

Nursing and Midwifery Postgraduate Scholarship Guidelines 2021

Purpose of Scholarships

Nursing and Midwifery Scholarships for postgraduate tuition fees are offered to support clinical, education, research, leadership, and management scopes of practice. Courses that do not lead to a qualification directly related to an applicant's scope of practice will not be supported.

The allocation of scholarships will be **prioritised in the following order:**

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander applicants.
- Workforce development approved study programs.
- Applicants who have not received funding for studies previously.
- Areas of **identified need** as determined by ACT Health. These areas of need are subject to change and may differ from year to year.
- Graduate Certificate courses.
- Graduate Diploma courses.
- Nurse Practitioner courses (with an identified position on completion).
- Masters level courses will be considered if directly related to the applicant's current role.

Each application will be scored according to the ranking table (Appendix A). Funding will be allocated to the highest scoring applicants first, according to available funds.

Scholarships for international study are not supported through this Scheme.

Exclusion

A two-year scholarship exclusion period applies to staff who have previously received an ACT Health Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship for a full program of study. Consideration will be given to applicants upgrading an existing program of study.

The Nursing and Midwifery Office may exclude applications at any time during the application process, including under the following circumstances:

- The application is not submitted through the online Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship application system,
- The application is incomplete, including missing documents,
- The supporting documents are not in PDF format,
- The application does not meet the eligibility criteria,
- The application is submitted after the closing date,
- The applicant has received, or intends to receive, funding from another source for the course of study,
- The application includes false or misleading information.

Eligibility

To be eligible for an ACT Health Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship, applicants must:

- a) be employed by ACT Public Health Services in a permanent nursing/midwifery position for a minimum of one year at full-time equivalence prior to their scholarship application, not including transition to practice year,
- b) declare if funding from another source has, or intends to be, received for the postgraduate program of study,
- c) declare if funding support for another program of study has been previously received from the ACT Health Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship Scheme,
- d) complete an application and populate an email to obtain endorsement from their direct line Supervisor and Director of Nursing and/or Midwifery. The application will automatically be sent to the applicant's Supervisor/Director of Nursing (DON) and Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery for approval. Please allow at least seven days prior to closure of the applications for Supervisors and DONs to review and approve applications.

Allocation of Funds

ACT Health has complete discretion to determine distribution of funds awarded to successful applicants. The availability of funding is dependent upon the funding allocation.

Scholarships are awarded for a period of up to one calendar year only. If the proposed course of study will exceed one calendar year, applicants are required to re-apply each year for a continuing scholarship.

Scholarship funding covers tuition fees only. Associated costs, including course administration fees, student union fees, textbooks and the purchase of equipment, are not funded by the Scheme.

Reimbursement of tuition fees will be paid in accordance with the following fee scale if funds allow:

- Workforce Development Scholarships will receive 100% funding for tuition costs.
- Graduate Certificate Scholarships (4 units) will receive \$750 per unit on successful completion of each unit. Up to a maximum of \$3,000.
- Graduate Diploma Scholarships (8 units) will receive \$750 per unit on successful completion of each unit. Up to a maximum of \$6,000.
- Masters Scholarships for courses directly related to current role (up to 12 units) will receive \$750 per unit on successful completion of each unit. Up to a maximum of \$9,000 for the total program of study.

Applications

Applications must be submitted by the due date for assessment. Late applications will not be considered. Applicants are required to select the relevant application for submission:

- I. **Application for NEW Post Graduate Program of Study:** For nurses and midwives who are:
 - commencing a new program of study, or
 - continuing study and not previously awarded a scholarship.
- II. **Application for CONTINUING Post Graduate Program of Study:** For nurses and midwives who are seeking continuing scholarship support for their postgraduate program of study.

Applications will be assessed by the applicant's Director of Nursing (DON). If the applicant is not supported by the DON, they will receive an email advising that their application will not be progressed.

Criteria for Scholarship Applications

Applicants are required to address several criteria in the online application form and obtain endorsement from their current Nursing/Midwifery Supervisor and Director of Nursing and/or Midwifery.

Assessment of Applications

Each supported application will be reviewed to ensure it is complete and graded according to the ranking criteria by the Nursing and Midwifery Scholarships Team. Each supported application will then be reviewed and assessed on merit by a Nursing and Midwifery Scholarships Panel. The function of the Panel is to review all applications based upon responses to the selection criteria, Supervisor recommendations, DON/M endorsements and ranking criteria. Upon completion of the panel review process, applicants will be advised in writing of the outcome of their scholarship submission. The Panel will consist of the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, the Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship Co-ordinator, and an Independent Member from the Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (ANMF).

