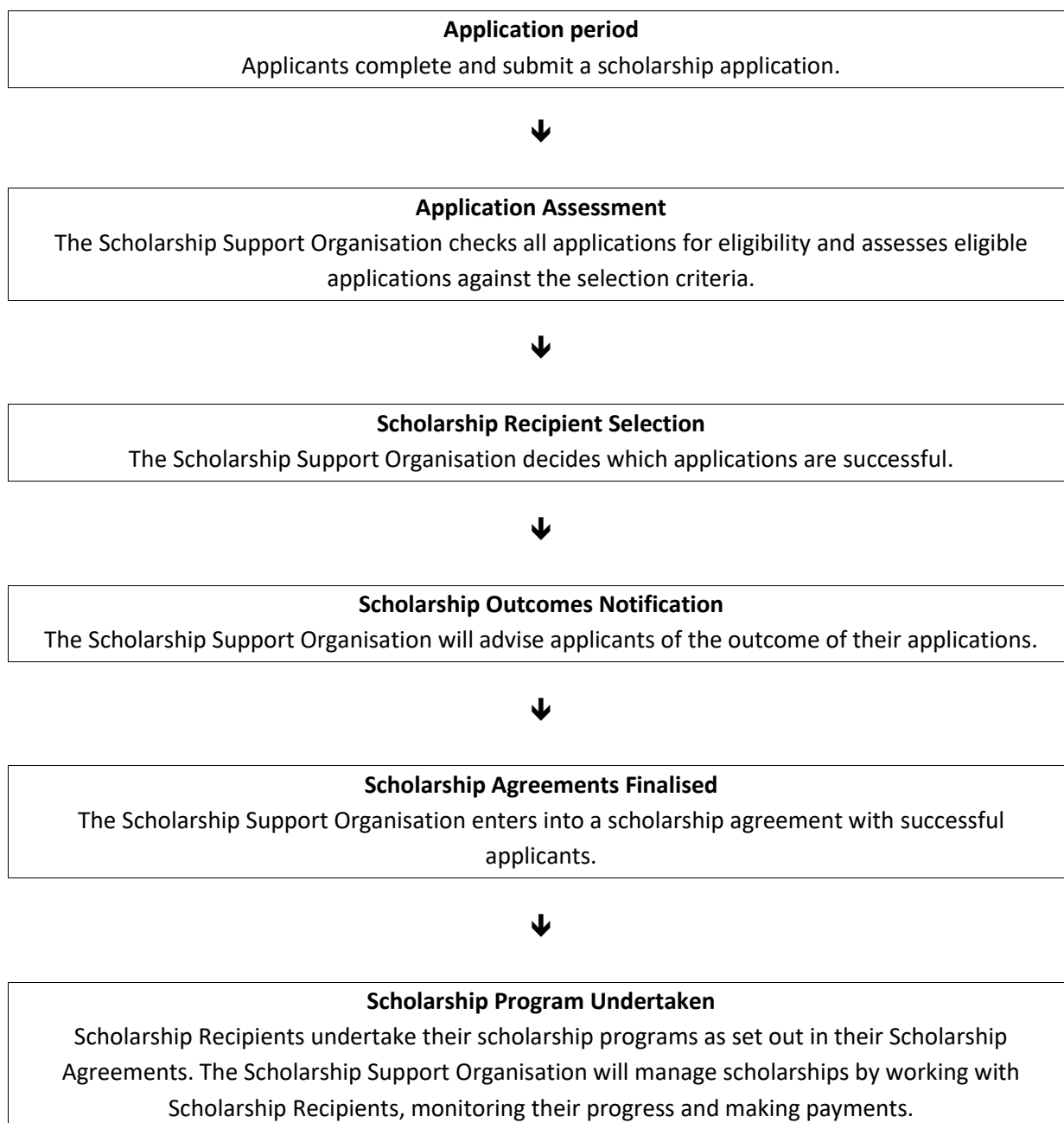
Scholarship Recipients have the option to access support for undertaking an internship. Internships give Scholarship Recipients an opportunity to gain experience within a workplace relevant to their study or training and learn about the organisation in which they are placed.

The [Department of Education and Training](#) is contracting a third party provider, the Scholarship Support Organisation, to manage the Program. The Scholarships Support Organisation will run the application and selection processes, distribute scholarship funding, monitor continued eligibility and compliance with scholarship conditions, and report to the department at specified intervals.

