




# Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships Policy Handbook

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**June 2022**



# You must read this Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships Policy Handbook carefully and fully understand its contents before signing the Contract with the Commonwealth of Australia.

The handbook is provided to answer any questions you may have about your scholarship. Please also read the other information in your pre-departure pack and follow the instructions carefully.

For further assistance, please contact DFAT at [australiaawardspacific@dfat.gov.au](mailto:australiaawardspacific@dfat.gov.au)

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## Changes to the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship Policy Handbook – June 2022

Page	Section	Reason for change
16	Glossary of terms and acronyms	<p>Clarified what is meant by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Carer</li> <li>• Disability Support Agreement (DSA)</li> <li>• Disability Support Statement (DSS)</li> <li>• End date</li> <li>• Pre-departure briefing</li> <li>• Reasonable accommodations</li> <li>• Reasonable adjustments</li> <li>• Scholarship categories</li> </ul>
20	1. Australia Awards	Changes made throughout the introduction of Australia Awards to reflect that of AAS policy
20	1.1 Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship	<p>Refined paragraphs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.1.1</li> <li>• 1.1.2</li> <li>• 1.1.4</li> <li>• 1.1.6</li> <li>• 1.1.7</li> </ul>
23	1.3 Management responsibilities	<p>Refined paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.3.1</li> <li>• 1.3.7</li> <li>• 1.3.8</li> <li>• 1.3.10</li> <li>• 1.3.11</li> <li>• 1.3.13</li> <li>• 1.3.14</li> <li>• 1.3.15</li> </ul>
25	How to use this scholarships policy handbook 1.2.2	APPENDIX D: COVID-19 must be read in conjunction with this handbook. The appendix will take precedent to the extent of any inconsistency.
26	2.2 Eligibility criteria	<p>Clarified criteria's on the topic of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age requirement</li> <li>• Citizenship status</li> </ul>

Page	Section	Reason for change
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marriage to an Australia/New Zealand citizen</li> <li>• Previous AAS or AAPS award holders</li> <li>• Specific country criteria</li> <li>• Visas</li> </ul>
28	Pre course English language training in-country	<p>Clarified Sending Post actions</p> <p>Clarified Institution actions</p>
29	2.5 Finding an appropriate course	<p>Awardees must ensure they do their research prior to completing their applications.</p> <p>Sending Post must confirm that the selected course meets Australia Awards criteria</p>
29	2.6 Types of courses available	Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships must be taken up in the year for which they are awarded
30	Bachelor degrees	<p>Clarified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time frames</li> <li>• Institution actions</li> </ul>
30	Master degrees	Clarified the maximum duration for a Master degree program.
30	Doctorate Programs	Maximum duration for thesis submission after returning home extended to two years at request of some universities
31	Courses not available	Clarified the requirements for approval of a course by distance or external mode outside of the study country.
32	Application process	<p>To reflect that what exists in AAS policy</p> <p>Clarified both Awardee and Sending Post actions</p>
33	Document certification	Clarified Sending Post actions
34	3. Fraud	Editorial corrections and clarifying of policy
35	4. Selection	Reinforce merit-based criteria and other activities Post can include in the process



Page	Section	Reason for change
36	4.2 Reintegration Plans	Applicants must propose a Reintegration Plan as part of their application  Clarified both Awardee and Post actions
36	Successful and reserve Applicants	Applicants are to be advised once they have received notification from the Institution. Clarified when candidates become Awardees. Clarified how Scholarship numbers are determined.
37	4.4 Advising Applicants of selection outcomes	Clarified Sending Post actions
37	5. Placement	Editorial amendments.  Clarified Sending Post actions  Clarified Institutions actions
40	Articulated study programs	Editorial changes
40	Multi-country and multi campus study	Clarifying the LLB and PDLP programs. Editorial amendments
41	6.2 Scholarship conditions  <b>During the Scholarship period the Awardee must:</b>  xi. If you publish any Material while on Scholarship, you agree:  a) To acknowledge that you are an Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships scholar, supported by the Australian Government; and  To use a disclaimer which makes clear that the views and opinions expressed in the Material are those of you, the author, and do not represent the views of the Australian Government.  Financial obligations	Editorial changes  6.2.1 point xi This section has been updated to include when publishing articles the Awardee must include a disclaimer  If the Awardee departs the study country with the intention of completing the Scholarship from home without notifying the Institution of their intent
45	6.3 The preventions of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) and child protection	This section has been updated to include reference to the PSEAH Policy

<b>Page</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>
45	Deferring an offer	Editorial changes and amendments. Including all Scholarship holders must complete an IAP
46	Pre-departure	Further information including emergency services information
48	Family	Editorial amendments, changes and clarifying Awardee and Institution actions
48	Visa requirements	New consolidated student visa information
49	Visa requirements for accompanying dependant family members	Editorial changes. Awardees responsibility for visa's and costs associated for their dependants
49	Visa requirements for Awardees with disability	Editorial changes. No provision for medical waiver.
50	Visa requirements for the Carer of an Awardees with disability	Clarified Awardee actions Clarified Sending Post actions
50	Visa obligations	Editorial corrections
51	Visa extension	Editorial changes. Clarified Awardee actions. Clarified Institution actions. Clarified Receiving Post actions
51-52	Deferring an offer	Revised to include COVID-19 border restrictions
52	Two-year exclusion rule	Editorial changes
52	Early completion	Clarifying discontinuation of financial support
53	Debt to the commonwealth	Editorial changes
53	Support for people with disability	Editorial changes
55	Applicants with disability	Editorial changes
55	Principles for providing disability support for AAPS Awardees	Editorial changes to reflect DFAT disability policy and that which exists in AAS
56	Assessing disability support needs	New section to reflect DFAT disability policy and that which exists in AAS.  Limitation on cost of implementation of disability support.

Page	Section	Reason for change
		<p>Awardees to engage with Disability Support Unit Coordinators early</p> <p>Apply fair and equal practices, consider on merit</p> <p>Incorporate new requirement for Disability Support Carers agreement etc.</p>
57	Disability support process responsibilities	<p>Editorial changes to reflect DFAT disability policy and that which exists in AAS.</p> <p>Clarified Awardee actions. Clarified Sending Post actions. Clarified Institution actions.</p>
61	Reasonable adjustments and accommodations	Editorial changes
62	Responsibilities for Reasonable adjustments	Editorial changes
63	Responsibilities for Reasonable accommodations	Editorial changes
63	Carers	Incorporated new section to reflect as much as AAPS can with that which exists in AAS policy
67	Assistive devices and mobility equipment	Incorporated new clauses
70	Out of scope	Incorporated new clauses including support for medical conditions. DFAT expects Awardees to self-fund their health care
71	Health conditions	<p>Incorporated new clauses including DFAT's distinction between people with disability and those experiencing health issues.</p> <p>Inability of Awardees to study will not qualify for disability support as well as clarification that DFAT does not provide funding.</p>
71	Elective medical treatment	<p>Incorporated new clauses including clarification that DFAT does not provide funding. Awardees are liable for all costs associated with their treatment.</p> <p>Identified Sending Post actions</p>

Page	Section	Reason for change
72	Medication	Incorporated new clauses including clarification that DFAT does not provide funding
72	Scholarship fees and entitlements	Editorial changes – academic fees, Establishment allowances, Contribution to Living Expenses and Supplementary academic support
75	Establishment allowances	Editorial changes
75	Transitional allowances	Editorial changes and amendments to clauses. Strengthened wording around program requirements and the need to move to another country to finalise different components of courses
76	Contribution to Living Expenses	Editorial changes and amendments to clauses. Strengthened wording around accompanied rates in particular and clarification surrounding timeframes and cessation of CLE  Clarified CLE payments to married couples both on Scholarship  CLE and establishment allowances new rates annexed
77	Scholarship cost	Updated to include COVID-19 response
78	Visa costs	Editorial changes. Visa extension costs are the responsibility of the Awardee
78	COVID -19 response	Additional entitlements to cover additional expenses incurred due to the impacts of COVID-19. New entitlement to include quarantine costs  ANNEX D: COVID-19 RESPONSE
79	Conditions that apply to travel	Strengthened wording around conditions that apply to travel
79	Mobilisation travel	Clarification of Awardee and Sending Post actions
80	Reunion travel	Editorial changes. Strengthened wording that apply to Reunion travel including

<b>Page</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>
		clarification that the reunion airfare must be used by the end of the eligible year
82	Independent travel	Awardees are responsible for arranging their own travel insurance
82	Completion travel	Editorial changes and clarification to Institution actions
82	General support services	Editorial changes and clarification to Sending Post actions
83	Accommodation	Clarification of Awardee actions
84	Initial accommodation	Clarification of Awardee and Institution actions
84	Long term accommodation	Information about student accommodation assistance providers, Clarification of Awardee and Sending Post actions
85	Supplementary academic support	Strengthened wording around SAS entitlements. Clarification of Awardee and Institution actions
86	Fieldwork	Strengthened wording around fieldwork. CLE payments, reunion travel and for Awardees with disability. Clarified Institution and Awardee actions
87	Completion travel	Updated to include COVID-19 response
88	Fieldtrips	Clarified Institution actions
88	Work attachments, placements or work experience	Editorial changes
89	Work experience	Editorial changes
89	Unsatisfactory academic progress	Editorial changes including strengthening and clarifying Awardee actions
90	Study load	Editorial changes including strengthening wording of what is required by Awardees. Clarified Institution actions.
91	Scholarship conditions and terms of enrolment	Editorial changes including clarifying Sending Post and Institution actions
92	Withdrawals	Clarified Awardee and Institution actions

<b>Page</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>
93	Extension	Editorial changes. Clarified Awardee actions
94	Suspensions	Editorial changes. Strengthened poorly understood clauses about the conditions of a Suspension. Clarified Awardee actions. Clarified Sending Post actions. Clarified Institution actions
97	Course transfers	Clarified Institution actions
97	Institution or campus transfer	Editorial changes
98	Upgrades	Editorial changes
98	Upgrade to a PhD	Editorial changes
99	Reductions	Editorial changes including Institution actions of informing the relevant authorities that DFAT is withdrawing support for the Awardee.
100	Entitlement variations	Editorial changes
100	Terminations	Editorial changes. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities for processing the termination
103	DFAT notification and procedure for welfare incidents	Editorial changes
104	Privacy	Editorial changes
105	Welfare incident – general responsibilities	Clarified Awardee actions
107	Health issues and scheduled hospitalisations	Editorial changes – DFTA strongly recommends that Awardees do not undergo elective surgery whilst on-Scholarship
108	Long term illness	Editorial changes
109	Medical costs	Strengthened policy surrounding medical costs
109	Death of an Awardee’s family member	Editorial changes including clarifying and strengthening policy

