

Allied Health Scholarship Scheme

Applicant Guidelines 2027



ACT
Government

Acknowledgement of Country

The Health and Community Services Directorate acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

We respect the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and their continuing culture and contribution they make to the Canberra region and the life of our city.

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Purpose

The Allied Health Scholarship Scheme (AHSS or the Scheme) is a workforce development initiative that provides financial subsidy to eligible allied health staff undertaking programs of study that are relevant to the ACT public health system. The objectives of this Scheme are to:

- support ongoing education and skill development of allied health staff; and
- enhance practice in service areas and disciplines, particularly those with identified workforce needs.

The Scheme is evaluated annually to ensure it is meeting these objectives.



NOTE: There is no guarantee that all applications will be successful.

This is a reimbursement scheme, and applicants must first be enrolled and have intention to complete the course, regardless of scholarship funds.

Section 1: Eligibility Criteria

1.1 Staff Eligibility Criteria

For the purposes of the Scheme, an eligible staff member is defined as:

- Being on the list of **Eligible Allied Health staff** (refer Appendix 1), where an allied health qualification is a requirement of their role; **AND**
- An **Australian citizen or permanent resident** of Australia; **AND**
- A **permanent employee** with the ACT Public Service, or a **temporary employee** for a period of **at least 12 months continuous duration** as at the application closing date and able to provide evidence of continuous employment; **AND**
- Having a minimum of **two years full-time equivalent post-qualification work experience in the related field of practice, or equivalent for part-time staff**; **AND**
- Able to provide **evidence of a formal offer of place in a course** from an education provider where the focus of study is on allied health practice, health education, management and leadership, research, or data science; **AND**
- **Not having received a scholarship through the AHSS for a new course of study within the previous 12 months**; **AND**

- Able to provide **evidence of current registration** for practitioners registered through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra); **OR**
- Where the applicant is an allied health staff member not registered through Ahpra, able to provide one of the following:
 - **evidence of their current membership of the relevant national association;** or
 - **evidence of their listing on the publicly available register for their discipline;** or
 - **their current credentialing outcome demonstrating credentialing and scope of clinical practice approval;** or
 - **a copy of their allied health qualification** (only where one of the above documents are unavailable).



NOTE: Eligibility criteria are strictly adhered to. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they meet eligibility criteria and submit an eligible application. Applicants who are ineligible will not be considered.

1.2 Exclusions

The following staff are not eligible to apply:

- Nurses, midwives, and medical practitioners
- Those employed in a Health Professional or other classifications who are not on the list of Eligible Allied Health staff (refer Appendix 1), or do not have an eligible allied health qualification
- Those on the list of Eligible Allied Health staff (refer Appendix 1), where an allied health qualification is **NOT** a requirement of their role
- Staff who have all professional development fully funded.

1.3 Course Eligibility Criteria

1.3.1 For allied health professionals

Eligible courses are:

- Relevant to the applicant's allied health discipline, workplace, and organisation; **AND**
- Of at least six months duration; **AND**
- Related to allied health practice, health education, health service management and leadership, research, or data science

Ineligible courses are:

- Doctoral Degree;
- Masters by Research and PhD courses;

- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs);
- Courses that lead to an entry level allied health university qualification.

1.3.2 For allied health assistants

Eligible courses are:

- Relevant to the applicant's allied health assistant practice, workplace, and organisation; **AND**
- Short courses; **AND**
- Related to allied health practice, health education, health service management and leadership, research, or data science

Ineligible courses are:

- Doctoral Degree;
- Masters by Research and PhD courses;
- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs);
- Courses that lead to an entry level allied health university qualification.

1.4 Alternative / Additional Study Support Schemes

- Applicants may be able to complement AHSS funding with financial support from other sources however the applicant must ensure the other sources permit this, and that total funding received does not exceed total cost incurred.
- Some applicants may be eligible to apply for study support schemes that are not co-ordinated by the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer. These include:
 - **Study Assistance:** This is an ACT Government scheme to support staff to acquire skills and knowledge through recognised external qualifications that will benefit the organisation and the individual. Provision of study leave and/or financial assistance is at the discretion of your approving delegate after consideration of equity and fairness in allocation of assistance, your performance plan and development needs, and work area requirements. Financial support is refunded after successful completion of unit(s). AHSS recipients are not eligible to apply for financial assistance through this scheme but may apply for study leave.
 - **Professional Development Support for Health Professionals:** This support is available to staff employed under the *ACT Public Sector Health Professional and Technical and Other Professional Enterprise Agreements* who meet identified eligibility criteria to undertake professional development, training,

and educational activities. Applicants must access their relevant organisational procedures for information regarding eligibility criteria, eligible expenditure, administrative and financial processes involved.