Funding for the Program is \$24 million between 2017-18 and 2020-21.*

* Note – As outlined in the addendum at the start of this document, in Round Three the size and scope of the program was increased to support students of any discipline.

2. Process overview



3. Scholarship benefits

Scholarship Recipients may receive total Scholarship payments up to \$18,000, based on course length and type of study or training (refer to the table below). A further \$500 is available to Scholarship Recipients to support an Internship.

An Internship Host Organisation receives \$500 to assist with the cost of supporting an Internship that is not a requirement of the Scholarship Recipient's Eligible Course of Study.

An organisation supporting an Internship that is a requirement of the Scholarship Recipient's Eligible Course of Study (i.e. work-integrated learning) will not receive the \$500.

As an example, a four-year (or more) Scholarship Program includes:

- up to \$18,000 in study assistance;
- \$500 as an incentive payment to the student for undertaking an Internship; and
- \$500 to the Internship Host Organisation.

The tables below outline the different levels of Scholarship payments by mode of study:

Full-time study

Scholarship length	Study Assistance	Internship (Student)	Internship (Internship Host Organisation)	Total Student Payment
6 months	\$2,250	\$500	\$500	\$2,750
1 year	\$4,500	\$500	\$500	\$5,000
2 years	\$9,000	\$500	\$500	\$9,500
3 years	\$13,500	\$500	\$500	\$14,000
4 years	\$18,000	\$500	\$500	\$18,500

Part-time study

Scholarship length	Study Assistance	Internship (Student)	Internship (Internship Host Organisation)	Total Student Payment
1 year	\$2,250	\$500	\$500	\$2,750
2 years	\$4,500	\$500	\$500	\$5,000
3 years	\$6,750	\$500	\$500	\$7,250
4 years	\$9,000	\$500	\$500	\$9,500
5 years	\$11,250	\$500	\$500	\$11,750
6 years	\$13,500	\$500	\$500	\$14,000
7 years	\$15,750	\$500	\$500	\$16,250
8 years	\$18,000	\$500	\$500	\$18,500

Note: The above amounts are represented as gross figures.

Scholarship Duration

The minimum course duration a Scholarship can support is six months full-time and the maximum is four years full-time (or the part-time equivalent). If a Scholarship Recipient is undertaking full-time study over a longer period, funding is available for a maximum of four years only.

Purpose of Scholarship payments

Scholarship payments are intended to assist the Scholarship Recipient with the financial costs of attending their institution and undertaking their Eligible Course of Study and Internships.

4. Scholarship selection process

4.1 Application process overview

Scholarship Recipients are selected through a competitive, need- and merit-based selection process against selection criteria set out at Section 6.

To receive a Scholarship, each individual must submit a complete application, including supporting documentation. Advice on making an application is published on the websites of the Scholarship Support Organisation and the [Department](#).

All applications submitted by the closing date are checked for compliance with the eligibility conditions described at Section 4.

Eligible applications are assessed against the selection criteria by the Scholarship Support Organisation.

Based on this assessment, the decision-maker at the Scholarship Support Organisation decides which Scholarship Applicants receive a Scholarship.

Where applications permit, the Scholarship Support Organisation will award a minimum of 25 per cent of Scholarships each to:

- individuals proposing to complete an Eligible Course of Study at a VET provider, and
- individuals proposing to complete an undergraduate Eligible Course of Study at a higher education provider.

Unsuccessful Scholarship Applicants for one round may submit a new application in a future Scholarship round.

4.2 When to apply

Scholarship application round opening and closing dates are published on the websites of the Scholarship Support Organisation and the [Department](#).

Scholarship Applicants can only apply for one Eligible Course of Study in one round. For example, it is not possible to apply for Scholarships for two different six-month courses in a single application round.

4.3 Completing the Scholarship application

A complete application must include:

- a completed application form; and
- supporting documentation (refer to below).

Only one application per Scholarship Applicant per round is assessed. If more than one application from the same Scholarship Applicant is received by the Scholarship Support Organisation, only the latest application received before the round closes is considered.

4.4 Supporting documentation

Applicants must submit the following documentation with their completed application form:

- evidence of Australian citizenship, permanent residency, holding a permanent humanitarian visa or being a New Zealand citizen living in Australia;
- proof of residence in a regional or remote area in Australia (see Section 5.1);
- evidence of financial need (see Section 7); and
- evidence of eligibility for Other considerations (see Section 7).

