



ACT
Government

ACT Health

ALLIED HEALTH POSTGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

APPLICANT GUIDELINES

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PURPOSE

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

- support ongoing allied health professional education and skill development; and
- enhance practice in service areas and professions, 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 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 allied health professional is defined as:

- Being from an **eligible allied health profession** (refer Appendix 1), where that profession is a requirement of their role; **AND**
- An **Australian citizen or permanent resident** of Australia; **AND**
- A **permanent or temporary employee** of Canberra Health Services, including North Canberra Hospital, or ACT Health Directorate for a period of **at least 12 months continuous duration** as at the Scheme 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 postgraduate course** from an education provider where the focus of study is on clinical practice, health professional education, management and leadership, research, or data science; **AND**
- **Not having received a scholarship through the AHPGSS for a new course of study within the previous two years; AND**
- Able to provide **evidence of current registration** for practitioners registered through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA); **OR**
- Where the applicant is from an allied health profession not registered through AHPRA, able to provide one of the following:
 - **a certified copy of their current membership certificate of the relevant professional association; or**
 - **evidence of their listing on the publicly available register of professionals for their profession; or**
 - **their current credentialing round outcome letter demonstrating credentialing and scope of clinical practice approval; or**
 - **a certified 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 STAFF NOT IN SCOPE

- Nurses, midwives, and medical practitioners are not eligible to apply.
- Staff employed in a Health Professional or other classification who are not from an eligible allied health profession, or do not have an eligible allied health qualification are not eligible to apply.
- Staff with an eligible allied health qualification, where that qualification is **NOT** a requirement of their role are not eligible to apply.

1.3 COURSE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligible courses are:

- Relevant to the applicant's profession, workplace, and organisation; **AND**
- Of at least six months duration (if completed full time); **AND**
- Offered by an Australian onshore university at one of the following qualification levels:
 - Graduate Certificate - Australian Qualifications Framework¹(AQF) Level 8; or
 - Graduate Diploma - AQF Level 8; or
 - Masters (Coursework only) - AQF Level 9; **AND**
- Related to clinical practice, health professional education, health service management and leadership, research, or data science.

Ineligible courses are:

- Courses offered by overseas universities, whether through online study, on-campus study, or partnerships with Australian universities;
- Courses of less than 6 months duration (from start to completion);
- Courses that lead to a vocational or entry level university qualification;
- Masters by Research and PhD courses;
- Masters courses that lead to an entry level allied health qualification;
- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

1.4 ALTERNATIVE STUDY SUPPORT SCHEMES

- Some applicants may be eligible to apply for alternative 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

¹ <https://www.aqf.edu.au/sites/aqf/files/aqf-2nd-edition-january-2013.pdf>

performance plan and development needs, and work area requirements.

Financial support is refunded after successful completion of unit(s). AHPGSS 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 Enterprise Agreement 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.
- Any applicant who seeks or gains support from these schemes should note this on their AHPGSS Application Form.
- For further information search: 'Support for further study' on your local intranet.

NOTE: Approved AHPGSS 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 can be obtained from the AHPGSS Administrator.



SECTION 2: PRIORITISATION CRITERIA

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

SECTION 3: SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

3.1 OPENING AND CLOSING DATES

- Applications are opened once a year. Applications will only be accepted during the defined application period.
- 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.**

3.2 APPLICATION PACKAGE

- The following documents are available from the ACT Health Directorate website:
<https://www.health.act.gov.au/careers/allied-health/learning-and-professional-development/postgraduate-scholarship-scheme-allied>
 - Applicant Guidelines
 - Eligible Allied Health Professionals List
 - Electronic Application Form
- Applicants should familiarise themselves with the Scheme guidelines, requisite documents, and application form to ensure they understand the requirements of the Scheme and can submit a complete application by the closing date.
- Applicants are strongly advised to obtain required documentary evidence regarding their employment status **as soon as possible** to avoid making last minute requests to Shared Services.

3.3 REFEREES

- Applications must include the names and email addresses of **two senior ACT Public Service referees** in their application.
- **One referee must be their 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.
- **At least one referee must be a senior allied health professional** (from a profession identified on the eligible allied health professions list).

- Referees must be at HP3 classification (or equivalent) 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 required referee report. **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 profession, team, division and/or the broader organisation and community.
 - The applicant's capacity to complete postgraduate level study.

3.4 SUBMITTING A COMPLETE APPLICATION PACKAGE

- Applicants must submit a **complete** application, which includes the following:
 - Application form, including names 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 Shared Services;
 - Evidence of current registration (regulated allied health professionals) or alternate evidence where the applicant is from a self-regulated allied health profession (as outlined in Section 1.1);
 - Evidence of enrolment in course;
 - Copy of or link to course outline;
 - Where available, copy of invoice for the relevant semester / trimester of study.
- **All applications and referee reports must be submitted** via the [online application form](#) **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.

SECTION 4: ASSESSMENT AND FUNDING OF APPLICATIONS

4.1 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- The AHPGSS 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 AHPGSS assessment panel.
- The panel is chaired by the AHPGSS Administrator and includes two additional allied health representatives from ACT Health Directorate.
- 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 (max 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 (max 500 words); and
 - referee reports
- The assessment panel will rank 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 provisional recommendations is greater than the available budget, then scholarships will be prioritised based on criteria identified in Section 2.

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 ACT Health Directorate Chief Allied Health Officer is the authorised financial delegate for the AHPGSS, 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 why no offer is being 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 is intended as a *contribution only* towards the postgraduate course fees.
- Specifically, 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 AS PART 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
 - Any other study related costs or arrangements including Study Leave, accommodation, salary and wages, travel etc

5.4 CLINICAL PLACEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- Placements are available within several ACT Government public health facilities and are run in accordance with the Deeds and Schedules of education providers.
- If your course of study has a requirement for practicum or placement hours, your education provider must contact the ACT Health Directorate 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 AHPGSS 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 panel's decision;
 - identify the basis of the appeal; and
 - be addressed to the ACT Chief Allied Health Officer:
alliedhealthscholarships@act.gov.au
- The decision of the ACT Chief Allied Health Officer is final.
- Applicants may also provide feedback relating to the process at any time. 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.



Important
Information

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

END GUIDELINES

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ELIGIBLE ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Eligible Allied Health Professions Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme
Analytical Scientist - Forensic Chemist, Environmental Chemist, Microbiologist, Forensic Toxicologist
Audiologist
Biomedical Engineer
Cardiac Perfusionist
Cardiac Scientist
Cardiac Sonographer
Clinical Neurophysiology Scientist
Counsellor
Creative Art Therapist
Dental Prosthetist, Dental Therapist, Oral Health Therapist
Dietitian
Environmental Health Scientist
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

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