- **The Loan Scheme for Tertiary Study:** This scheme assists employees with fee payment for tertiary education related to their employment. The loan provides advanced payment of course fees which must be repaid through regular payroll deduction within the semester of study. Applicants must access relevant procedures for information regarding eligibility criteria, eligible expenditure, administrative and financial processes involved.
- Any applicant who seeks or gains support from other schemes must note this in their AHSS Application.
- For further information search: 'Support for further study' on your local intranet.



NOTE: Approved AHSS recipients who apply to another funding source for the same course of study may be required to choose which funding source they accept. Further advice should be obtained from the AHSS Administrator.

Section 2: Prioritisation Criteria

- Prioritisation may be needed when the available level of funding cannot be evenly distributed between the approved applicants.
- If prioritisation criteria are required these are identified and documented by the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer.
- Key criteria used to assist in the ranking of applicants may, in order of priority, include:
 1. Indigenous status of applicant
 2. Local workforce shortage of discipline
 3. Health workforce development needs

Section 3: Applying

3.1 Opening and Closing Dates

- Applications will only be accepted during the defined application period once a year.
- The Scheme application period, for study in any academic year, will open on the first **Monday in November of the preceding year** and close at **5:00pm on the second Friday in February of the academic year in which the study will be undertaken.**
- Both new and returning applicants must submit applications during this period.

3.2 Application Package

- The following documents are available from the [ACT Government](#) website:
 - Applicant Guidelines (including eligible allied health staff list)
 - Electronic Application Form
- Applicants should familiarise themselves with the Scheme guidelines, required documents, and application form to ensure they understand the requirements of the Scheme and can submit a complete application by the closing date.
- New applicants are strongly advised to obtain required documentary evidence from their human resources or payroll team regarding their employment status **as soon as possible** to avoid making last minute requests.

3.3 New Applicants

New applicants are those who have not previously received a scholarship through the AHSS, or have received a scholarship more than 12 months ago.

3.3.1 Referees

- New applications must include the names and email addresses of **two senior ACT Public Service referees**.
- **One referee must be the applicant's current line manager.** Applicants are expected to discuss their application with and gain support from their line manager. This referee does not have to be an allied health professional or assistant.
 - Where the applicant's line manager is not supportive of the application, applicants may contact the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer for advice.
- **At least one referee must be a senior allied health staff member** (from a discipline on the eligible allied health staff list).
- For allied health professionals, this referee must be at Health Professional 3 (HP3) or Child Youth Protection Professional 3 (CYPP3) classification (or equivalent), or above that level. For allied health assistants, this referee must be at Allied Health Assistant 4 (AHA4) or Health Professional 3 (HP3) classification, or above that level.
- When the scholarship application is submitted referees will automatically receive a copy of the application and a link to complete the referee report via email. **Referees must submit referee reports by the scheme closing date.** Applicants are responsible for ensuring referee reports are completed within the required timeframe.
- The referee report should be informed by the referee's working relationship with the applicant. They must address:

- The applicant's commitment to continual improvement and excellence in their area of practice;
- How the proposed course of study will add value or benefit to the applicant's discipline, team, division and/or the broader organisation and community.
- The applicant's capacity to complete tertiary level study.

3.3.2 Submitting a Complete Application Package

- New applicants must submit a **complete** application, which includes the following:
 - Application form, including name and email address of the two (2) referees who meet criteria outlined in Section 3.3;
 - Up to date Curriculum Vitae;
 - Up-to-date duty statement relating to applicant's current position (must not be in draft / unapproved state);
 - Evidence of employment status from human resources or payroll team;
 - Evidence of current registration (registered allied health professionals) or alternate evidence where the applicant is from a discipline that is self-regulated (as outlined in Section 1.1);
 - Evidence of enrolment in course;
 - Copy of or link to course outline;
 - The course provider's invoice for the relevant study, or where this is not available an indication of anticipated fees based on what was previously charged by the institution.
- **All new applications including referee reports must be submitted on or before 5:00pm on the advertised closing date.**
- Submission of the second of two referee reports triggers receipt of a complete application by the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer. Incomplete or late applications (received after 5:00pm on the closing date) **will not be accepted.**
- Receipt of applications will be acknowledged by the Scheme Administrator via email.