<b>Page</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>
109	Pregnancy	Editorial changes
110	Referral to counselling services	Editorial changes
110	Victim of crime overseas	Editorial changes
111	What is a critical incident	Clarifying the difference between an emergency and is in a serious condition and non-serious conditions
112	Role of Regional Scholarship team officers	Clarified RST actions
113	Notification of critical incidents	Out of office notification need to have an emergency contact number on them  Clarified Awardee actions
115	Critical incident response and management	Clarified Institution actions
116	Awardees who are victims of or charges with a crime in the study country	Clarified Institution actions
117	Unexpected or emergency hospitalisation of an Awardee	Clarified Institution actions
118	Death of an Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship Awardee	Clarified Receiving Post actions
123	Finalisation of studies	Clarified "end date"  Editorial changes in Institution actions
124	Final departure date	Clarified regardless of end date DFAT will withdraw support
124	Remaining in the study country after the Scholarship end date	Strengthened and reinforced exclusion policy and Awardees not permitted to extend their visas for any reason including attending their graduation clauses in line with AAS policy.  Clarified Institution actions
125	Returning home due to illness or accident	Editorial changes  Clarified Sending Post actions
126	Medical escort home	Editorial changes

Page	Section	Reason for change
127	Awardees who are unfit to travel	<p>Awardees must make arrangements with the Department of immigration in the study country to either extend or transfer to an appropriate visa</p> <p>Clarified Institution actions</p>
154	APPENDIX D: COVID-19	New addition: specifies additional responsibilities for institutions and awardees due to COVID-19
159	APPENDIX E: AUSTRALIA AWARDS PACIFIC SCHOLARSHIP CYCLE (Alt Text)	New addition: accessible version of the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship Cycle.



## AUSTRALIA AWARDS PACIFIC SCHOLARSHIP CYCLE



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

Terms and acronyms	Explanation
Academic year	The Institutions academic year is the same as the calendar year. Academic dates for these Institutions can be found on their websites.
Alumni	Alumni are defined as Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship or Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research award recipients who have successfully completed their Scholarship and returned home.
Applicant	A person who has applied for, but has not yet received, a DFAT funded Scholarship.
Arrival date	The day on which an Awardee arrives in the study country at the commencement of their Scholarship and registers their arrival with their Institution.
Articulating course	A course of study which progresses to another course of study at a higher qualification level. Also known as a package program e.g. Postgraduate Diploma articulating to a Master's.
Assistive technology	The full range of technological solutions that allow people with disability to be more independent, more connected, and provide opportunities for them to realise their potential as active members of their chosen place of study and communities.
Awardee	A person in receipt of a DFAT funded Scholarship.
Carer	Someone who provides personal care, support and assistance to an Awardee with disability.
Contribution to living expenses (CLE)	A fortnightly payment to Awardees during the Scholarship, at a rate determined by DFAT (sometimes referred to as Stipend).
COVID-19	COVID -19 is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus. Symptoms include fever, coughing, a sore throat and shortness of breath.
Deferral	Where an Awardee delays the commencement date of their Scholarship until later in the year.

Terms and acronyms	Explanation
Dependant	A dependant is defined as a person who is dependent on another person if, at the time of application, the first person has been wholly or substantially reliant on the other person for financial support to meet their basic needs. Additionally, a dependant is a child or stepchild, who has not turned 18 years of age. If aged 18 years or over a dependent child must not have a partner or be engaged to be married.
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Disability Support Unit Coordinator	A coordinator employed by the Institution to ensure in study country disability inclusive support is provided to Awardees with disability.
Disability support agreement (DSA)	A Disability Support Agreement (DSA) outlines reasonable accommodations for an Awardee with disability funded by DFAT. All DSA's are developed in consultation with an Awardee with disability, Institutions, Sending Post and Suva Post. DSA's are funded by DFAT.
Disability support statement (DSS) form	The form where an Awardee with disability outlines what support they believe is required to ensure their equal participation in the study country.
End date	The end date of a Scholarship is determined by the release date of the final results or the day the Awardee leaves the study country whichever comes first.
Establishment allowance	A one-off allowance paid to each new Awardee when they commence their Scholarship, to contribute to their start-up costs.
Extension	Any increase in the length of an Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship.
External modes of study	External modes of study are courses within programs that are taken on external basis i.e. Awardees are not physically required to attend university. Awardees may study independently from home, in some cases using multimedia interactive material
Field of study	The vocational area of specialisation or principal subject matter of an Australia Awards Pacific

Terms and acronyms	Explanation
	Scholarship Awardee's course e.g. agriculture, health, etc.
Fieldtrip	A short class-based excursion for the purposes of education or research to provide Awardees with experiences outside their everyday course activities.
Fieldwork	Research undertaken in either the home country or the study country as part of an Awardee's course.
Foundation program	An intensive study program of up to 12 months offered to undergraduate Awardees who do not meet the required standard for direct entry into their chosen course.
Introductory Academic Program	A compulsory program provided by the Institution to orient new Awardees to the Institution and its surroundings before they commence their academic program.
International English Language Testing System (IELTS)	An international standardised test of English language proficiency which is accepted by Institutions. It may also be used to fulfil an eligibility requirement for the study permit.
In-country	In the Applicant's home country, not in the study country.
Institution	Tertiary education Institution contracted by DFAT to provide education services to Awardees.
Long-term award	An award (Scholarship) supporting studies of more than six months towards a course of study.
Managing contractor (MC)	A person or organisation that is contracted by a DFAT Sending Post to manage the implementation of the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships.
Material	Includes articles in print or digital form, documents, equipment, software (including source code and object code versions), goods, information and data stored by any means including all copies and extracts of them.
OASIS	Online Australia Awards Scholarships Information System.

Terms and acronyms	Explanation
Overseas	Outside the study country.
Panel	Group of people drawn together for the purposes of selecting Awardees.
Partner government	A government that has an agreement relating to Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships with Australia.
Pearson test of English Academic (PTE Academic)	An international standardised test of English language proficiency which is accepted by Institutions. It may also be used to fulfil an eligibility requirement for the study permit.
Pre-course English	An intensive English program provided to Awardees who need additional English language skills before starting their qualification studies (in-country or in the study country).
Pre-departure briefing	A Pre-departure briefing is an event run by the Sending Post to support Awardees and their families' transition to study life. A Pre-departure briefing is usually held over a day, and includes talks and workshops that give Awardees the advice they need to start their studies with confidence. During the Pre-departure briefing Awardees will learn key information related to visa requirements Award conditions, obligations, entitlements and student life.
Placement offer	<p>An offer of enrolment made by the Institution to the Awardee. The placement offer specifies the course, duration of study and also includes an estimate of the associated costs such as academic fees and stipend allowances.</p> <p>Placements (requests and offers) are processed in OASIS by the Sending Post and the Institution.</p>
Preliminary program	Courses deemed necessary by the Institution to enable an Awardee to successfully complete their qualification in the timeframe specified by the Institution.
Preparation program	One or more introductory courses that an Institution may require Awardees to undertake before they start their chosen course. Preparation programs include pre-

Terms and acronyms	Explanation
	course English, preliminary programs and foundation programs.
Reasonable Accommodations	Reasonable accommodations is the provision of support, modifications and/or adjustments that meet the individual needs of people with disabilities to ensure they enjoy and exercise all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis to others. Reasonable accommodations can include the provision of accessible transportation, sign-language interpreters, accessible meeting venues, and documents in accessible formats.
Reasonable adjustments	Measures which an education provider is required to make to ensure Awardees with a disability are enabled to participate in their course of study on the same basis as Awardees without a disability. Reasonable adjustments might include changes to the way a person enrolls in a course, alterations to the physical environment and other facilities, and changes to the way training is delivered and skills are assessed.
Receiving Post (RP)	The Australian Diplomatic Mission (Embassy or High Commission) located in the study country.
Regional Scholarships Team (RST)	The team designated by the Institution to be its main point of contact with DFAT for AAPS Awardees.
Reintegration Plan	An Awardee's proposed strategy for using the new skills and knowledge when they return home at the end of their studies in the study country.
Request for placement (RFP)	A request on behalf of an Awardee made through OASIS by a DFAT Sending Post or managing contractor for a placement offer from an Institution.
Scholarship	A long-term award (e.g. Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship) funded by DFAT.
Scholarship Categories	<b>Public:</b> Public sector employees nominated by their government for an Award through a competitive selection process – these Applicants are required to return to the public sector on completion of their Scholarship.

Terms and acronyms	Explanation
	<p><b>Open:</b> Anyone who meets the eligibility criteria may apply under this category</p> <p><b>Targeted:</b> Applicants are selected from targeted areas which are in line with the country program’s identified priority sectors and may include people with disabilities or from minority groups</p> <p><b>Note:</b> All of the above must undertake a study program in line with their country priorities and must agree to return home for a two-year period on completion of their Scholarship</p>
Sending Post (SP)	The Australian Diplomatic Mission (Embassy or High Commission) located in the Awardee’s home country.
Sensitive information	<p>(a) information or an opinion about an individual’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) racial or ethnic origin, or</li> <li>(ii) political opinions, or</li> <li>(iii) membership of a political association, or</li> <li>(iv) religious beliefs or affiliations, or</li> <li>(v) philosophical beliefs, or</li> <li>(vi) membership of a professional or trade association, or</li> <li>(vii) membership of a trade union, or</li> <li>(viii) sexual preferences or practices, or</li> <li>(ix) criminal record,</li> </ul> <p>that is also personal information, or</p> <p>(b) health information about an individual, or</p> <p>(c) genetic information about an individual that is not otherwise health information.</p>
Suspension	The temporary cessation of an Awardee’s study program and financial support from DFAT.
Study country	The country where Awardees undertake full-time study load at the designated Institution.
Termination	DFAT’s decision to end an award before the completion of study.

Terms and acronyms	Explanation
Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)	An international standardised test of English language proficiency which is accepted by Institutions. It may also be used to fulfil an eligibility requirement for the study permit.
Variation	Any change to the original placement offer made to the recipient of an award.
Vocational education and training (VET)	A qualification level designed to skill workers for particular industries. VET is part of a broader educational network in schools, universities, and adult and community education.
Withdrawal	When an Awardee chooses to cease their award before completing the course of study.



