

act health DIRECTORATE

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CHIEF ALLIED HEALTH OFFICE

OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP & EDUCATION

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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 retention 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 Scheme aims to support ongoing allied health professional education and skill development, and enhance practice in service areas and professions, particularly those with identified workforce needs.

## SECTION 1: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

### 1.1 Staff eligibility criteria

For the purposes of the Scheme, an eligible allied health professional is defined as:

1. Being from an **eligible allied health profession** - refer Appendix 1; **AND**
2. An **Australian citizen or permanent resident** of Australia; **AND**
3. A **permanent or temporary employee** of Canberra Health Services, Calvary Public Hospital Bruce, 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**
4. Having a minimum of **two year’s full-time equivalent post-qualification clinical experience**; **AND**
5. 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, and/or research/data science; **AND**
6. **Not having received a scholarship through the AHPGSS for a new course of study within the previous three years**; **AND**
7. Able to provide **evidence of current registration** for practitioners registered through the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA); **OR**
8. 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 allied health qualification**; or
	* **a certified copy of their membership certificate of the relevant professional association**; or
	* **evidence of their listing on the publicly available register of professionals for their profession; or**
	* **their last credentialing round outcome letter demonstrating credentialing and scope of clinical practice approval**.



**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 for the AHPGSS

* 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.

### 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 on-shore university at one of the following qualification levels:
	+ Graduate Certificate - Australian Qualifications Framework[[1]](#footnote-1)(AQF) Level 8; or
	+ Graduate Diploma - AQF Level 8; or
	+ Masters (Coursework only) - AQF Level 9; **AND**
* Related to clinical practice, health professional education, management and leadership, and/or research/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 Other Study Support Schemes

Some applicants may be eligible to apply for other study support schemes. 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). AHPGSS recipients are not eligible to apply for financial assistance through this scheme but may apply for study leave.
* **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.

The Office of Professional Leadership and Education does not administer these schemes.

Any applicant who seeks support from these schemes should note this on their AHPGSS Application Form.

For further information search: [Support for further study](https://healthhub.act.gov.au/employment-resources/staff-development/support-further-study) on your local intranet. Employees of Calvary Public Hospital Bruce should discuss study support options available with their supervisor.

**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.

### 1.5 Clinical Placement Implications

Placements are available within several ACT 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 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. If you have questions regarding placements, please direct these to your education provider, or the Clinical Placement Office at CPO@act.gov.au.

## SECTION 2: SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

### 2.1 Opening and Closing Dates

* Applications are opened once a year. Applications will only be accepted during the defined opening timeframe.
* Applications 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**.

### 2.2 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
	+ Electronic Referee Report Form
* Applicants are required to familiarise themselves with the Scheme Guidelines, the Application Form and Referee Report template so that they understand the requirements of the Scheme and can complete and submit an eligible application by the closing date.
* Applicants are strongly advised to obtain the documentary evidence regarding their employment status **as soon as possible** to avoid making last minute requests to Shared Services or Calvary HR.

### 2.3 Referee Reports

* Applications must include the names of **two senior referees** in their application.
* **At least one referee must be a senior allied health professional.**
* **One referee must be their current line manager**, and 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.
* Referees must be at HP3 classification (or equivalent) or above that level.
* The referee must read the applicant’s completed application.
* Applicants must direct referees to the online AHPGSS referee report template.
* 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.

### 2.4 Submitting a Complete Application Package

* Applicants must submit a **complete** application, which includes the following:
	1. Application form, including names of two (2) referees who meet criteria outlined in Section 2.3;
	2. Up-to-date curriculum vitae;
	3. Up-to-date duty statement (must not be in draft / unapproved state);
	4. Evidence of employment status from Shared Services Payroll or Calvary HR;
	5. Evidence of current registration (regulated allied health professionals) or alternate evidence (as outlined in Section 1.1 viii) where the applicant is from a self-regulated allied health profession;
	6. Evidence of enrolment in course;
	7. Copy of or link to course outline;
	8. Where available, copy of invoice for Semester 1 of the following academic year.
* All applications must be submitted via the [online application form](https://www.health.act.gov.au/careers/allied-health/learning-and-professional-development/postgraduate-scholarship-scheme-allied) on or before 5:00pm on the advertised closing date.
* Incomplete and/or late applications (received after 5:00pm on the advertised closing date) **will not be accepted**.
* Receipt of applications will be acknowledged by the Scheme Administrator.

## SECTION 3: ASSESSMENT AND FUNDING OF APPLICATIONS

### 3.1 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;
* Determining priority or ranking criteria where demand exceeds available budget;
* Allocating and approving scholarships, both number and funding level;
* Authorising payments to approved recipients.