3.4 Returning Scholarship Recipients

Returning scholarship recipients are those that have received a scholarship through the AHSS within the previous 12 months and would like to renew their scholarship for the same course of study within the next academic year.

3.4.1 Submitting a Scholarship Renewal

- Returning scholarship recipients must submit the following:
 - Application form (abbreviated);
 - Up-to-date duty statement relating to recipient's current position (only if this has changed within the last 12 months);
 - Evidence of current registration (registered allied health professionals) or alternate evidence where the applicant is from a discipline that is self-regulated (as outlined in Section 1.1);
 - The course provider's invoice for the relevant study, or where this is not available an indication of anticipated fees based on what was previously charged by the institution.
- **All renewal applications must be submitted on or before 5:00pm on the advertised closing date.**
- Receipt of renewal applications will be acknowledged by the Scheme Administrator via email.

Section 4: Assessment and Funding

4.1 Assessment Process

- The AHSS is an eligibility-based and limited funds scheme, not an entitlement scheme, and not all applications may be successful.
- Initially the Scheme Administrator screens all applications against eligibility criteria.
- Applications identified as meeting minimum criteria are referred to the AHSS assessment panel.
- The panel is chaired by the AHSS Administrator and includes two additional allied health representatives.
- The assessment panel reviews all applications based on:
 - responses to two (2) selection criteria
 1. identifying the relationship between the proposed course of study and the applicant's area of allied health practice (maximum of 500 words)
 2. identifying how the proposed course of study is relevant to, or will contribute to the applicant's organisation's core values and key strategic priorities (maximum of 500 words); and
 - referee reports

- The assessment panel will score applications according to the following criteria:
 - 5 – identifies extremely strong relationships / relevance / contributions
 - 4 – identifies very good relationships / relevance / contributions
 - 3 – identifies satisfactory relationships / relevance / contributions
 - 2 – relationships / relevance / contributions require development
 - 1 – relationships / relevance / contributions not identified
- The Scheme Administrator and Chief Allied Health Officer assess the Scheme's capacity to support recommended applicants. If the total funding required to support all recommendations is greater than the available budget, then scholarships will be prioritised based on criteria identified in Section 2 and partial funding may be distributed across applicants

4.2 Scholarship Funding

- The Scheme is a reimbursement scheme. The agreed financial support is reimbursed to the scholarship recipient after successful completion of the approved units of study.
- The Chief Allied Health Officer, HCSD, is the authorised financial delegate for the AHSS, and is responsible for:
 - Confirming the available scholarship budget;
 - Allocating and approving scholarships, both number and funding level;
 - Authorising payments to approved recipients.

Section 5: Scholarship Offer

5.1 Receiving an Offer

- All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by email.
- Applicants who do not receive a scholarship offer, and their immediate supervisor, will be advised via email of the reason no offer has been made.
- Applicants who receive an offer, and their immediate supervisor, will be advised via email of the proposed scholarship offer and the semester/s for which the funding is offered.
- Applicants who accept an offer will be sent a formal Deed of Agreement.
- When the Deed of Agreement is signed and returned, the applicant's status changes to that of scholarship recipient.

- Scholarship recipients will be provided with detailed information on how to make a scholarship claim.

5.2 Scope of Scholarship Offer

- Where a scholarship offer is made, the offer remains in place until the recipient completes or withdraws from the course of study.
- The scholarship offer is intended as a *contribution only* towards course fees for the duration of the program of study.
- The scope of the funding offer is limited to full or partial cost of tuition fees only, as identified by the university on the applicant's tax invoice or Commonwealth Assistance Notice relevant to a period of study.

5.3 Items not in Scope of Scholarship Offer

- The scholarship offer does not include any of the following study related items:
 - Student Services and Amenities Fees (SSAF)
 - Late fees
 - Course books
 - Training materials
 - Costs associated with face-to-face on-campus attendance
 - Other study related costs or arrangements such as Study Leave, accommodation, salary and wages, travel, parking etc.