4.5 Questions during the application process

Questions during the application process must be directed to the Scholarship Support Organisation.

4.6 Notification of application outcomes

The Scholarship Support Organisation advises Scholarship Applicants of the outcomes of their applications in writing. Unsuccessful applicants may not be notified before Scholarship Agreements have been executed with successful applicants.

4.7 Feedback on applications

Unsuccessful Scholarship Applicants may request feedback on their applications from the Scholarship Support Organisation. The process for requesting feedback will be advised in the written notification.

5. Scholarship eligibility criteria

Applications must meet all the eligibility criteria to be considered.

5.1 Scholarship Applicant eligibility criteria

To be eligible for a Scholarship:

- the Scholarship Applicant must be an Australian citizen, Permanent Resident, holder of a permanent humanitarian visa, or a New Zealand citizen living in Australia;
- the Scholarship Applicant must not have already commenced their Eligible Course of Study;
- the Scholarship Applicant's permanent home address must be in a regional or remote area as defined by the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS).¹

5.2 Eligible Courses of Study

Eligible Courses of Study are those that meet the following requirements listed under Eligible Providers, Accredited Courses, Field of Study, Level of Study, Commencement Period and Mode of Study.

Eligible Providers

Scholarship Applicants must propose and undertake their course of study at an Eligible Provider.

An Eligible Provider is either a:

- registered training organisation (RTO) registered with the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) or the Western Australian Training Accreditation Council (WA TAC)², or
- higher education provider registered with the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA).³

The Department advises the Scholarship Support Organisation of higher education or training providers for which issues of financial viability, quality or unethical behaviour have been identified and may, at its discretion, require that a higher education or training provider not be considered an Eligible Provider for the purposes of the Program.

Accredited courses

The course of study must be accredited, and the Eligible Provider must be accredited to deliver the course.⁴

¹ Scholarship Applicants can check the remoteness classification of their address under the ASGS at [DoctorConnect](#).

² Scholarship Applicants can confirm their RTO is registered at training.gov.au.

³ Scholarship Applicants can confirm their higher education provider is registered at TEQSA's [National Register](#).

⁴ Scholarship Applicants can view the accredited courses their provider is approved for by searching for its registration page on training.gov.au or the TEQSA website. Higher education institutions will be accredited to deliver certain courses, or have self-accrediting status.

Field of Study

To be recognised as a STEM course of study, the course must be classified under one of the following [Australian Standard Classification of Education](#) (ASCED), 2001 broad fields of study:

- Natural and Physical Sciences (includes Mathematical Sciences);
- Information and Technology;
- Engineering and Related Technologies;
- Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies; and
- Health (except the narrow field of study 0619: Complementary Therapies).

Scholarship Applicants should confirm with their Eligible Provider the ASCED field of study their proposed course is classified under.

Note – As outlined in the addendum at the start of this document, in Round Three the size and scope of the program was increased to support students of any discipline.

Level of Study

The course of study must be classified at one of the following Australian Quality Framework (AQF) levels:

- Level 4 - Certificate IV;
- Level 5 - Diploma;
- Level 6 - Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree;
- Level 7 - Bachelor Degree;
- Level 8 - Bachelor Honours Degree, Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma;
- Level 9 - Master Degree;
- Level 10 - Doctoral Degree (PhD).

Commencement Periods

Scholarship Recipients must commence their course of study prior to 1 July 2018 for 2018 round Scholarship Applicants, and prior to 1 July 2019 for 2019 round Scholarship Applicants.

Scholarships may not be deferred.

Mode of study

Scholarship Recipients may undertake study on a full-time or part-time basis. A full-time study load is as defined by the Eligible Provider of the Eligible Course of Study. Part-time Scholarships are reduced proportionally per semester as shown by the tables in Section 2: Scholarship benefits.

A Scholarship Recipient may change from full-time to part-time study, or vice versa, with the agreement of the Scholarship Support Organisation.

The mode of study may be face-to-face or online, but must be undertaken in Australia, unless a special exemption is given by the Scholarship Support Organisation (e.g. to allow for a student exchange experience).

Study must be delivered in English, unless a special exemption is given by the Scholarship Support Organisation (e.g. to allow for a student exchange experience).