# 1. Australia Awards

The Australia Awards are prestigious international scholarships funded by the Australian Government that aim to contribute to the long-term development needs of Australia's partner countries, in line with global, bilateral and regional agreements. The Australia Awards are a whole-of-government initiative bringing together Scholarships administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), offering the next generation of global leaders an opportunity to undertake study, research and professional development, in Australia and other countries globally including the Pacific.

The Australian Government recognises that education develops skills and knowledge, builds enduring people-to-people, country and professional links, and has the power to influence positive change.

The Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships (AAPS) strive to develop leadership potential and stimulate lasting change by empowering a global network of talented individuals through high-quality education experiences in the Pacific region. Recipients return home with new ideas and knowledge, and the ability to make a significant contribution to their home countries as leaders in their field.

The Australia Awards also demonstrate Australia's commitment to providing education opportunities to improve living standards and stimulate economic growth in developing countries. For Australia, the Awards build an engaged and influential global network of leaders, advocates and change-makers and establish a network of ambassadors across the world.

The Awards also contribute to the productivity of Australia and the development of people-to-people links between Australia, our regional neighbours and the broader international community.

This Scholarship policy handbook covers the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships only. For Australia Awards Scholarship (AAS) awardees studying in Australia, please refer to the Australia Awards Scholarship Policy Handbook.

## 1.1. Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships

- 1.1.1. AAPS demonstrate Australia's commitment to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. They aim to contribute to the long-term development needs of Australia's partner countries in line with Australia's aid priorities and bilateral and regional agreements. The AAPS provide opportunities for people from developing countries to undertake full-time undergraduate or postgraduate study at participating Institutions and Vocational and Education Training (VET) Institutions.

- 1.1.2. The Australian Government encourages equality for all, without discrimination. The AAPS support study by people with disability and aim to empower women to participate in the economy, leadership and education.
- 1.1.3. The study and research opportunities provided by AAPS develop the skills and knowledge of individuals to drive change and contribute to the development outcomes of their own country.
- 1.1.4. To ensure the development impact of AAPS, all Awardees must return home on completion of their studies to contribute to development in their country. Awardees are required to leave their study country for a minimum of two years after completing their Scholarship. Failure to do so will result in the Awardee incurring a debt to the Commonwealth of Australia for the total accrued cost of their Scholarship (this includes all the Contribution to Living (CLE) allowances provided).
- 1.1.5. AAPS generally cover the following fees and entitlements: (see [Chapter 10](#) for further details.)
  - i. Full tuition fees
  - ii. Return air travel
  - iii. Establishment allowance
  - iv. Contribution to living expenses
  - v. An Introductory Academic Program
  - vi. Basic medical costs for Awardee only
  - vii. Initial visa expenses.
- 1.1.6. Subject to the requirements and eligibility, AAPS may also cover:
  - i. Pre-course English language training fees
  - ii. Supplementary academic support
  - iii. Fieldwork (for research purposes only)
  - iv. Reunion airfare (for unaccompanied Awardees).

The Australian Government provides nominal financial assistance for the dependants of Awardees. This cost is designed purely to assist and contribute towards ongoing living expenses in the study country irrespective of the composition of the family unit. The award does not cover any travel, visa or medical costs for dependants. Awardees are responsible, including financially, for their dependants who accompany them whilst on Scholarship in the study country.

## 1.2. How to use this Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships policy handbook

- 1.2.1. This handbook provides the guiding policy and instructions for those managing or undertaking the AAPS, Institutions, Applicants or Awardees, and other DFAT officers at Sending and Receiving Posts and their managing contractors/sub-contractors. They should be familiar with its contents and understand their roles and responsibilities.
- 1.2.2. Where [Appendix D: COVID-19](#) applies, this Handbook must be read in conjunction with Appendix D: COVID-19. If there is an inconsistency, between the clauses in Appendix D: COVID-19 and a clause in the Handbook, the clauses in Appendix D: COVID-19 will take precedent to the extent of the inconsistency.
- 1.2.3. Institutions, Applicants, Awardees, and DFAT including their Managing Contractors and their sub-contracted Case Managers must read and comply with this handbook. To help users identify the sections which are most relevant to them or identify actions they need to take to comply with the policy, this handbook uses coloured boxes and icons for each group of users. The key for each user is at the bottom of each page.
- 1.2.4. Sections/ Subsections starting with {A}: AAPS policy or instruction most relevant for Applicants or Awardees.
- 1.2.5. Sections/Subsections starting with {S}: AAPS policy or instruction most relevant for Sending Posts (and their managing contractor and case managers).
- 1.2.6. Sections/Subsections starting with {I}: AAPS policy or instruction most relevant for Institutions.
- 1.2.7. Sections/Subsections starting with {R}: AAPS policy or instruction most relevant for the Receiving Post.
- 1.2.8. The Online Australia Awards Scholarships Information System (OASIS) is DFAT’s internet-based data management system. It enables DFAT, managing contractors and Institutions to access a centralised database to electronically enter and store data, process applications and manage awards. DFAT provides users with an OASIS user manual and initial training.
- 1.2.9. This handbook stipulates when actions need to be taken in OASIS at each stage of the process. Detailed descriptions are contained in the OASIS quick references guides or manuals.
- 1.2.10. {I} This handbook underpins the contract:
- i. Between DFAT and Institutions to provide education services, and
  - ii. Between the Awardee and the Australian Government.
- 1.2.11. {I} An Institution should use the guidance in this handbook, together with its knowledge and experience, to make decisions that are in the best interests of the Australian Government, the Awardee and the Institution.

## Policy handbook review and update

- 1.2.12. This handbook forms part of the contractual arrangements between Awardees, Institutions and DFAT. It is reviewed on a regular basis to maintain its relevance and consistency with current DFAT policy.
- 1.2.13. DFAT reserves the right to amend this handbook and will provide timely notification of any changes.

## 1.3. Management responsibilities

- 1.3.1. The following summarises responsibilities for users of this handbook.
- 1.3.2. **Suva Post** has responsibility for:
  - i. AAPS management policy. This is often informed by policy for Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS) managed by the Scholarships and Alumni Branch in Canberra
  - ii. Developing and maintaining DFAT AAPS Scholarship policies and conditions often informed by AAS policy and ensuring consistency in their administration
  - iii. Managing AAPS Institution contracts with FNU and USP in Fiji
  - iv. Assisting Sending Post with implementation of policies
  - v. AAPS Awardees in Samoa and Vanuatu (as they are managed under the contract to the USP)
  - vi. Assisting Sending Posts and their managing contractors with promotion, selection and mobilisation processes
  - vii. Determining in-Fiji arrangements for Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships
  - viii. Engaging with the Disability Support Unit Coordinators at FNU and USP in Fiji to assist in the development of Disability Support Agreements in support of Awardees with disability
  - ix. Managing OASIS training for DFAT, managing contractors and Institution staff
  - x. Engaging with whole-of-government relationships in Canberra and Fiji.
- 1.3.3. Port Moresby is the Receiving Post for AAPS holders in PNG. The Australia Awards PNG Facility acts as the Managing Contractor for Scholarships in PNG. Port Moresby has responsibility for:
  - i. Managing AAPS contracts within PNG partner tertiary Institutions
  - ii. Mobilisation processes
  - iii. Determining in PNG arrangements for AAPS
  - iv. Engaging with the Disability Support Unit Coordinators in PNG partner tertiary Institutions to assist in the development of Disability Support Agreements in support of Awardees with disability.

## Applicants and Awardees

- 1.3.4. {A} Applicants/ Awardees are responsible for reading and understanding the policies underpinning AAPS.
- 1.3.5. {A} Awardees are responsible for their academic and personal conduct as defined in [Chapter 6](#) of this handbook and for complying with their contract with the Commonwealth of Australia
- 1.3.6. {A} Applicants/ Awardees are responsible for providing complete, true and accurate information at all times including, but not limited to, the information provided in their award and visa applications.
- 1.3.7. {A} Applicants /Awardees must not give false or misleading information at any time in relation to their AAPS application or while studying in any Institution in the Pacific Region. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995.

## DFAT Receiving Post (RP)

- 1.3.8. {R} It has responsibility for:
  - i. AAPS contract management including that for Institutions and Managing Contractors in the study country
  - ii. Liaising with Sending Post when and where necessary including administration of Scholarships processing for awards in the study country
  - iii. Assisting with critical incidents involving AAPS Awardees

## DFAT Sending Post (SP)

- 1.3.9. {S} DFAT Posts are in-country offices or DFAT country programs are in Canberra (desks), and work collaboratively on the following policy tasks:
  - i. Liaising with partner governments and relevant authorities on Australia Awards, including AAPS matters
  - ii. Organising the nomination process and promoting awards
  - iii. Processing applications (hardcopy and/or online)
  - iv. Ensuring that all selection processes are equitable and transparent and that connections or relationships between Applicants and staff employed in Sending Post or with managing contractors are disclosed and managed appropriately
  - v. Forwarding placement requests to Institutions in OASIS by the deadline, and ensuring that documents accompanying the requests have been properly certified
  - vi. Notifying all Applicants of the outcome of the selection process
  - vii. Advising Suva Post and Institutions of Awardees with disability who require additional assistance, liaising with the Disability Support Unit Coordinators at the Institution to determine the level of support they require in the study country and providing any pre-departure support for Awardees with disability

- viii. Arranging in-country pre-course English where relevant
  - ix. Providing guidance to Awardees around visa application process
  - x. Arranging travel to the study country for Awardees and recording travel details in OASIS
  - xi. Requesting character and/or police checks from Awardees and ensuring these are received before Awardees depart for the study country
  - xii. Providing pre-departure briefings to Awardees, processing and approving AAPS variations in OASIS and in accordance with current policy and financial delegations
  - xiii. Overseeing performance and contractual matters relating to the managing contractor (if applicable); and
  - xiv. Managing engagement with Australia Awards Alumni and Alumni networks.
- 1.3.10. {S} A number of Sending Posts have contracted the in-country management of AAPS to a managing contractor and sub-contracted Case Managers. For the purposes of this handbook, references to Sending Posts may relate to responsibilities of either Sending Post, a managing contractor, or Case Managers depending on each country program's internal arrangements and the division of responsibilities.
- 1.3.11. {S}The roles and responsibilities of managing contractors are generally set out in their agreement with DFAT. However, Sending Posts are responsible for clearly defining responsibilities with the managing contractor and ensuring that they are aware of all guidance on Australia Awards, including this handbook. This responsibility extends to sub-contractors.