Should an applicant be dissatisfied with the Panel's decision, an appeal process has been established.

Written requests for review of panel decisions must:

- be provided within eight (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 Nursing and Midwifery Officer: NMO@act.gov.au.

The decision of the ACT Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer is final.

Agreement and Reimbursements

All successful applicants will receive an ACT Health Nursing and Midwifery Post Graduate Scholarship Scheme Agreement and Fringe Benefit Declaration form. Applicants are required to sign the Agreement and FBT form, have their signature witnessed, and return it to the Nursing and Midwifery Office by the due date specified in the letter of offer.

Reimbursements will be processed on submission of documents as per the reimbursement checklist and upon successful completion of the study period. Reimbursement requests must be submitted within 8 weeks of completion of the study period. Applicants must phone or email the Nursing and Midwifery Office if their results have not been received within this timeframe.

Reimbursement of course fees is provided through electronic funds transfer directly into the scholarship recipient's nominated bank account.

Extension and Suspension of Scholarships

All requests for variation to the Scholarship Agreement must be notified in writing to the Nursing and Midwifery Office.

Termination of Scholarships

An ACT Health Nursing and Midwifery Scholarship may be terminated at any time:

- at the recipient's request,
- if in the opinion of ACT Health, the recipient's performance is unsatisfactory,
- if the recipient terminates enrolment or fails to observe the conditions of the Scholarship Agreement.

Lapse of Scholarships

A scholarship will be deemed to have lapsed:

- upon completion of the course of study,
- when all money has been paid according to the agreed amount as stated on the Nursing and Midwifery Post Registration Scholarship Scheme: Agreement,
- within 8 weeks of completion of each semester of study and request for reimbursement of fees has not been received by the Nursing and Midwifery Office.

Income Tax Requirements

Reimbursements received from some scholarship categories may be subject to taxation. It is recommended that all scholarship recipients obtain advice from a registered accountant or the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Fringe Benefit Tax (FBT)

ACT Health incurs liability for FBT on the Nursing and Midwifery Post Graduate Scholarship Scheme. To reduce the amount of this liability and maximise the amount of funds available for scholarships, ACT Health provide the ATO with documentation from each scholarship recipient covering the nature and the purpose of the expense incurred. All scholarship recipients will be sent a Fringe Benefit Declaration form to complete and return that will cover the period from 1st April to 31st March of each year. Completion of the Fringe Benefit Declaration form **will not** result in personal financial liability.

Commonwealth HECS-HELP and FEE-HELP Schemes

Scholarship recipients who enrol in undergraduate units or full fee-paying postgraduate units may be eligible for Commonwealth assistance through HECS-HELP or FEE-HELP arrangements.

HECS-HELP is a loan scheme for eligible students enrolled in Commonwealth supported places. Further information on HECS-HELP study support can be accessed at:

<http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/help-paying-my-fees/hecs-help/pages/hecs-help-welcome>

FEE-HELP is a loan scheme that assists eligible fee-paying students by funding all or part of their tuition fees. Further information on FEE-HELP study support can be accessed at:

<http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/studyassist/help-paying-my-fees/fee-help/pages/fee-help->

Other Sources of Funding

The ACT Public Service Studies Assistance Scheme assists employees to undertake external study leading to a qualification by providing discretionary access to paid study leave and/or financial assistance. Further information can be accessed at: <http://healthhub.act.gov.au/employment-resources/staff-development/support-further-study>

Appendix A

2021 Postgraduate Application Ranking and Selection Criteria		
Rank 1: Equity	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent	Verified <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation of Aboriginality (COA) Letter of support Community Reference
Rank 2: All other applicants ranked in order of total selection criteria score. Funding will be allocated to highest scoring applicants first, according to available funds.		
	Select one	Score
1. Years of ACT Health service	> 10 years 6 – 10 years 1 – 5 years < 1 year	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Not eligible
2. Course	Graduate Certificate Graduate Diploma Masters related to current role	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
3. Proportion of course already completed	Course partially completed and no previous funding received from ACT Health	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
4. Priority Study Area	Workforce Development Child and Family Health Mental Health PG Course (UC)	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 10
5. Previous Scholarship Funding	None Travel/Professional Development Scholarship Funding only Scholarship Funding more than 3 years ago	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 5
TOTAL		

Contact: Nursing & Midwifery Office, N-MScholarships@act.gov.au | Phone: 02 5124 4978