5.4 Clinical Placement Implications

- Placements are available within several ACT Government agencies and are run in accordance with the Deeds and Schedules of education providers.
- If a course of study has a requirement for practicum or placement hours, the education provider must contact the Clinical Placement Office (CPO) to discuss or arrange the required clinical placement.
- Students are not to approach ACT public health services initially to organise their own placements. Questions regarding placements should be directed to your education provider, or the Clinical Placement Office at CPO@act.gov.au

Section 6: Appeals

- Should an applicant be dissatisfied with the AHSS assessment panel decision, an appeal may be made for review.
- The appeal must:
 - be made in writing;
 - be submitted within 8 weeks of the applicant receiving notification of the assessment panel's decision;
 - identify the basis of the appeal; and
 - be addressed to the Chief Allied Health Officer:
alliedhealthscholarships@act.gov.au
- The decision of the Chief Allied Health Officer is final.
- Applicants may also provide feedback relating to the AHSS at any time via the same email address. Feedback should be constructive and appropriate in tone.

Section 7: Changes to Study Program post Scholarship Acceptance

- Scholarship recipients are required to advise the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer in writing of any changes to their program of study, including but not limited to:
 - the number of study units undertaken
 - the course of study undertaken
 - withdrawal from a unit or course of study
 - failure to satisfy minimum course requirements or qualify for a pass grade (fail)
 - any change of employment circumstances such as temporary or permanent cessation of employment with an eligible organisation, temporary or permanent movement between eligible organisations, leave-without-pay or extended personal leave.
- If a scholarship recipient transfers to a different course their scholarship isn't guaranteed to follow them. It will only be transferred if the new course meets AHSS eligibility requirements.



NOTE: If a scholarship recipient undertakes less units than outlined in their application, they will only receive reimbursement for units undertaken.

If a scholarship recipient undertakes more units than outlined in their application, or the cost of the approved units increases after their application is submitted, the approved amount is the maximum amount reimbursed. There is no capacity to increase the offer made.

Scholarship recipients who fail a unit are ineligible to receive reimbursement for that unit of study and are responsible for paying course fees to re-sit that unit.

Section 8: Knowledge Sharing and Evaluation

- Scholarship recipients may be invited and expected to provide feedback on the learning gained and benefits of the scholarship and the program of study to themselves, their workplace / service / team, and their organisation across a variety of forums.
- The Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer conduct ongoing evaluation of the Scheme to continually improve and ensure opportunities meet the identified objectives. At the end of each academic year the administrative process and outcomes of the scholarship program are evaluated. Scholarship recipients will be sent an evaluation survey to complete between November and February, for the academic year just ended. Data collected will be de-identified and analysed, and may be used to guide Scheme improvements, or referenced in future reports, presentations, or publications.

Section 9: Copyright and Publication Implications

- Funding support from the HCSD AHSS must be acknowledged in all reports, publications, conference papers and posters that have direct correlation with the recipient's course of study. The AHSS Administrator must be advised in advance of the intention to disseminate a report, publication, conference paper or poster in which funding support from the HCSD Allied Health Scholarship Scheme is acknowledged.

Appendix 1: Eligible Allied Health Staff

Allied Health Staff Eligible for the Allied Health Scholarship Scheme
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner / Liaison Officer
Allied Health Assistant
Analytical Scientist - Forensic Chemist, Environmental Chemist, Microbiologist, Forensic Toxicologist
Audiologist
Biomedical Engineer
Cardiac Perfusionist
Cardiac Scientist
Cardiac Sonographer
Child, Youth Protection Professional
Clinical Neurophysiology Scientist
Counsellor
Creative Art Therapist
Dental Prosthetist/ Dental Therapist/ Oral Health Therapist
Dietitian
Environmental Health Officer
Epidemiologist
Exercise Physiologist
Genetic Counsellor
Medical Laboratory Scientist
Medical Physicist
Music Therapist
Nuclear Medicine Technologist
Occupational Therapist
Orthoptist
Pedorthist
Pharmacist
Physiotherapist
Play Therapist
Podiatrist
Prosthetist and Orthotist
Psychologist
Public Health Officer
Radiation Therapist
Radiographer
Respiratory Scientist
Sleep Scientist
Social Worker
Sonographer
Speech Pathologist / Speech-Language Pathologist