### Institutions (I)

- 1.3.12. {I} Tertiary education Institutions contracted by DFAT are responsible for in-study country management of Awardees in accordance with this handbook and their contract with DFAT. Management responsibilities include:
- i. Responding to both Sending Posts and Receiving Posts requests to place an Awardee
  - ii. Meeting the academic and pastoral requirements of Awardees from time of arrival until the completion of their award, including, where necessary, intervening early to ensure academic success
  - iii. Ensuring records in OASIS are up-to-date and accurate
  - iv. Providing information to DFAT about the Awardees on request
  - v. Managing finances in accordance with the contract
  - vi. Managing risks in accordance with the contract
  - vii. Providing reasonable assistance, including making reasonable adjustments, for Awardees with disability

- viii. Implementing all Disability Support Agreements, including the management of disability support funding and introduction of Awardee with a disability to the Institution's Disability Unit; and
  - ix. Reporting all critical and welfare incidents to DFAT
- 1.3.13. {I} Institution Regional Scholarships Team (RST) Officer:
- 1.3.14. Institutions must nominate a contact officer whose role is to act as the prime contact for liaison between the Institution and DFAT on matters not directly related to Awardees, such as DFAT's contract with the Institution.
- 1.3.15. {I} Student Contact Officers: Institution appointed Student Contact Officers are the points of contact for Awardees in relation to AAPS and anything over and beyond the role of the Institution's student service area. The Institution decides how to manage these arrangements, including the roles and responsibilities of the contact officers in RST.

## 2. Applying for an Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship

### 2.1. General eligibility

AAPS holders are expected to succeed academically and meet all challenges posed by studying in the Pacific region. All Applicants should be prepared to undertake study in English, live in Fiji, Vanuatu or Samoa (with a culture which may be very different to the Awardees expectations) and under stringent academic conditions. Maturity and resilience are qualities sought in Applicants. Applicants should research their in-study country conditions and suitability to their particular needs before applying, as pre-existing conditions may be aggravated by the stress of undertaking the Scholarship.

### 2.2. Eligibility criteria

- 2.2.1. {A} To be eligible to receive an AAPS, Applicants must:
- i. Be a minimum of 18 years of age on 1 February of the year of commencing the Scholarship;
  - ii. Be a citizen of a participating country (as listed on the Australia Awards website) and be residing in and applying for the Scholarship from their country of citizenship;
  - iii. Not be a citizen of Australia or New Zealand, hold permanent residency in Australia or New Zealand or be applying for a visa to live in Australia or New Zealand permanently;
  - iv. Not be married, engaged to, or a de facto of a person who holds, or is eligible to hold, Australian or New Zealand citizenship or permanent residency, at any time during the application, selection or mobilisation phases (note: residents of Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau with New Zealand citizenship are eligible but must apply for a student visa);
  - v. Not be current serving military personnel;
  - vi. Not have previously received a long-term Australia Award unless they have resided outside of the study country for twice the length of the total time that they were in the study country (for example, a previous Awardee who has been on an AAPS in the study country for four years will not be eligible to apply for another Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship or Australia Awards Scholarship until they have resided outside of the study country for eight years);
  - vii. Have satisfied any specific criteria established by the Sending Post or the government of the Applicant's country of citizenship (e.g. having worked a certain number of years in an appropriate sector);
  - viii. Be able to satisfy the admission requirements of the Institution at which the award is to be undertaken (this may mean that Sending Post will need to withdraw an award offer if the recipient cannot satisfy the Institution's admission requirements. This may not be known until Sending Post requests a placement at selected Institutions);



- ix. Be able to satisfy all requirements of the Department of Immigration in the study country to hold a Student Visa. This may mean that Sending Post will need to withdraw an award offer if the recipient cannot satisfy the visa requirements;
- x. Not be applying for a Scholarship for a course of study at an academic level lesser than they have already achieved (e.g. be applying for a Master’s Scholarship when they already hold a PhD); and
- xi. Inform the Sending Post of any connection or relationship to staff employed at Sending Post, Receiving Post (including locally engaged staff at Post) or with managing contractors so that the application may be properly and transparently managed.

2.2.2. {S} Sending Posts may consider the following exceptions to [subsection 2.2.1\(ii\)](#) in relation to Applicants being required to apply from their country of citizenship:

- i. Applicants working for their government in a third country
- ii. Applicants residing in the immediate region to which they would be willing to grant an award (e.g. Pacific Island countries considering Applicants from other eligible Pacific Island countries), noting that the award will be reported as belonging to the Applicant’s country of citizenship.

## 2.3. Country profiles

2.3.1. {A} Applicants must read the participating country profile for details on the application process, as opening and closing dates for applications, and documentation requirements may vary. The profiles can be found at [Participating countries | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(dfat.gov.au\)](#)

## 2.4. English language requirements

2.4.1. An Applicant or Awardee will meet DFAT’s English language requirements for receiving an AAPS if their first language is English and if they have undertaken their education in English (evidenced by their academic transcripts).

2.4.2. Note that some Institutions may still require evidence of English language proficiency and Sending Posts relying on the above may need to check whether Institutions accept Applicants from particular regions or with particular qualifications from English language Institutions.

- i. Where an Applicant or Awardee does not meet DFAT’s English language requirements (see [subsection 2.4.1](#)), the Awardee must provide an academic English language test result that meets the Institution’s academic English language requirement tests before commencing the

approved main course of studies. The below are accepted English language tests:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)
- Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic)

- 2.4.3. Awardees' English language test results must be valid at 1 January of the year in which the Awardee is commencing studies in the study country (IELTS, TOEFL scores, and PTE Academic are valid for two years after the test date). If the Institution requires a different test validity timeframe, Awardees must meet the Institution's requirements.
- 2.4.4. Where an Institution's academic English language requirement is higher than DFAT's requirement for the main course of study, the Awardee must meet the Institution's requirement.

### **Pre-course English training**

- 2.4.5. Country programs may elect to provide English training to Awardees in their home country or the immediate region for a maximum of six months prior to commencement of formal study program and will be included in the Award.
- 2.4.6. An Awardee who does not meet the Institution's requirements may be able to undertake pre-course English language training in the study country.
- 2.4.7. Pre-course English training in the study country is for a maximum of six months.

### **Pre-course English language (PCE) training in-country**

- 2.4.8. {S} Sending Post may elect to provide pre-course English language training in country, prior to mobilisation.
- i. It is up to Sending Post to determine on what basis they provide in-country English language training, however training should be provided prior to a provisional offer of an award.
- 2.4.9. {S} Sending Post will determine when Applicants or Awardees need to provide evidence of their English language abilities and advise Applicants accordingly. Sending Post must provide the evidence in OASIS before or at the time of requesting a placement for the Applicant at an Institution.
- 2.4.10. {I} Before making a placement offer, Institutions should give careful consideration to the English language training that an Awardee may require.
- 2.4.11. {I} An Institution must not accept an Awardee if they are unlikely to reach the standard of English required for the main course of studies within six months of PCE training.

## 2.5. Finding an appropriate course and Institution

- 2.5.1. Scholarships are available only for courses agreed to by DFAT and partner governments and listed on Institution websites and Course Handbooks.
- 2.5.2. {A} Scholarship Applicants are not required to have an offer of place at an Institution when they apply for an AAPS. However, Applicants must have researched their preferred courses, including information provided on Institution websites (see [Appendix C: AAPS institution websites](#)), and Institution Course Handbooks. Applicants are asked to do their research carefully before completing the application form. Once the application is submitted, course preferences cannot be changed.
- 2.5.3. {A} Applicants are expected to undertake research on the Institutions that may provide the most appropriate course of study which meets their needs. Applicants must include their course and Institution preferences when submitting their application for a Scholarship.
- 2.5.4. {I} Institutions may offer in-country information sessions and also have extensive information on their individual websites. An Institution may recommend a qualifying or preliminary course to be taken as part of the Awardee's academic program.
- 2.5.5. {S} Sending Post must confirm that the course selected meets all of the requirements for an AAPS, in particular, the requirement that less than 25 per cent is offered online.
- 2.5.6. {S} Sending Post may also assist Applicants to make an informed decision on the most appropriate course of study and location.

## 2.6. Types of courses available to Applicants

- 2.6.1. All Scholarships must be taken up in the year for which they are awarded. Should an Awardee not be able to commence their study by November in the year of the award, the Scholarship offer will be withdrawn, and the applicant may re-apply for the next intake.
- 2.6.2. The types of courses available for study under a Scholarship will depend on the Applicant's home country government priorities. AAPS may be available for the following types of courses:
- i. Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses
  - ii. Bachelor degree (undergraduate) courses
  - iii. Master degree courses
  - iv. Doctorate degree (PhD) programs
- 2.6.3. AAPS do not support completion of studies already commenced in the study country.

2.6.4. AAPS do not support study for a lesser degree than one already held by the Applicant.

2.6.5. {A} Applicants must read the relevant Country Profile or check with the nearest DFAT office (or the Managing Contractor's office) to find out what courses are support by an AAPS. For example, some Program Areas do not provide scholarships for undergraduate or PhD studies.

### Bachelor's degree

2.6.6. The maximum duration of study permitted for a Bachelor degree is five (5) years, except for the Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MBBS). The maximum duration of study permitted for the MBBS is six (6) years. Double Bachelor degrees are permitted so long as both can be completed within five (5) years and are included in the original offer.

2.6.7. {I} Institutions may recommend an Honours year for an outstanding Awardee undertaking a Bachelor degree by submitting a Course Transfer variation in OASIS (see [subsection 13.5.5](#)).

2.6.8. {I} Institutions must seek approval from Sending Post before inviting an Awardee to undertake an Honours program. Institutions should provide the Awardee's subject results when seeking approval.

2.6.9. {I} Approval must be sought by the Institution no later than three (3) months before the Awardee's Scholarship completion date, to allow time for the Sending Post to assess the request and, where relevant, seek Partner Government approval.

