

# Final Year Higher Education Scholarship Guidelines

Department of Education

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Acronyms	Full form
AASW	Australian Association of Social Workers
AHPRA	Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
CDU	Charles Darwin University
COA	Confirmation of Aboriginality
DCDD	Department of Corporate and Digital Development
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
HELP	Higher Education Loan Program
NTG	Northern Territory Government
NTPS	Northern Territory Public Sector
P1	Professional level 1
P2	Professional level 2
SWIPS	Student Wellbeing and Inclusion Programs and Services

## Contents

1. Overview.....	4
2. Key Dates.....	4
3. General Information.....	4
4. Eligibility .....	5
5. Application process.....	6
6. Assessment and award process .....	7
7. Payment / Reporting and acquittal .....	8
8. Frequently Asked Questions .....	9
9. Glossary .....	11
Final Year HE Scholarship – Application Checklist .....	12

## 1. Overview

Inclusive education supports the physical and mental wellbeing and diversity of all children and young people and enables them to engage, grow and achieve their full potential.

To support inclusive education, the Northern Territory (NT) Department of Education (the department) needs a skilled allied health and special education workforce to build the capacity of school staff and strengthen systems for early and timely support for children and students with disability and diverse needs.

The Final Year Higher Education Scholarship (the scholarship) program is a strategic investment to support the recruitment and retention of allied health practitioners in areas that the department has identified as experiencing workforce shortages.

Up to 4 scholarships are awarded annually to eligible NT based Charles Darwin University (CDU) students in their final year of study in a relevant entry to practice allied health degree. The scholarship provides financial support of \$15,000 for recipients who complete their studies and a guarantee of employment in a permanent Professional level 1 (P1) or level 2 (P2) allied health position in the department.

## 2. Key Dates

Date	Milestone	Description
July	Applications open	Applications open in NTG Jobs and Grants NT
September	Applications close	Applications close
October	Applications assessed	Application assessed by panel
November	Applicants advised of outcome	Successful and unsuccessful applicants notified of outcome

## 3. General Information

The Final Year Higher Education Scholarship supports the recruitment and retention of allied health practitioners in areas that the department has identified as experiencing workforce shortages. The scholarships aim to help local NT students to complete their studies and commence their career with the department by:

- supporting the cost of studying an accredited allied health degree at CDU,
- increasing front-line allied health practitioners in areas currently experiencing workforce shortages, and
- improving retention of allied health practitioners within the department.

The scholarship provides \$15,000 to support the costs associated with studying an accredited program of study or commencing a career after graduating. Recipients are also eligible for an additional retention allowance calculated on recipients' length of service and salary range. Recipients may use scholarship funds to pay off HECS / HELP, pay for professional supervision, mentoring, registration or membership fees, or for other expenses. The \$15,000 scholarship payment will be made after recipients have successfully completed study and meet essential criteria and pre-employment checks and before they commence employment with the department.

Successful applicants will be required to accept a conditional offer of employment and sign a funding agreement. The funding agreement is a legally binding document that specifies the terms and conditions, requirements and expectations between the department and the scholarship recipient.

## 4. Eligibility

The allied health professions that are eligible for the scholarship program in 2024 include:

- Psychology, and
- Social Work.

You can apply for and receive a scholarship if you:

- Apply for a permanent P1/P2 School Counsellor or P1/P2 Psychologist position, and are deemed suitable for appointment<sup>1</sup>,
- Are expecting to graduate from an accredited entry to practice social work or psychology degree with CDU from mid-2024 through to mid-2025,
- Obtain registration with the relevant National Board<sup>2</sup> or demonstrate eligibility for full membership with the relevant professional association.<sup>3</sup>
- Are an NT resident,
- Are an Australian citizen or permanent resident,
- Complete essential pre-employment checks e.g., obtain Working with Children Clearance,
- Commence employment as soon as practicable on completing studies.

The terms and conditions of employment will be outlined in the final letter of offer of employment provided when the employment commencement date is confirmed. The terms and conditions of the scholarship will be outlined in the Scholarship Agreement.

You cannot apply for and receive a scholarship if you receive a scholarship, bursary, stipend or funding from another source, excluding:

- Australian Government Youth Allowance and ABSTUDY
- One-off merit scholarships paid in one year or less
- Access and equity grants
- Subsidies and grants not paid to you directly, e.g., an accommodation scholarship or textbook bursary.

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<sup>1</sup> An offer of employment does not guarantee that a scholarship will be awarded.

<sup>2</sup> Psychologists are required to have provisional or general registration with the Psychology Board of Australia (AHPRA).

<sup>3</sup> Social workers are required to be eligible for membership with the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW).