6. Internships

Students who undertake an Internship relevant to their Eligible Course of Study receive \$500.

Internships must be undertaken for a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 business days. Internships may be undertaken on a full-time or part-time basis. Internships may be undertaken during or after the Scholarship Recipient's Eligible Course of Study. The Internship must be completed within three months of the Scholarship Recipient completing their Eligible Course of Study, or of Scholarship payments ending, whichever occurs first.

Internships must be undertaken in Australia.

If the Internship is not part of the Eligible Course of Study:

- Scholarship Recipients are responsible for finding an Internship Host Organisation and arranging their Internship placement;
- Scholarship Recipients are eligible to receive the \$500 payment;
- the Internship Host Organisation must establish an agreement with the Scholarship Support Organisation; and
- the Internship Host Organisation receives \$500 to assist with the costs of administering the Internship.

If the Scholarship Program includes an Internship in the form of work-integrated learning (e.g. apprenticeships or clinical work placements):

- the Scholarship Recipient is eligible to receive the \$500 payment; and
- the organisation supporting the Internship does not receive a \$500 payment.

7. Selection criteria

Scholarship Applicants are assessed on the following selection criteria:

Criterion 1: Financial need (maximum of 50 points)

Scholarship Applicants must provide evidence to demonstrate their financial need.

Scholarship Applicants are considered to be experiencing financial need if they satisfy any one of the following four conditions listed in the table below. The documents which can be used as evidence of financial need are listed for each category. Applications without the required evidence are not considered.

Successful Scholarship Applicants must continue to demonstrate financial need, by satisfying one of the conditions below, for the duration of their Scholarship Program.

Financial Need Category	Evidence
1. A person currently receiving an eligible Centrelink benefit or concession card.	<p>A copy of a Centrelink letter or current Income Statement showing receipt of any one of the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ABSTUDY Living Allowance b. Austudy c. Carer Payment d. Disability Support Pension e. Low Income Healthcare Card f. Newstart Allowance g. Parenting Payment Single h. Parenting Payment Partnered i. Special Benefit j. Youth Allowance. k. Farm Household Allowance <p><i>Note:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scholarship Applicants using Low Income Healthcare Card as evidence must provide a copy of their card (both sides) showing their full details and card expiry date.</i> • <i>If the Scholarship Applicant is providing the Centrelink letter, it must have been issued within the three months before the due date for Scholarship applications.</i>
2. A person expecting to receive an eligible Centrelink benefit or concession card on commencing their Eligible Course of Study.	<p>Scholarship Applicants must indicate on their application form the Centrelink benefit or concession card they will apply for.</p> <p>The benefit or concession card must be on the above Financial Need Category 1 list.</p> <p>Scholarship Applicants must use the Centrelink Payment Finder to</p>

Financial Need Category	Evidence
	<p>generate the details of payments they may be eligible for and attach the printed copy with the application form.</p> <p><i>Note:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Successful Scholarship Applicants must provide evidence of their application for an eligible Centrelink benefit or concession card listed under Financial Need Category 1 in order to accept their Scholarship offer.</i> • <i>No Scholarship payments are made until the Scholarship Recipient provides evidence of receiving an eligible Centrelink benefit or concession card.</i> • <i>Scholarship Applicants expecting to receive Youth Allowance or Austudy should note that Centrelink applications for these payments can be made up to 13 weeks before starting the course, and are encouraged to apply as soon as possible to avoid any delays in receiving their Centrelink payments.</i> • <i>Applicants facing extreme financial need should contact the Department of Human Services to request that their Centrelink application be prioritised.</i>
<p>3. A dependent whose parent or guardian is in receipt of:</p> <p>a) a) A Health Care Card with the student's name on it;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>b) b) A payment listed in Financial Need Category 1.</p>	<p>For 3 a) a copy of a Centrelink Healthcare Card showing the names of the parent or guardian and the dependent (both sides of the card); OR</p> <p>For 3 b) both</p> <p>i. a copy of a Centrelink letter or current Income Statement showing receipt by the parent/guardian of any one of the benefits in Financial Need Category 1 AND</p> <p>ii. evidence that the applicant is under the age of 22, together with a statement confirming that they meet the definition of 'dependent' as published by the Department of Human Services.</p>
<p>4. A person whose income documents demonstrate financial need.</p>	<p>The applicant's tax return for the previous year and the last eight weeks of the Applicant's pay slips.</p>

Criterion 2: Capability (maximum of 40 points)

Applicants must provide a written response describing:

- a past educational achievement, or achievements, which indicate the applicant's ability to undertake their Eligible Course of Study;
- a past work achievement, or achievements, which indicate the applicant's ability to undertake their Eligible Course of Study.