### Master's degree

2.6.10. The maximum duration for a Master's degree program is two years. Where an Awardee studying a Master's by Research returns to their home country before their final thesis is submitted, a written submission timeline (agreed by the Awardee's supervisor) must be given by the Awardee to their RST Officer to be uploaded into OASIS. The maximum duration to submit a thesis after returning home is two (2) years (see [subsection 10.6.4](#) for CLE during this time). Awardees studying Master's by Coursework with a research component must submit their research before they return home, or their Scholarship completion will be recorded as a fail.

2.6.11. Master's degree programs may be offered by coursework, by research or by a combination of coursework and research. Master's by Research or a combination of coursework and research should be offered only to those Applicants who have demonstrated the need for high-level research skills in order to undertake research, teaching, or to supervise researchers upon their return home.

2.6.12. Double Master's degrees are permitted only when both are included in the Institution's original offer and both courses can be completed within two years.

2.6.13. {A} Applicants wishing to undertake a Master's by Research must investigate an appropriate supervisor and identify the Institution's area of research strength. Applicants should supply evidence of past research undertaken and highlight outcomes.

### Doctorate (PhD) programs

- 2.6.14. The maximum duration for a PhD is four (4) years.
- 2.6.15. Where an Awardee returns to their home country before submitting a final thesis, the Awardee must give a written submission timeline (agreed by the Awardees supervisor) to their RST Officer to be uploaded into OASIS. The maximum duration to submit a PhD thesis after returning home is two (2) years (see [subsection 10.6.4](#) for CLE during this time).
- 2.6.16. Study at doctorate level (PhD) may be subject to partner government approval. Normally, approval is given only where the Applicant occupies, or is expected to occupy, a senior position requiring individual research or the supervision and training of other researchers in a research organisation (e.g. university or research centre) in the Applicant's home country.

### Articulated study programs

- 2.6.17. An articulated study program is one that combines a lower and higher-level course of study, leading to award of the higher qualification. Examples include a vocational course providing a direct pathway to a university undergraduate course of study; or a Graduate Diploma leading directly to a Master's, or a Master's leading directly to a PhD.
- 2.6.18. Scholarships are available for articulated study programs, subject to the relevant Country Profile, but must not comprise more than two courses or have a total duration in excess of the maximum duration permitted for the higher qualification (see [subsection 5.2.9](#)).

### Preparation programs

- 2.6.19. Preparation programs are courses deemed necessary by the Institution to enable an Awardee to successfully complete their qualification in the timeframe specified in the award offer. Such programs may be formal or informal, for example bridging courses or special intensive courses, and may not lead to a recognised qualification.
- 2.6.20. Preparation programs include:
- i. Pre-course English (see [section 2.4](#))
  - ii. Qualifying or preliminary programs for postgraduate Awardees
  - iii. Foundation programs for undergraduate and vocational education and training Awardees.
- 2.6.21. Preparation programs can be up to a maximum of 12 months. The total program of activities (i.e. a combination of the preparatory programs and

the main course of studies) must not result in the Scholarship duration being more than 12 months longer than the main course.

## 2.7. Types of courses for which Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships are not available

### 2.7.1. AAPS are not available for:

- i. Training in areas related to nuclear technology or flying aircraft.
- ii. Legal workshops
- iii. Study by distance or external mode in the study country unless part of a registered course where the majority of units are undertaken in the primary Institution and the external component is no more than 25 per cent of the total course study load
- iv. Study by distance or external mode while residing outside the study country unless as part of the Institution's registered course where:
  - o the majority of the units are undertaken in the study country
  - o the external component is no more than 25 per cent of the total course study load
  - o with the prior approval from DFAT.
- v. Military training and those currently serving.
- vi. Training in counter-subversion methods, the suppression of political dissent or intelligence procurement.

2.7.2. Scholarships will not be available for courses of study in the study country where the Applicant already has achieved that qualification and the qualification is deemed to be equivalent to the study country qualification at the same level.

2.7.3. This is not an exhaustive list and excluded programs of study are not limited to the above. Check country Profiles for more information.

## 2.8. Application process

2.8.1. Country Profiles detail the opening and closing dates for applications and which method of application is acceptable for that country. While all Applicants are encouraged to apply online, not all Sending Posts are able to receive applications via the online application facility in OASIS. Sending Posts websites contain specific information about application methods. The profiles can be found at [Participating countries | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(dfat.gov.au\)](#)

2.8.2. {A} It is important that Applicants read and fully understand and comply with the relevant Country Profile before submitting an application. Guidance for Applicants on using the Online Application facility OASIS is at: [OASIS](#)

- 2.8.3. {A} Applicants must supply documents to support their Scholarship application including, but not limited to:
- i. A certified copy of original formal degree graduation certificate (i.e. testamur) and if not in English a certified translation of the degree;
  - ii. A certified copy of original formal academic transcript/s and, if not in English, a certified translation copy of the transcript/s;
  - iii. A certified copy of a citizenship document (e.g. passport or national identity card);
  - iv. A certified copy of original birth certificate and, if not in English, a certified translation;
  - v. A certified copy of original formal degree graduation certificate (i.e. testamur) and, if not in English,
  - vi. A curriculum vitae (CV) briefly detailing work history and responsibilities (and research experience, if relevant to the application);
  - vii. Referee reports: at least one academic referee report and at least one other referee report (e.g. a work supervisor). Master's by Research or PhD Applicants should provide two academic referee reports. A template for the preferred format of a referee report is available at [How to apply for an Australia Awards scholarship | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(dfat.gov.au\)](#)
  - viii. PhD candidates only – evidence (e.g. letter or email communication) that the Applicant has received in-principle support for their research topic from a potential supervisor.
- 2.8.4. {A} See [subsection 2.8.7](#) for certification requirements.
- 2.8.5. {A} PhD candidates only- if an AAPS is awarded, an additional research proposal for Sending Posts to submit to institutions.
- 2.8.6. {S} Sending Post may need to submit, on behalf of a successful Applicant, an application form for the relevant Institution in addition to the request for placement to meet the Institution's specific enrolment requirements.

### Document certification

- 2.8.7. Documents accompanying a Scholarship application that require certification must be certified in accordance with the requirements below.
- 2.8.8. The original document has been sighted and the copy has been sworn to be a true copy of the original by an authorised person at one of the following:
- i. The official records department of the Institution that originally issued the document/s, or
  - ii. An Australian overseas diplomatic mission, or
  - iii. A Notary Public
  - iv. Justice of the Peace (JP).

- 2.8.9. The authorised person must:
- i. Write 'This is a certified true copy of the original document as sighted by me', and
  - ii. Sign and print his/her name, address, contact telephone number, profession or occupation or organisation and the date verified, and
  - iii. Include the official stamp or seal of the verifier's organisation on the copy, if the organisation has such a stamp.
- 2.8.10. Where an Institution has specific document certification requirements, the Awardee must meet the Institution's requirements.
- 2.8.11. {S} Sending Post may elect at which stage of the application or selection process they require correctly certified documents, provided that certified copies are included in each request for placement at an Institution in the study country.
- 2.8.12. {S} Where an Institution has additional certification requirements beyond those detailed in [subsections 2.8.7 - 2.8.9](#) the Sending Post will provide a letter to the Institution confirming that it has viewed the original documents and certified copies. Further guidance, including a template for this letter, can be found in OASIS under Support Materials – Document Certification Fact Sheet.
- 2.8.13. {A} Applicants may not verify their own documents, even if they belong to one of the categories listed in [subsection 2.8.8](#).
- 2.8.14. {A} Documents cannot be verified by a person directly related to the Applicant.
- 2.8.15. {A} If an Applicant has studied under a previous name, they must supply documentary evidence to prove their change of name, such as a marriage certificate, deed poll registration or other registration. The documentation must show their previous name/s and their current name/s.



### 3. Fraud

- 3.1.1. DFAT takes all possible steps to ensure that Australian Government funds are used appropriately to deliver effective aid and development and treats all attempted, alleged, detected and suspected fraud seriously.
- 3.1.2. DFAT defines fraud as dishonestly obtaining a benefit, or causing a loss, by deception or other means.
- 3.1.3. DFAT has a zero-tolerance attitude towards any attempts to gain a benefit fraudulently from the Australian Government. DFAT has the right to vary or reverse any decision regarding an AAPS made on the basis of incorrect or incomplete information.
- 3.1.4. The following could constitute fraud in the context of the AAPS:
- i. False supporting documents in an application;
  - ii. False information on forms;
  - iii. Not disclosing relevant information;
  - iv. Not disclosing a conflict of interest (e.g. a relationship with decision-makers, panel members or any DFAT staff member);
  - v. Deliberately claiming a benefit not entitled to (e.g. claiming reunion travel when dependant family members are with the Awardee in the study country, or changing travel arrangements to include or extend a stopover, where this is not permitted under the policy), and
  - vi. Plagiarism.
- 3.1.5. Applicants providing suspected fraudulent documents will be excluded from the selection process until the documents are verified. If fraud is confirmed, the Applicant will be ineligible to apply for further Australia Awards Scholarships and Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships. Australia Awards Section and DFAT's Fraud Control Section must be notified in all cases of suspected fraud.
- 3.1.6. {A} When submitting an application for an AAPS, Applicants are required to declare that the contents of their application are true and correct; and acknowledge that DFAT has the right to vary or reverse any decision regarding an AAPS made on the basis of incorrect or incomplete information. Applicants should carefully read the Fraud clause in the contract signed by all Awardees prior to beginning their Scholarship.
- 3.1.7. {I} Institutions must report to the Australia Awards Section and/or Sending Post via email when it detects or suspects that an Awardee has committed fraud.
- 3.1.8. {S} Sending Posts must report to DFAT's Fraud Control Section and copy the Australia Awards Section via email when it detects or suspects that an Awardee has committed fraud.

## 4. Selection

### 4.1. Selection process and criteria

- 4.1.1. All applications for AAPS are considered on merit providing equal opportunity to all Applicants.
- 4.1.2. Sending Posts manage the selection process in each country and the selection process is detailed in the relevant Country Profile. The selection process must include an interview of short-listed candidates and may include other activities such as group participation sessions to assess the suitability of Applicants.
- 4.1.3. Selection of Applicants will take into account the Applicant's professional and personal qualities, academic competence and, most importantly, their potential to impact on development challenges in their home country. Each country may have additional selection criteria, which can be accessed in the relevant [Country Profile](#).
- 4.1.4. {S} Sending Posts are responsible for selecting and awarding AAPS to the most suitable Applicants. These are Applicants who match the desired profile, who demonstrate a strong likelihood of succeeding in their studies and who will be able to contribute to development in areas being targeted by the development strategy. Applicants who demonstrate a significant ability to develop networks while in the study program and promote Australia in their home country on completion of their studies will be favourably considered.