## 5. Application process

To apply for a Final Year Higher Education Scholarship, follow these concurrent steps:

1. Read over the scholarship guidelines to confirm you meet all eligibility criteria,
2. Fill in the 'final year higher education scholarship' application form through [Grants NT](#), at the same time as prepare an application for a Graduate Entry School Counsellor or Graduate Entry Psychologist position through the [NTG Job website](#),
3. Check you have attached all required documentation to your applications and submit, [refer application checklist](#).

### 5.1. Job application process

The job application submission through the [NTG Job website](#) (Step 2) will require the following documents and information:

- Resume
- 1 page cover letter that confirms your interest in the scholarship and details experience, skills and knowledge as they relate to your selected position,
- Official academic results (transcript) for the relevant degree qualification,
- The names and contact details of two referees,<sup>4</sup>
- Confirmation of Australian Citizenship/evidence of permanent residency,
- Certified copy of identification confirming your residential address (i.e., current copy of a Northern Territory Drivers licence) / Proof of NT residency (for example, a bill or photo ID),
- NTPS Statutory Declaration<sup>5</sup>
- Working with Children Clearance (Ochre Card).<sup>6</sup>

Applicants are strongly encouraged to enquire about the graduate entry scholarship positions with the contact person and ask questions about the role, the location, how new graduates are supported in the work environment.

### 5.2. Scholarship application process

The scholarship application submission through [Grants NT](#) (Step 3) will require the following documents and information:

- A personal statement / short answer responses to assessment criteria, covering why you chose your field of study and your professionalism and commitment to wellbeing and inclusion in the NT (entered into the application form),

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<sup>4</sup> Referees must include one placement supervisor / field educator and may include one current or former line managers from paid employment (if suitable) or your academic leader or coordinator.

<sup>5</sup> Aboriginal applicants who wish to be assessed under the department's Special Measures Recruitment Plan must attach a NTPS statutory declaration. If successful, the applicant will be required to provide Confirmation of Aboriginality (COA) prior to commencing in the position

<sup>6</sup> You are able to submit your application without an Ochre card however prior to commencing your it's compulsory when working with children to complete background checks and screening. If you don't have the appropriate clearance, you won't be permitted to commence.

- Details of allied health placements undertaken during your entry to practice allied health degree (organisation, role/area, dates/length of placement, name of placement supervisor/field educator),<sup>7</sup>
- Endorsement from your Academic Lead, Course Coordinator or their nominated delegate,
- Confirmation of enrolment into an entry to practice allied health degree at CDU,
- Evidence of degree qualification or official academic results (transcript),
- Study plan / your anticipated completion date.

Failure to provide the above documents and information will impact on the finalisation of scholarship applications.

## 6. Assessment and award process

You will receive a confirmation email on receipt of your job and scholarship applications. If further documentation is required to progress your application, you will be contacted via email.

If your application meets the eligibility criteria, it will be submitted to the panel for assessment. Eligible applications will be ranked based on assessment criteria. Up to 4 scholarships will be awarded.

The assessment panel will undertake the selection process for the P1 / P2 graduate entry scholarship positions and scholarship applications. The panel will undertake the following assessment process:

1. Pre-employment screening (final outcome depending on applicants completing studies and pre-employment checks),
2. Referee checks,
3. Interview shortlisted applicants,
4. Make recommendations regarding offers of employment and awarding of scholarships to the delegate,
5. Notify applicants of the outcome of employment and scholarship applications.

### 6.1. If your application is successful

If your application is successful, the department will correspond with you to follow your study / pre-employment check progress and confirm an employment date with you. This award process involves:

1. **Conditional employment offer** – You will receive a conditional letter of offer of employment from the department via email,
2. **Scholarship notification** – You will receive a notification of your scholarship (if applicable) via Grants NT notification,
3. **Offer acceptance** - You will upload the following documents to Grants NT:
  - Signed and returned conditional letter of offer via email.
  - Signed and returned grant agreement confirming you will continue to meet scholarship criteria and terms via Grants NT. This is a legally binding document.

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<sup>7</sup> Your placement supervisor/field educators may also be used as referees in your job application (Step 2).

- Signed Talent release form, allowing the department to use your image and/or testimonial for promotional and recruitment purposes.
  - Vendor creation/amendment application and statement by a supplier form.
4. **Progress check-ins** – the department will correspond with you to follow your study / pre-employment check progress.
- You must tell the scholarship administrator in writing as soon as practicable if you wish to withdraw your application or make any changes to your course or enrolment that will affect the duration of your studies or expected completion date. The scholarship administrator will determine if you are still eligible for the scholarship and if it should be continued, suspended or ceased. A failure to notify the scholarship administrator may result in the scholarship being ceased.
5. **Pre-employment requirements met** - You will provide the following via email:
- A certified transcript for (completed) studies or a certified copy of your tertiary qualification. This document must also be uploaded to Grants NT.
  - Evidence of registration with the relevant National Board or eligibility for membership with the relevant professional association.
  - A Working with Children Clearance (if not already provided).
  - Confirmation of your proposed start date for your employment. If required, your new line manager will be in contact to clarify your proposed start date.
6. **Scholarship payment** - Payment of \$15,000 will be made by electronic funds transfer to your nominated bank account. You will need to ensure your bank details in Grants NT match the details in the vendor creation/amendment form.
7. **Unconditional employment offer** – You will receive the final, unconditional letter of offer of employment via DCDD Employment Actions team, reflecting your agreed commencement date. The unconditional employment offer will be sent to the email address you have provided in your NTG job application.
8. **Onboarding** - Your new line manager will contact you about onboarding.