Applicants may support their response by attaching additional documentation, but only where it is relevant and provides evidence of claims made in the written response. Evidence could include academic transcripts, awards or referee statements.

Note that the educational and/or work achievements need not specifically relate to the Eligible Course of Study.

Other considerations (maximum of 3 points per category)

Additional points can be given to Scholarship Applicants from one or more categories below.

Scholarship Applicants may receive a maximum of 3 points for each category.

Category	Evidence
1. People proposing to undertake an internship, either through the Eligible Course of Study or independently.	Eligible Course of Study: Evidence showing the course includes work-integrated learning, such as a course outline. Independent: Applicant's statement in their application of their intention to undertake an internship.
2. People from areas of high unemployment (greater than 8 per cent). *Areas of high unemployment are assessed based on Small Area Labour Markets (SALM) data at Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2).	Permanent home address at time of application as stated on the application form.
3. People from remote and very remote areas. *Remote and Very Remote areas as defined by the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), and DoctorConnect locator .	Permanent home address at time of application as stated on the application form.
4. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. *Further information is available on the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies website.	Confirmation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Heritage. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people are not required to provide evidence if they do not wish to be considered for additional points under this category.
5. Women studying in fields with low female representation. *Determined by the proportion of female students in the narrow field of study as indicated in Department's student statistics.	Proposed course of study as stated on the application form.
6. People with disability.	A written statement from a registered health professional attesting to the applicant's condition. People with disability are not required to provide evidence if they do not wish to be considered for additional points under this category.

8. Scholarship Recipients

8.1 Acceptance of Scholarship offer

Successful Scholarship Applicants must enter into a legally binding Scholarship Agreement with the Scholarship Support Organisation.

If there are unreasonable delays by a successful Scholarship Applicant in entering into a Scholarship Agreement, the Scholarship offer may be withdrawn and the Scholarship may be awarded to a different Applicant.

Scholarship Recipients must provide evidence of enrolment in their Eligible Course of Study and up-to-date evidence of financial need before the first Scholarship payment is paid.

Scholarship Applicants who applied under Financial Need Category 2 (expecting to receive an eligible Centrelink benefit or concession card on commencing their Eligible Course of Study) must provide evidence of applying for an eligible Centrelink benefit or concession card in order to accept their offer. No Scholarship payments are made until the Scholarship Recipient provides evidence of receiving an eligible Centrelink benefit or concession card.

Scholarship Recipients should not make financial commitments in reliance on being awarded a Scholarship.

8.2 The Scholarship Agreement

The Scholarship Agreement contains standard terms and conditions that apply to all Scholarship Recipients and generally cannot be changed.

The Scholarship Agreement states the maximum Scholarship amount to be paid and the timeframe over which it is paid, reflecting the value of study assistance corresponding to the course length and mode of study. The Scholarship Agreement also specifies whether internship payments apply, based on the Scholarship Recipient's stated intention in their application.

If a Scholarship Recipient fails to meet the obligations of the Scholarship Agreement, the Scholarship Support Organisation may terminate the Scholarship Agreement. The Scholarship Recipient must return any unspent Scholarship payments.

Scholarship Recipients must continue to demonstrate financial need by satisfying one of the Financial Need Categories (see Section 6: Selection Criteria – Criterion 1: Financial Need) for the duration of their Scholarship Program. Ongoing financial need will be demonstrated through a Participation Report as outlined under Reporting below.

Reporting

Scholarship Recipients must submit a Participation Report to the Scholarship Support Organisation each semester. This must include:

- evidence of the Scholarship Recipient's continued enrolment in their Eligible Course of Study;
- units of study attempted and successfully completed to date, in the Eligible Course of Study;
- progress of Internship (where relevant); and
- evidence of continued financial need.

If a Scholarship Recipient ceases undertaking their Eligible Course of Study, they must notify the Scholarship Support Organisation immediately.

If a Scholarship Recipient ceases receiving, or receives a different Centrelink benefit or concession card, they must notify the Scholarship Support Organisation immediately.