### 4.2. Reintegration plans

- 4.2.1. Reintegration plans (also known as Development Impact Plans or Re-Entry Action Plans) are an effective tool to assist Sending Posts, Applicants,
- 4.2.2. Awardees and Alumni at the selection, return-home and post-Scholarship stages. Applicants must provide a Reintegration plan as part of their application.
- 4.2.3. {A} The Reintegration plan is a statement of intent by the Applicant, setting out practical and realistic examples of tasks on which they plan to apply the skills and knowledge gained through their studies in the study country and the possible constraints they think could prevent them from achieving these tasks and mitigation strategies to overcome challenges.
- 4.2.4. {A} Awardees may be required to update their Reintegration plan at any stage of their Scholarship, including as part of on-award enrichment training.
- 4.2.5. {S} Sending Posts will include Reintegration plans as part of the application and selection process and require all Applicants to complete a Reintegration plan to help selection panels identify which candidates have well thought

through approaches for using their new skills on return to their home country.

- 4.2.6. {S} Sending Posts may include the Applicant's/Awardee's employer as a party to the plan, particularly where the employer is holding the Awardee's position open, and where there is a strong human resource development priority for the Sending Posts AAPS.

### 4.3. Successful and reserve Applicants

- 4.3.1. The AAPS selection process in each country (or, in some cases, in the region) will result in a list of successful candidates equal to the number of scholarships available for the country, and in most instances a list of reserve candidates ranked in order.
- 4.3.2. Candidates will be advised of their success or otherwise by the end of August in the year of application.
- 4.3.3. Successful candidates become Awardees once the candidate has signed the Scholarship contract with the Commonwealth of Australia after a placement offer has been received from an Institution in the study country.
- 4.3.4. {S} Scholarship numbers are determined by the budget allocations of the Sending Post. Reserve candidates may be selected to take up a Scholarship if sufficient budget is identified.
- 4.3.5. {S} Posts should ensure that reserve candidates continue to meet all eligibility criteria and be deemed suitable for placement in the event that a successful candidate's Institution placement is rejected, or the candidate declines the award offer.

### 4.4. Advising Applicants of selection outcomes

- 4.4.1. {S} Sending Post will inform successful Applicants of the outcomes of their AAPS selection process by the end of August in the year of selection.

## 5. Placement

### 5.1. Request for placement and placement offers

- 5.1.1. After finalising Awardee selection, Sending Posts use OASIS to request placements for successful Applicants at their first preference Institution and course.
- 5.1.2. Requests for placement are assessed by Institutions on merit. An Institution will process a placement offer only where the Awardee meets the Institution's admission requirements (including English language requirements) and is assessed as being capable of successfully completing the nominated course within the specified period.
- i. Placements of Awardees with disability involve additional considerations and requirements apply (see [Chapter 9](#)).
- 5.1.3. DFAT reserves the right to reject a placement offer made by an Institution or to withdraw a placement request.
- 5.1.4. {A} Successful Applicants selected to undertake a PhD or Master's by Research will need to provide Sending Post with a well-developed research proposal to submit to the Institution as part of the Request for Placement process. The proposal should include a proposed methodology, timeline and a brief literature review.
- 5.1.5. {S} Sending Post must use OASIS to request placements. Requests sent outside OASIS may not be considered by Institutions.
- 5.1.6. {S} Sending Post will initiate requests for placement in OASIS **by the end of October** for first semester commencement and **by early April** for second semester commencement. Sending Posts are to ensure that when submitting a request for placement to an Institution:
- i. It is compliant with any country specific conditions set by the partner government, and
- ii. The following have been uploaded or recorded in OASIS:
- Properly certified supporting documentation,
  - The Awardee's emergency contact details,
  - The dependants' information, where relevant, and
  - The Awardee's passport number and expiry date.
- iii. For PhD Awardees, the following has been uploaded into OASIS:
- The letter or email communication, as outlined at [subsection 2.8.3vii](#), from the Applicant's potential supervisor giving in-principle support for the research proposal, and
  - The supporting documents outlined at [subsection 2.8.3](#).
- 5.1.7. {S} If the Institution requests further information from Sending Post to process the request for placement, Sending Post must respond promptly to

- enable the Institution's final response to the request for placement to be sent in accordance with the timeframes outlined in [subsection 5.1.6](#).
- 5.1.8. {S} Placements involving periods of more than six (6) weeks, where the Awardee is not enrolled (excluding semester breaks), will not be approved. If a long period without study is unavoidable between pre-course English, foundation programs or articulated programs and the main course of study, alternative options should be considered such as enrolment in summer or winter courses or [Suspension](#).
- 5.1.9. {S} If the Applicant's first preference is declined by an Institution, the Sending Post may approach the second Institution. The second preference Institution will process the request for placement in OASIS in line with the process above and the timeframe outlined in [subsections 5.1.12 – 5.1.15](#).
- 5.1.10. {S} If a successful Applicant cannot be placed in any of their preferred courses, the Sending Post must advise the Applicant and where relevant, their nominating authority, that no placement can be offered. In such circumstances, the Sending Post will withdraw the scholarship offer, and may then request a placement for a reserve Applicant.
- 5.1.11. {S} Sending Post will not attempt to negotiate with an Institution to accept a Scholarship holder who does not meet the Institutions minimum requirements.
- 5.1.12. {I} Institutions must respond to complete placement requests received in OASIS:
- i. Within 15 business days for coursework studies; and
  - ii. Within 30 business days for research studies.
- The Institution may respond to a placement request in OASIS by:
- iii. Declining to offer a place at the Institution and stating the reasons why;
  - iv. Offering a place conditionally; and
  - v. Offering a place unconditionally.
- 5.1.13. {I} If the Institution requires further information from the Sending Post to process the placement, the Institution must respond to the request for placement as soon as possible, to attempt to meet the timeframe at [subsection 5.1.12](#).
- 5.1.14. {I} If the Institution does not respond to a completed request within the stipulated timeframe the Sending Post may withdraw the placement from that Institution at its discretion.
- 5.1.15. {I} The institution should ensure placement offers include:
- i. The Introductory Academic Program
  - ii. The Awardee's nominated course including RPL, course length, fees and entitlements adjusted accordingly where appropriate
  - iii. Any preparatory programs deemed necessary by the Institution

- iv. Any other compulsory courses or course elements (e.g. fieldwork, work attachments, first aid course, occupational health and safety course, etc.)
- v. Course costs and Scholarship entitlements, as required (see [Chapter 10](#)); and
- vi. Any conditions of the offer
- vii. Additional information about the placement offer that the successful Applicant should be aware of when signing the offer and contract, such as courses that are delivered in a non-standard mode (i.e. intensive mode or at more than one Institution).

## 5.2. Preparation programs

5.2.1. Preparation programs are courses deemed necessary by the Institution to enable an Awardee to successfully complete their qualification in the timeframe specified by the Institution. Such programs may be formal or informal, for example bridging courses or special intensive courses, and may not lead to a recognised qualification.

5.2.2. Preparatory programs include:

- i. Pre-course English (see [subsection 2.4.5](#))
- ii. Qualifying or preliminary programs for postgraduate Awardees
- iii. Foundation programs for undergraduate and vocational education and training Awardees.

5.2.3. {I} Institutions may recommend preparatory programs that run for up to a maximum of 12 months. The total program of activities (i.e. a combination of the preparatory programs and the main course of studies) must not result in the Scholarship duration being more than 12 months longer than the main course.

### Foundation programs

5.2.4. A foundation program of up to 12 months may be offered by the Institution to vocational education and training and undergraduate Applicants if the Institution assesses that the Awardee does not meet the required standard for direct entry into their chosen course.

5.2.5. Awardees may also attend in-country foundation programs as part of their Scholarship program.

5.2.6. Approval from the Sending Post must be sought if there is likely to be more than a two-week break between completion of the preparatory program and the main course of study at any time other than normal session breaks.

5.2.7. {A} Awardees undertaking preparatory programs in the study country should commence their main course of study as soon as the preparatory program is completed. Awardees must achieve satisfactory results in their preparation program to continue their award, including preparatory programs

undertaken in-country. Failure to achieve satisfactory results may result in termination of the award.

- 5.2.8. {I} Upon receiving a request for placement, Institutions should assess whether the Awardee will require a preparation program to successfully complete their qualification in the timeframe specified by the Institution. Preparation programs should be included in the initial placement offer. If the Institution later assesses that a shorter period of preparation is adequate, the Institution must reduce the overall length of the award in OASIS through a reduction variation towards the end of the award period (see [section 13.7](#)).

### Articulated study programs

- 5.2.9. For articulated study programs undertaken at more than one Institution, the Institution offering the higher course of study is deemed to be the primary Institution. The primary Institution will be responsible for the contractual obligations with DFAT.
- 5.2.10. The primary Institution needs to ensure that both courses comprising the articulated program are identified (and entered into OASIS) as part of the Scholarship offer.

### Multi-country and multi-campus study: Bachelor of Laws

- 5.2.11. Awardees for the Bachelor of Laws (LLB program) and the Professional Diploma in Legal Practice (PDLP) at the University of the South Pacific (USP) have the choice to undertake this at either the Emalus campus, Vanuatu or the Laucala campus, Fiji.
- 5.2.12. Awardees wishing to undertake the LLB-PDLP program must undertake the PDLP in the immediate semester after completing the LLB degree at the same campus they are enrolled at.
- 5.2.13. Only in exceptional circumstances are Awardees studying at the Emalus campus, Vanuatu permitted to transfer to the Laucala campus, Fiji to undertake the PDLP. This must be to complete their studies within the timeframe specified in their Scholarship contract.
- 5.2.14. In the event the above occurs, Laucala campus becomes the primary campus, and assumes responsibility for the contractual obligations with DFAT and the OASIS processes. Laucala campus must ensure that both courses comprising the articulated program are identified (and entered into OASIS) as part of the Scholarship transfer offer.

### Combined degrees

- 5.2.15. The only conjoint or combined degree permissible is the Bachelor Commerce/Bachelor of Laws (BCOM/LLB) study program. Laucala campus, Fiji is the primary campus.

- 5.2.16. The primary campus is responsible for the contractual obligations with DFAT and the OASIS processes. The primary Institution must ensure that both courses comprising the articulated program are identified (and entered into OASIS) as part of the Scholarship offer.