## 6.2. If your application is not successful

If you did not receive a scholarship and believe your application should be reviewed, you may apply to the scholarships administrator within seven days of receiving the decision.

You must make a written application via email for a review and include any supporting information.

Your request will be reviewed and the original decision may be upheld, amended or overturned. The decision made following the review is final and cannot be further reviewed.

## 7. Payment / Reporting and acquittal

### Bank details

To facilitate the scholarship payment, you must ensure your bank details in Grants NT match the details in the vendor creation/amendment form, provided during the offer acceptance stage (Step 3), above.

### Scholarship payment

Scholarship payment will be made to you after you have successfully completed study and meet essential criteria and pre-employment checks and before you commence employment with the department.



To enable scholarship payment, you will be required to provide evidence that your pre-employment checks are met (Step 5), above, including uploading a certified transcript for (completed) studies or a certified copy of your tertiary qualification into Grants NT.

Payment of \$15,000 will be made by electronic funds transfer to your nominated bank account. The payment will be processed/submitted through Grants NT. You will receive a notification once payment is completed.

### **Scholarship feedback**

Within 12 months of graduating, you may receive a request to provide feedback regarding your experience with the scholarship. Your responses help to inform continuous improvement and determine whether the intent of the program is being met. Information provided may also be used in departmental marketing.

## **8. Frequently Asked Questions**

### **How may I spend the scholarship?**

The purpose of the scholarship is to provide financial assistance to support the costs associated with studying an accredited entry to practice allied health degree and commencing your career with the department.

You may use scholarship funds to pay off HECS / HELP debt, or to pay for professional supervision, mentoring, registration or membership fees, or for other expenses.

You are not required to acquit these funds; however, you are required to finish your studies and commence employment as soon as practicable and to complete three years' service with the department.

Please discuss your personal circumstances with the scholarship administrator / your manager if you believe you may be unable to meet these conditions. They will provide advice about your options and whether you may be required to repay your scholarship.

### **What if I have to defer my studies?**

If you are thinking about deferring your studies after accepting an offer of employment, please discuss your personal circumstances with the scholarship administrator / scholarship panel before making your decision. Depending on the impact, the department may not defer your employment commencement date and you may be required to repay your scholarship.

### **What if I experience a delay in completing my degree and must postpone my employment commencement date?**

The department acknowledges that completion of all university requirements to graduate, such as placements and passing exams, sometimes happens outside the usual timeframe for completing a degree. If completing your degree is delayed, please discuss your personal circumstances with your selection panel. They will provide advice about your options and the impact on your employment commencement date.

### **What if I take leave during my first three years of employment?**

An employee, including a scholarship recipient, is entitled to leave entitlements in accordance with the NTPS Enterprise Agreement 2021-2025, including parental leave and personal leave. If you want to apply for Leave Without Pay, your application will be considered in accordance with the department policy.

You will have to complete an aggregate of three years of service with the department to meet the conditions of the scholarship. Unpaid leave is not recognised in length of service calculations. Your manager will be able to advise if there is any impact on your requirement to complete three years of service, depending on your personal circumstances and the specific type of leave.

## If I want to move to a different position in the department within my first three years of service, will it affect my scholarship?

The department acknowledges that you may want or need to explore different employment opportunities over your first three years of service. This could be because you want to work in a different practice setting or need to move to a different region if you experience extenuating personal circumstances and need to be closer to support networks.

The department expects that you will complete at least 18 months to two years in your first Professional level position so that you get a good start to your career. Please discuss your personal circumstances and reason for seeking alternative employment within the department with your manager before applying for another position. You will need to complete an aggregate of three years of service with the department in an allied health service-based position to receive your retention allowance and may be required to repay the first payment if you do not complete three years' service with the department.

## What if I don't complete three years of service with the Department?

If you don't complete three years of service with the department you may be required to repay a pro rata portion of the scholarship.

## Offer of employment

New employees who are relocating within the Northern Territory to commence employment with the department are encouraged to discuss relocation assistance with the hiring manager during the scholarship assessment process.