Adequate progress

Scholarship Recipients must make adequate progress in their Eligible Course of Study.

Adequate progress in a Scholarship Recipient's Eligible Course of Study is defined as successfully completing all the requirements of 50 per cent or more of units of study attempted for the course.

The Scholarship Support Organisation may, at its discretion, take Scholarship Recipient's individual circumstances into account when considering action in response to instances of underperformance.

Internships

Before an Internship can be recognised as part of the Scholarship Recipient's Scholarship Program, and the \$500 payment made to the Scholarship Recipient, the Scholarship Recipient must provide additional information to the Scholarship Support Organisation.

For Scholarship Recipients undertaking work-integrated learning, this includes information such as the Eligible Course of Study outline demonstrating that the work-integrated learning is a course requirement and evidence that the student is enrolled in the corresponding unit.

For Scholarship Recipients organising their own Internship, this includes confirmation from the Internship Host Organisation of the supervisor details, internship learning goals, commencement and end dates, and workplace induction for the Internship.

8.3 How the Scholarship payment is paid

Scholarship payment is paid to Scholarship Recipients by the Scholarship Support Organisation.

Study assistance payment

Each study assistance payment is for one half-year period. Once a Scholarship Agreement has been executed, the Scholarship Support Organisation makes the first study assistance payment no less than four weeks after the Scholarship Recipient commences study.

Subsequent study assistance payments are made half yearly for the duration of the Scholarship, no less than four weeks after the commencement of each semester and upon receipt of the Scholarship Recipient's Participation Report for the previous semester.

Internship payment

Scholarship Recipients receive the one-off payment of \$500 once the required information has been received (see Section 7.2 The Scholarship Agreement - Internships) to allow for recognition of the Internship as part of the Scholarship Program.

The Internship Host Organisation receives \$500 to assist with the cost of supporting an Internship

that is not part of the Scholarship Recipient's Eligible Course of Study.

8.4 Receipt of other support

Scholarship Recipients are permitted to receive support or financial assistance from other sources while participating in the Program, provided they continue to fulfil the Program's ongoing financial need requirement (see Section 8.2: The Scholarship Agreement). This may include, but is not limited to, income from employers, assistance from other Government programs and scholarships from education and training providers.

The exception to this is that Scholarship Recipients cannot also be in receipt of scholarship funds from the Commonwealth Scholarships Program for South Australia except if there is a demonstrated need (e.g. severe financial hardship). A successful Scholarship Applicant may apply to receive funds from both programs and decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

8.5 Scholarship payments and taxation

Scholarship Recipients should note that:

- Study assistance provided to full-time students is exempt from income tax as per Section 51.10, 2.1A of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* (Cth).
- Study assistance provided to part-time students is considered assessable income and is not income-tax exempt.
- Any payment made to the Scholarship Recipient by the Internship Host Organisation is considered assessable income and is not income-tax exempt.

8.6 Scholarship payments and social security payments

Merit or equity-based scholarships awarded to enable a student to study at an educational institution are treated as exempt income for social security purposes as per Section 8(8) (zjd) of the *Social Security Act 1991* (Cth), to the extent that the payment does not exceed the person's threshold amount for that year.

9. Program Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 Scholarship Applicant responsibilities

Scholarship Applicants are responsible for:

- submitting an accurate and complete application form (including required supporting documentation); and
- ensuring their proposed course of study meets all the requirements to be considered an Eligible Course of Study.

9.2 Scholarship Recipient responsibilities

Scholarship Recipients are responsible for:

- adhering to the terms of the Scholarship Agreement, Internship Agreement (if relevant) and the Program Guidelines;
- making adequate progress in their Scholarship Program;
- arranging an Internship (where relevant);
- submitting a Participation Report to the Scholarship Support Organisation every semester; and
- participating in Program evaluation if asked to do so.

9.3 Scholarship Support Organisation responsibilities

The Scholarship Support Organisation is responsible for:

- promoting the Program in consultation with the Department;
- administering the application rounds and selecting Scholarship Recipients;
- monitoring Scholarship Recipients to confirm adherence to the terms of the Scholarship Agreement;
- administering Scholarship payments, including making payments to Scholarship Recipients and Internship Host Organisations;
- monitoring Program outcomes;
- Program reporting; and
- participating in Program evaluation.