### Image result for important information

### NOTE: The Scheme will be reviewed in 2020 - 2021. Funding for second half of the 2021 academic year cannot be guaranteed.

### 3.2 Assessment Process

The AHPGSS is an eligibility-based and limited funds Scheme, not an entitlement Scheme, and not all applications may be successful.

For the purposes of the assessment process the following definitions apply:

* **New applicant** - a *first-time* applicant to the Scheme;
* **Continuing applicant** - a recipient of a previous AHPGSS scholarship who re-applies to access the Scheme to continue the *same* course of study;
* **Repeat Applicant** - a recipient of a previous AHPGSS scholarship who re-applies for a *new* course of study, noting that there is a three-year exclusion period in place for staff who have received an allied health postgraduate scholarship leading to an award level program of study as outlined in Section 1.3.

The following assessment process is followed:

1. The AHPGSS Administrator screens and assesses all applications against eligibility and selection criteria.
2. Applications identified as meeting the criteria are provisionally recommended for a postgraduate scholarship and then identified to the Chief Allied Health Officer for further consideration.
3. The Scheme Administrator and Chief Allied Health Officer assess the Scheme’s capacity to support provisionally 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 areas of need. Areas of need may be informed by service areas or workforce shortage reports, are subject to change, and may differ from year to year.
4. Recommendations are made and may be referred to an Assessment Panel for final determination, noting that scholarship offers must be informed by available funding.

## SECTION 4: SCHOLARSHIP OFFER

### 4.1 Receiving an offer

* All applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by email.
* Applicants who do not receive an offer will be advised of the reason why no offer is being made.
* Where an offer is made, the email will outline the amount of funding and the semester/s for which the funding is offered.
* Applicants who receive an offer will be required to accept or decline the offer by return email within a specified timeframe. If the offer is accepted a formal Deed of Agreement will be sent to the applicant.
* 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 submit a scholarship claim.

### 4.2 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 as follows:

* Approved postgraduate scholarships are a contribution towards the cost of actual tuition fees only, as identified by the university on the applicant’s tax invoice or Commonwealth Assistance Notice relevant to a period of study.
* The maximum period of study supported per application is 3 semesters per a single academic year.

### 4.3 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

## SECTION 5: APPEALS

There is **no appeal process** and applicants cannot appeal the decision or the amount of funding.

## SECTION 6: Feedback

Scholarship recipients may be invited and expected to provide feedback on the outcomes and benefits of the scholarship and the program of study to themselves, their workplace / service / team, and their organisation across a variety of forums.

## SECTION 7: CHANGES TO STUDY PROGRAM POST SCHOLARSHIP ACCEPTANCE

Scholarship recipients are required to advise the Office of Professional Leadership and Education 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)

**NOTE:** If a scholarship recipient undertakes less units than outlined in their application, they are only eligible to 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 payment amount. 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 full payment of course fees to re-sit that unit.

## SECTION 8: COPYRIGHT AND PUBLICATION IMPLICATIONS

Funding support from the ACT Health Directorate Allied Health Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme 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

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| --- |
| **Analytical Scientist - Forensic Chemist, Environmental Chemist, Microbiologist, Toxicologist** |
| **Audiologist** |
| **Biomedical Engineer** |
| **Cardiac Perfusionist** |
| **Cardiac Scientist** |
| **Clinical Neurophysiology Scientist** |
| **Counsellor** |
| **Creative Arts Therapist** |
| **Dental Practitioner - Dental Prosthetist, Dental Therapist, Oral Health Therapist** |
| **Dietitian** |
| **Environmental Health Scientist** |
| **Epidemiologist** |
| **Exercise Physiologist** |
| **Genetic Counsellor** |
| **Medical Laboratory Scientist** |
| **Medical Physicist** |
| **Nuclear Medicine Technologist** |
| **Occupational Therapist** |
| **Orthoptist** |
| **Pharmacist** |
| **Physiotherapist** |
| **Podiatrist** |
| **Prosthetist and Orthotist** |
| **Psychologist** |
| **Radiation Therapist** |
| **Radiographer** |
| **Respiratory Scientist** |
| **Sleep Scientist** |
| **Social Worker** |
| **Sonographer** |
| **Speech Pathologist** |



ACT HEALTH DIRECTORATE

OCTOBER 2020

This document will be reviewed in September 2021, or earlier in the event of significant scheme changes.

1. <https://www.aqf.edu.au/sites/aqf/files/aqf-2nd-edition-january-2013.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)