### Reviewing a placement offer and issuing a letter of offer

- 5.2.17. Sending Posts are responsible for reviewing an Institution's placement offer, and issuing the letter of offer, along with the Scholarship contract to the successful Applicant, and recording the Applicant's acceptance (or rejection) of the offer in OASIS. OASIS will send an email alert to the Institution advising of this decision.

5.2.18. {S} Sending Post will review a placement offer from an Institution, and request further information or clarification if required, to ensure that it contains the information as outlined at [subsection 5.1.15](#).

5.2.19. {S} Once the Sending Post has reviewed the placement offer and is satisfied that it meets the requirements above, the Sending Post must:

- i. Generate a letter of offer and contract in OASIS, ensuring that specific conditions required by the Institution are included
- ii. Send the letter of offer and contract to the successful Applicant to sign
- iii. Upload the signed contract into OASIS once it is received from the Applicant
- iv. Record the acceptance (or rejection) of the placement offer in OASIS.



## 6. Accepting the Scholarship and its Conditions

### 6.1. Accepting the Scholarship

- 6.1.1. A Scholarship is only offered once an Applicant's placement offer is finalised. Upon signing the Scholarship contract, Applicants become Awardees.
- 6.1.2. {A} Successful Applicants will receive a Scholarship letter of offer and contract from the Sending Post in their country. To accept the Scholarship and its conditions, the successful Applicant must read and sign the contract between themselves and the Commonwealth of Australia and return it to the Sending Post.

### 6.2. Scholarship conditions

- 6.2.1. In accepting the Scholarship, Awardees agree to the following Scholarship conditions:

#### **Obligations {A}**

The Awardee agrees they must:

- i. Commence the Scholarship in the academic year for which it is offered, unless DFAT has agreed to defer the commencement of the Awardee's studies;
- ii. Participate in the Pre-departure briefing arranged by the Sending Post and participate in the Institution's compulsory Introductory Academic Program when the Awardee arrives in the study country;
- iii. Undertake only the approved course of study for which the Scholarship is offered, abide by the rules of the Institution, submit all assessment items required for the course, sit examinations, and complete their course of study and Scholarship by the end date;
- iv. Obey the laws of the study country and act in a manner that will not bring disrepute to DFAT, and
- v. Leave the study country for a minimum of two years at the end of, or termination of, the Awardee's Scholarship and acknowledge that any time spent outside the home country during the two-year exclusion period will extend the end date of the exclusion period (see [Section 8.6](#)).

#### **For the duration of the Scholarship the Awardee must: {A}**

- vi. Engage in a full-time program of study at all times unless approved by DFAT;
- vii. Make satisfactory academic progress as determined by the Institution and maintain good academic conduct;

- viii. Reside in the study country for the duration of the Scholarship (apart from holidays, reunion visits or fieldwork visits which have been approved by DFAT);
- ix. Maintain a clear and direct line of communication with DFAT through the Regional Scholarships Team (RST), recognising that the RST is the first point of contact for the Awardees dealing with DFAT, and
- x. Work with DFAT and RST if a welfare or critical incident occurs
- xi. If you publish any Material while on Scholarship, you agree:
  - a. To acknowledge that you are an Australia Awards Pacific scholar, supported by the Australian Government; and
  - b. To use a disclaimer which makes clear that the views and opinions expressed in the Material are those of you, the author, and do not represent the views of the Australian Government.

#### **Visa {A}**

- xii. The Awardee agrees to satisfy all visa requirements determined by the study country to hold a Study Permit. Information on this can be obtained from the Sending Post;
- xiii. The Awardee acknowledges that the study country issues visas for entry into the study country and that DFAT may provide support for certain visas but has no control over visa decisions made by the study country; and
- xiv. The Awardee acknowledges that if, during their Scholarship, they apply (including as part of a joint or family application) for a visa other than the Study visa, then their Scholarship will be terminated, and they will incur a debt to the Commonwealth of Australia of the total accrued cost of their Scholarship.

#### **Financial obligations {A}**

- xv. The Awardee acknowledges that the Awardee is responsible for all costs during the Scholarship period that are not covered by the Scholarship benefits;
- xvi. The Awardee acknowledges that the Awardee is responsible for how they budget any Scholarship benefits the Awardee receives to pay their living expenses; and
- xvii. The Awardee agrees to repay all Scholarship benefits the Awardee receives, as a debt due and owing to the Commonwealth of Australia if:
  - The Awardee does not leave the study country at the end of the Scholarship
  - If the Awardee applies for anything other than a short-term temporary visa to return to the study country or Australia within two years of completion of the Scholarship (refer [Section 8.6](#)), or
  - If the Awardee departs the study country with the intention of completing the Scholarship from home without notifying the Institution of their intent.

### **Medical expenses {A}**

- xviii. The Awardee will advise DFAT of any pre-existing medical conditions, which may affect their ability to study;
- xix. The Awardee acknowledges that the Awardee's medical cover entitlement may not cover all medical expenses, and that the Awardee is liable for any additional expenses incurred by them and their dependants during their Scholarship; and
- xx. There is no medical cover entitlement for dependants of Awardees.

### **Other Scholarships and studies {A}**

- xxi. The Awardee will not hold another Australian Government Scholarship, other than a DFAT supplementary award, at the same time as the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship, or begin studying another course; and
- xxii. The Awardee will not undertake any additional off Scholarship studies during their time in the study country on the study permit.

### **Change of circumstances {A}**

- xxiii. The Awardee will advise DFAT immediately, via the RST at the Institution, of any personal, financial or family circumstances or incidents (e.g. family or financial problems, medical conditions, etc.) that might affect the Awardee's ability to commence the Scholarship on time or to complete the approved course of study within the Scholarship period; and
- xxiv. The Awardee will advise DFAT immediately, via the RST, if the Awardee marries a person who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or is a permanent resident in Australia or New Zealand. A change to the Awardees citizenship or residency status may have implications for the Scholarship and contravene the visa conditions.

### **Changes to Scholarship or course of study {A}**

- xxv. The Awardee will discuss with the RST any proposed changes to the approved course of study for which the Scholarship is offered;
- xxvi. The Awardee will obtain approval from the Institution, DFAT and, in some instances, the partner government before making any changes to the course of study; and
- xxvii. The Awardee acknowledges that DFAT may amend the period of the Scholarship or Scholarship benefits at its discretion.

### **Termination and Suspension of Scholarship {A}**

- xxviii. The Awardee acknowledges that the Awardee holds the AAPS with DFAT's support and DFAT reserves its right to terminate the Scholarship and withdraw its support at any time, including if the Awardee:

- Does not comply with a condition of the Scholarship;
  - Does not make successful academic progress and remedial strategies have not been successful;
  - Is excluded by the Institution from the course or study units due to academic failure or from remaining at the Institution because of misconduct (as defined by the Institution);
  - Completes the maximum period of English language training available under the Scholarship and still has insufficient English language ability for entry to the main course of study;
  - Is unable to continue a program due to serious illness or incapacity for medical/mental health reasons;
  - Conducts themselves in a manner which is considered to have transgressed acceptable community standards;
  - Is found to have committed an act of fraud;
  - Applies for a visa or permanent residence in Australia or New Zealand or
  - Is found guilty of a crime.
- xxix. The Awardee acknowledges that DFAT reserves the right to suspend the Scholarship, including if:
- The student is unable to continue a course or study due to serious illness or incapacity due to medical or mental health reasons.
- xxx. The Awardee acknowledges that the Scholarship will be suspended until the Awardee can demonstrate that the Awardee is able to undertake full time study
- xxxi. If the Awardee's Scholarship is suspended the Awardee will return to their home country (with any dependants) for the duration of the Suspension and will seek the prior approval of DFAT and the Institution before returning to the study country.

#### **Privacy {A}**

- xxxii. The Awardee also acknowledges that:
- The [Privacy Act 1988](#) governs the handling of personal information by Australian Government agencies and
  - DFAT's privacy policy is available at [Privacy | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(dfat.gov.au\)](#)
- xxxiii. The Awardee consents to their personal information and that of their family members and dependants, including sensitive information as defined in the Privacy Act 1988, being collected, handled, used and disclosed by and exchanged between DFAT, other government agencies including the study country's immigration authorities, tertiary Institutions in the study country, partner organisations (including managing contractors and sub-contractors), medical insurers, medical practitioners, case managers, the home government (where applicable)

- and other parties, in the circumstances outlined, and for the purposes indicated, in the AAPS Policy Handbook as updated from time to time;
- xxxiv. The Awardee acknowledges that DFAT may disclose their personal information to their home government or another overseas recipient, such as a family member nominated by Awardees and that DFAT will not take any steps to ensure their home government or any other overseas recipient does not breach the Australian Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act before disclosing their personal information to them, and Awardees consent to DFAT disclosing the information on that basis;
- xxxv. The Awardee acknowledges that the purpose of any such exchange or disclosure of personal and sensitive information is to enable DFAT and others to properly manage the AAPS and any welfare incidents or critical incidents affecting Awardees and their Scholarship conditions;
- xxxvi. The Awardee acknowledges that from time to time the Australian Government may produce media releases for publication in Australia, the study country and in the Awardee's home country in various forms, in relation to the Scholarship or other development activities (promotional material); and
- xxxvii. The Awardee consents to DFAT, Australian Ministers and Australian Government agencies collecting, exchanging, using and disclosing information about the Awardee including, but not limited to, their academic background, their study program in the Pacific and their professional achievements either before or after receiving the Scholarship, and including it in such promotional material.

### 6.3. The prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) and child protection

- 6.3.1. DFAT has clear and strict policies in relation to managing and reducing risks of sexual exploitation abuse and harassment and child abuse and exploitation (PSEAH).
- 6.3.2. Awardees must act in accordance with the DFAT Child Protection and PSEAH policy principles and sign the Code of Conduct section of their Scholarship contract.
- 6.3.3. If an Awardee is involved in a sexual misconduct or child protection incident in Australia or the study country, the Welfare and Critical Incident Management process applies. Allegations about sexual misconduct related to adults or child abuse or exploitation of any kind, involving an Awardee will be handled in accordance with relevant Australian Commonwealth, State and Territory laws. DFAT reserves its right to terminate the Scholarship and withdraw its support at any time, including if the Awardee conducts themselves in a manner which is considered to have transgressed acceptable Australian community standards.