9.4 Internship Host Organisation responsibilities

Internship Host Organisations are responsible for:

- providing an Internship to the Scholarship Recipient;
- adhering to the terms of the Internship Host Agreement;
- providing a suitable supervisor and work experience plan for the Scholarship Recipient;
- providing the Scholarship Recipient with an induction appropriate to the workplace, including work health and safety; and
- maintaining a safe work environment.

9.5 Department of Education and Training responsibilities

The Department of Education and Training is responsible for:

- selecting the Scholarship Support Organisation;

- providing the Scholarship Support Organisation with Funding for the Program;
- promoting the Program;
- monitoring the performance of the Scholarship Support Organisation;
- maintaining the Program Guidelines; and
- monitoring and evaluating the overall Program performance.

10. Performance reporting and monitoring

The Scholarship Support Organisation must collect data for the purpose of Program assurance, including reporting on the Scholarships funded and demonstrating compliance with the Program Guidelines and achievement of Program objectives.

The Scholarship Support Organisation must submit performance reporting to the Department on, among other things, Scholarship Recipient study progress, Internship completion and performance, and administration of funding.

10.1 Evaluation

The Department will evaluate the Program to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved.

Evaluation of the success of the Program will include comparing Scholarship Recipients with non-participants in the following areas:

- the number of students engaging with STEM disciplines (for Rounds One and Two);
- the number of students able to undertake their preferred course of study irrespective of their location;
- the level of qualifications studied; and
- the rate of course completion.

Scholarships Recipients and the Scholarship Support Organisation are required by their respective agreements to provide information to help with this evaluation.

11. Probity

The Australian Government will take reasonable steps to ensure that the application process is fair, is conducted according to the Program Guidelines, and incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct.

Note: These guidelines may be changed from time to time by the Department. If this happens, the revised guidelines will be published on the [Department's website](#).

11.1 Complaints process

Feedback, enquiries and complaints relating to the Program must be sent to the Scholarship Support Organisation.

The Scholarship Support Organisation responds to all enquiries in the first instance. If the Scholarship support organisation cannot resolve the matter, it will refer it to the Department for resolution.

If a Scholarship Applicant does not agree with the way the Department has handled their complaint, they may also make a complaint directly to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's Office may require the complaint to be raised directly with the Scholarship Support Organisation and the Department in the first instance.

The Commonwealth Ombudsman can be contacted on:

Phone (Toll free): 1300 362 072

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.au

More information is on the [Commonwealth Ombudsman's website](#).

11.2 Conflict of interest

Scholarship Applicants

Scholarship Applicants must declare, as part of their application, any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or that, to the best of their knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

A real or perceived conflict of interest may arise if the Scholarship Applicant has a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process;
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the Scholarship Applicant from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives funding under the Program.

If a Scholarship Applicant later identifies that there is an existing or perceived conflict of interest, or that a conflict of interest might arise in relation to their application, the Scholarship Applicant must inform the Scholarship Support Organisation in writing immediately.

Scholarship Support Organisation

All personnel of the Scholarship Support Organisation must declare, on an ongoing basis, any perceived or existing conflicts of interest to the Department.

A real or perceived conflict of interest may arise if any personnel of the Scholarship Support Organisation have a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a Scholarship Applicant;
- professional, commercial or personal relationship with an Internship Host Organisation or its staff;
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation that is likely to interfere with or restrict the Scholarship Support Organisation from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently.

The Department

The Australian Public Service (APS) Code of Conduct (section 13 (7) of the *Public Service Act 1999*) requires that APS employees disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with their APS employment. It is also in the interests of all employees that the firms and people we do business with are confident that we act in accordance with the Code of Conduct and do not make improper use of information. Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff will be handled as set out in the Australian Public Service Code of Conduct (Section 13(7)) of the *Public Service Act 1999*. We publish our conflict of interest policy available on the Department's website.

11.3 Privacy: confidentiality and protection of personal information

Scholarship Applicants' and Recipients' personal information is treated according to the Australian Privacy Principles and the *Privacy Act 1988*. This includes informing Scholarship Applicants' and Recipients':

- what personal information will be collected;
- why Scholarship Applicants' and Recipients' personal information is collected; and
- to whom Scholarship Applicants' and Recipients' personal information will be given.

Scholarship Applicants and Recipients are required, as part of their application, to consent to use and disclosure of personal information for the purposes of the Program. Disclosure includes disclosure by the Scholarship Support Organisation to the Department and may include publication of personal information of successful Scholarship Applicants.