## Income Tax

Withholding tax will not be deducted. Scholarship recipients are advised to seek independent taxation and personal financial advice from their tax accountant or the Australian Taxation Office. Any tax implications associated with the scholarships are the responsibility of the recipient.

## Commonwealth support payments

Scholarship recipients are advised to seek independent financial advice and, where relevant, notify Services Australia of any changes to their financial situation, which may impact Commonwealth support payments.

## Contacts

For more information, contact the scholarship administrator by calling 08 8944 9238 or emailing [swipshr.doe@education.nt.gov.au](mailto:swipshr.doe@education.nt.gov.au).

All correspondence and notifications about your application will be confirmed via email.

## 9. Glossary

Term	Definition
Academic lead / Course Coordinator or delegate	A member of staff at a tertiary education institution that is appointed to undertake a teaching and/or research function and is responsible for the academic management of a degree or field of study.
Accredited entry to practice degree	A university degree that is accredited by an independent body and where graduates are deemed to meet the threshold professional competencies to practice that profession in Australia. May be a bachelor's degree, graduate entry master's degree or professional doctorate.
Eligible allied health profession	Occupational therapy, psychology, social work and speech pathology.
Eligible student	A student who is currently enrolled in the final year of an entry to practice Charles Darwin University degree in one of the eligible allied health professions and is expecting to graduate from mid-2024 to mid-2025.
Essential criteria	Specific qualification and/or registration/licences that are essential to undertake a specific role in the department. They are included in the Job Description for each position.
Field educator / Placement supervisor	Field educators / placement supervisors are allied health practitioners who meet their professional association's requirements to supervise students undertaking professional experience placements and to obtain membership or registration with their association. The placement supervisor has major responsibility for planning, guiding, monitoring and evaluating the student's learning and provides day-to-day and formal supervision of learning processes and tasks undertaken by a student during the placement.
National Board	A National Board established under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (as in force in each state and territory) Act 2010 i.e. Psychology Board of Australia.
P1/P2	A dual-banded classification level used for employing new graduates (level 1 range) and experienced allied health professionals (level 2 range).
Pre-employment checks	Including but not limited to 1) Working with Children Clearance 2) Identification check; and 3) Disciplinary action in previous employment check.
Professional Association	A professional association responsible for accreditation and other self-regulation functions i.e. Australian Association of Social Workers, Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, Speech Pathology Australia.
Selection Process	Process used to assess applications for employment and determine offers of employment based on merit.
Special Measures Recruitment Plan	Special Measures recruitment plans aim to increase the recruitment, retention and career development opportunities of Aboriginal people. Most vacancies in the NTPS are advertised under a Special Measures recruitment plan whereby Aboriginal applicants are assessed first. They are offered the vacancy if they meet all the essential criteria and are suitable at the level of the position.

## Final Year HE Scholarship – Application Checklist

Before applying, applicants should prepare the following documents, information and evidence:

### NTG Jobs application - Graduate entry Psychologist / School Counsellor on [Jobs - Search \(nt.gov.au\)](#)

- Register and create an account to apply for NTG jobs [here](#)**  
Or log in using your existing credentials. Employment opportunities and useful hints can be found [here](#).
- Resume**  
Include an up-to-date resume that highlights your education, experience, and relevant skills.
- One page cover letter**  
Write a cover letter confirming your interest in the scholarship and detailing your experience, skills, and knowledge as they relate to your selected position.
- Two nominated referees**  
Provide the names and current contact details of two referees who can vouch for your qualifications and character.
- Official academic results (transcript) for the relevant degree qualification**
- Certified copy of identification confirming your residential address**  
Such as a current NT Driver's licence or another document proving NT residency (e.g. a bill or photo ID).
- Working with Children Clearance (Ochre Card)**
- Special Measure Statutory Declaration**  
Complete and submit a Special Measure Statutory Declaration, if applicable.

### Grants NT Application - Final Year Higher Education Scholarship on [Grants NT](#)

- Create Grants NT account and a profile**  
Information on how to apply for a grant can be found [here](#).
- Check eligibility criteria**  
Review and ensure you meet all the eligibility criteria for the scholarship grant.
- Proof of enrolment**  
Submit evidence of current enrolment from Charles Darwin University.
- Academic transcript**
- Study plan / completion date**  
Provide your study plan or other evidence to support your anticipated completion date, as required.
- Allied Health Placement details**  
Complete and upload the table provided to detail your student placement experience. Include the name of placement organisations, your role, length of placement, and placement supervisor or field educator.
- Academic endorsement**  
Download the Academic Endorsement form for the academic lead of your course (or their delegate) to complete and attach this document to your application.
- Personal statement short answers**  
Provide short answers of approximately 200 words in response to four (4) questions in the application form regarding your interest in the scholarship and why you choose your field of study, your professionalism and commitment to wellbeing and inclusion in the NT.