The Australian Government may also use and disclose information about Scholarship Applicants and Recipients under the Program in any other Australian Government business or function. This includes giving information to the Australian Taxation Office for compliance purposes.

Personal information may be revealed to:

- Commonwealth employees and contractors to assist with effective management of the Program;
- employees and contractors of the Department to allow the Department to research, assess, monitor and analyse its programs and activities;

- employees and contractors of other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes, including government administration, research or service delivery;
- other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government agencies in program reports and consultations;
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner;
- the responsible Minister or Parliamentary Secretary; and
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

The Department may share the personal information given it with other Commonwealth agencies for any purposes including government administration, research or service delivery and according to Australian laws, including the:

- *Public Service Act 1999*;
- *Public Service Regulations 1999*;
- *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*;
- *Privacy Act 1988*;
- *Crimes Act 1914*; and
- *Criminal Code Act 1995*.

The Scholarship Agreement includes any specific requirements about special categories of information collected, created or held under the Scholarship Agreement.

11.4 Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the Program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons to whom the information relates.

All Freedom of Information requests must be referred to the Freedom of Information Coordinator in writing by:

Mail: Freedom of Information Team Leader
Schools, Childcare and Corporate Legal
C50MA10
GPO Box 9880
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Email: FOI@education.gov.au

More information on making a Freedom of Information request is on the [Department's website](#).

12. Glossary

Term	Definition
Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	The national policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system. It incorporates the quality assured qualifications from each education and training sector into a single comprehensive national qualifications framework.
Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED)	The Australian Bureau of Statistics' classification of educational activity by the level and field of the activity.
Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS)	The Australian Bureau of Statistics' geographical framework . Its Remoteness Structure classifies Australia into major cities, regional or remote areas based on the area's relative remoteness from services (e.g. health, education or retail).
Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)	The national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training sector.
Department	The Department of Education and Training and includes any department, agency or authority of the Commonwealth which is from time to time responsible for administering the Program.
Eligible Course of Study	Courses eligible for support through a Scholarship. Courses of Study must meet the eligibility requirements listed under Section 5.2 – Eligible Courses of Study.
Eligible Provider	A registered training organisation or higher education provider that meets all the eligibility criteria outlined at Section 5.2 Eligible Courses of Study – Eligible Providers.
Full-time study	As defined by the Eligible Provider of the Eligible Course of Study.
Higher education provider	A provider registered by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to offer an accredited higher education course.
Internship	A professional work experience in which a Scholarship Recipient has agreed learning goals relevant to their Eligible Course of Study and professional development.
Internship Host Organisation	A workplace organisation hosting the Scholarship Recipient for the duration of their Internship.
Minister	The Minister for the Department.
Participation Report	A report completed by the Scholarship Recipient and given to the Scholarship Support Organisation every semester showing continued eligibility for the Scholarship and adequate progress in the Eligible Course of Study.

Term	Definition
Personal Information	Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth).
Program	The Rural and Regional Enterprise Scholarships Program.
Registered Training Organisation (RTO)	Has the same meaning as in the <i>National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011</i> .
Regional or remote area	An area classified as Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote or Very Remote by the Australian Statistical Geography Standard.
Scholarship	Means Scholarship payments and other support provided to Scholarship Recipients.
Scholarship Agreement	The agreement between the Scholarship Recipient and the Scholarship Support Organisation detailing the Scholarship Recipient's responsibilities relating to the Scholarship Program and outcomes that must be achieved. It also sets out the arrangements for the payment of funding for the Scholarship Program to the Scholarship Recipient.
Scholarship Program	The combined study and internship components of the Scholarship.
Scholarship Support Organisation	The third party organisation contracted by the Department to administer the Program.
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics A list of ASCED fields of study considered to be STEM under the Program is at Section 5.2 Eligible Courses of Study - Field of Study.
Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)	The national regulator for Australia's higher education sector established under the <i>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011</i> .
Tertiary education	Any qualification on the Australian Qualifications Framework for which a Scholarship is available, i.e. Certificate IV to Doctoral Degree.
VET	Vocational Education and Training.
Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)	The state regulator for Victoria's VET sector.
Western Australian Training Accreditation Council (WA TAC)	The state regulator for Western Australia's VET sector.