- 6.3.4. Child abuse and exploitation includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which may result in potential or actual harm to a child's health and welfare. For more information see [DFAT's Child Protection Policy](#).
- 6.3.5. DFAT's PSEAH policy covers sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment of adults. For more information see [DFAT's PSEAH Policy](#).
- 6.3.6. {A} Awardees must sign the DFAT Child Protection and PSEAH Code of Conduct section of their Scholarship contract.
- 6.3.7. {S} Sending Posts must provide a copy of both the DFAT Preventing Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment and Child Protection policies with the AAPS offer and contract and check that Awardees have signed the Child Protection/PSEAH Code of Conduct section of their Scholarship contract.

## 6.4. Deferring an offer

- 6.4.1. At DFAT's discretion, an AAPS may be deferred to allow the Awardee to commence at a later date within the academic year for which the Scholarship is offered. A deferral to commence at a later date within the academic year may be approved for a variety of reasons including pregnancy, visa issues and family or work responsibilities. Awardees may be responsible for visa extension costs resulting from deferrals.
- 6.4.2. Only in very exceptional cases where the cause is beyond the control of the Awardee (e.g. border or travel restrictions as a result of COVID-19, visa processing delays or where foundation courses are only available in first semester/trimester) may an AAPS, be deferred until the following academic year or later if impacted by COVID-19 related border restrictions. Work or family commitments (including pregnancy), health issues (excluding disability) or not being able to meet the English language requirements are **not acceptable** reasons for deferral beyond the year for which the Scholarship is offered. The Awardee will need to decline the offer and reapply when they are ready to start their studies in the study country.
- 6.4.3. {A} Awardees requesting a deferral must do so after they have accepted their Scholarship and signed their Scholarship contract, and before they arrive in the study country. Awardees who wish to defer should contact the relevant Sending Post as soon as possible after receiving the Scholarship offer. After the deferral period, Awardees who commence their Scholarship study program will be entitled to the conditions and entitlements in their original contract with DFAT.
- 6.4.4. {A} Awardees should be aware that in some cases, Sending Post or the Institution may request or require a deferral of their Scholarship, for example due to COVID-19 border or travel restrictions or to ensure that Awardees with disability are mobilised successfully and have access to all necessary support and reasonable adjustments (see [Chapter 9](#) for more

information.) Awardees will be consulted where a deferral is contemplated. DFAT has the final decision on deferred start dates.

6.4.5. {A} Awardees who are granted a deferral must complete the next available Introductory Academic Program (IAP).

6.4.6. {S} Only Sending Posts or Suva Post, in consultation with partner governments where relevant, are able to approve a Scholarship deferral. Sending Post are responsible for processing the deferral variation in OASIS.

6.4.7. {I} Institutions may propose deferring a Scholarship commencement date until a later session if more time is required for the Institution to put in place reasonable adjustments for an Awardee with disability (see [Chapter 9](#)) or if the Awardee will not be able to arrive in the study country in time to undertake the IAP and start on the course start date.

## 7. Pre-departure

### 7.1. Pre-departure information

- 7.1.1. Pre-departure briefings provide essential information that Awardees need when they arrive in the study country, such as advice about living and studying in the study country. The briefings are also an opportunity to provide information about award conditions, including entitlements and obligations, such as the requirement that Awardees leave the study country and return to their home country for a minimum period of two years after completing their AAPS (see [section 8.6](#)).
- 7.1.2. The briefing provides cultural information about the study country to assist Awardees to settle into the study country and their Institution quickly, setting them up for success within the timeframe provided in their contract.
- 7.1.3. {A} It is compulsory for Awardees to participate in a Pre-departure briefing.
- 7.1.4. {A} Family members of Awardees, especially those who expect to accompany them to the study country, are encouraged to participate in the briefing. The costs for family members to attend the briefing must be covered by Awardees, but some Sending Posts may subsidise these costs.
- 7.1.5. {I} The Institution:
- i. Must provide each Awardee with an Institution information kit before they depart for the study country;
  - ii. Must provide the kit directly to the Awardee to arrive at the earliest possible time and no later than 14 days before the Awardee departs for the study country; and
  - iii. May liaise directly with Sending Posts to distribute the kit to an Awardee if this helps ensure the kit reaches the Awardee.
- 7.1.6. {I} Institutions should also provide information kits to the Receiving Post on request.
- 7.1.7. {I} As a minimum, the Institution information kit must include information that will assist Awardees in the study destination; any information required under the contract with DFAT, and other information the Institution deems relevant e.g. reception information, climate details, long-term accommodation options, living costs, course details, support services at the Institution, including disability support services at the Institution and in the community, local childcare and schooling options, and information about public transport.
- 7.1.8. {S} Sending Posts must:
- i. Provide the Pre-departure briefing at least one month before the Awardee departs for the study country;
  - ii. Arrange and cover the costs for Awardees to attend this briefing; and



- iii. Provide the Pre-departure guidebook/kits to Awardees as early as possible after they accept their AAPS offer. These resources will assist Awardees to prepare for their arrival, and to make the most of the opportunity to live and study in the study country.
- 7.1.9. {S} As part of the Pre-departure briefing, Sending Posts are required to ensure that Awardees understand that, while on Scholarship, they are bound by laws of the study country. Sending Post must explain that the legal framework in the study country may be different to an Awardee’s home country, particularly in relation to domestic and gender violence.
- 7.1.10. {S} Awardees should be made aware that there are various support networks available to them, and that they should seek help at an early stage when experiencing difficulty. In particular, Awardees should be aware that emergency services in the study country are available to assist when the situation warrants.
- 7.1.11. Suva Post provides a Pre-departure guidebook to Sending Post for Awardee’s attending FNU

## 7.2. Family

- 7.2.1. The Australian Government provides a Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) at the accompanied rate for the dependants of Awardees. The accompanied rate remains the same irrespective of how many dependants accompany the Awardee in the study country.
- 7.2.2. The Australian Government does not provide any other support (including financially) for the dependants of Awardees.
- 7.2.3. {A} Applicants must identify at the Scholarship application stage if they intend to bring family members with them to the study country.
- 7.2.4. {A} Awardees are responsible, including financially responsible, for their family members who accompany them to the study country.
- 7.2.5. {A} Awardees are not permitted to leave their dependent children, under 18 years of age, who accompany them to the study country, on their own during any Awardee’s absence from the study country during their Scholarship without having arranged a guardian to care for them.
- 7.2.6. {A} Awardees who intend to bring family with them are strongly encouraged to come to the study country on their own for at least the first six months. This will allow the Awardee to attend the Introductory Academic Program (see [section 12.1](#)) and become established in their program of studies without the distraction of family responsibilities.
- 7.2.7. {A} Awardees are responsible for making arrangements for accommodation, as well as schooling and childcare for dependants. The RST may be able to provide information but is not responsible for making arrangements on the Awardee’s behalf.

- 7.2.8. {A} Awardees should contact the Department of Immigration in the study country for information about current visa requirements for accompanying family.
- 7.2.9. {A}The accompanied rate of CLE is not paid for the period of IAP. If Awardees choose to be accompanied by dependants during the IAP the Awardee should be prepared to provide financial support for dependants. Only **after the completion** of the IAP then the payment at the accompanied rate will commence for the Awardee.
- 7.2.10. {I} While Awardees are responsible for the dependent visa application, including all costs associated with the visa requirements for their dependants, Institutions may provide documentation (for example, a letter confirming enrolment) requested by the Department of Immigration in the study country to assist visas for accompanying family to be arranged in an efficient and timely manner.

## 8. Visas

### 8.1. Visa requirements for Awardees

- 8.1.1. Awardees must have a Study Permit (visa) to travel to and study in the study country.
- 8.1.2. Awardees who hold dual citizenship must apply for their visa and travel to the study country using the passport of the eligible country for which they have received their AAPS.
- 8.1.3. Awardees will need to meet the Department of Immigration in the study country's financial, health and character requirements and demonstrate that their intention to stay temporarily in the study country is genuine.
- 8.1.4. {A} Awardees must ensure they have a valid passport and visa for the whole time they are on Scholarship. Most countries will not permit a traveller to enter their country unless the passport is set to expire at least six months after the final day of travel.
- 8.1.5. {A} Awardees must apply for their visa as soon as possible after accepting the Scholarship, and ensure they read the information on the Student/Study visas and the various requirements.

### 8.2. Visa requirements for accompanying dependant family members

- 8.2.1. An Awardee's accompanying dependant family members must satisfy all visa requirements for the study country in order to travel to and remain in the study country for the duration of the Awardee's study.
- 8.2.2. Awardees are responsible for the visa application, including all costs associated with the visa requirements for their dependants.

### 8.3. Visa requirements for Awardees with disability

- 8.3.1. Awardees with disability may need to obtain a different visa other than a Student visa or Study permit to travel to and study in the study country.
- 8.3.2. To be granted a visa, Awardees with disability may need to provide additional information to the Department of Immigration in the study country beyond the standard requirements for a visa application.
- 8.3.3. All parties should be aware that it may take a longer period of time to assess visa applications for Awardees with disability.
- 8.3.4. {S} Sending Post are required to directly assist Awardees with disability with their visa applications in order to ensure that the Department of Immigration in the study country receives all the information they require to make a determination in a timely manner.
- 8.3.5. {S} Sending Post should assist Awardees with disability begin the process of submitting a visa application as soon as possible after selection.

- 8.3.6. {S} DFAT sponsorship for Awardees does not provide a waiver of Department of Immigration in the study country visa medical requirements. Sending Post are to abide by the Department of Immigration in the study country decisions and not seek to change those decisions.
- 8.3.7. {A} Awardees with disability are required to work closely with the Sending Post and the Department of Immigration in the study country on their visa applications.
- 8.3.8. {A} Awardees with disability should inform the Sending Post immediately if the Department of Immigration in the study country requests additional information or letters of support.
- 8.3.9. {A} Awardees with disability should discuss with the Disability Support Unit Coordinators at their Institution and Sending Post as part of their disability assessment whether they require the support of a Carer for all or part of their Scholarship period in the study county. See [Chapter 9](#) for further information about disability assessments and visa requirements for Carers.
- 8.3.10. {S} Sending Post are required to liaise with the Awardee, the carer, the Institution and Receiving Post to ensure that Carers apply for the most appropriate visa for their case
- 8.3.11. {S} Sending Post should work closely with the Department of Immigration in the study country on these visa applications and to provide additional information including to assist with visa applications for Carers.
- 8.3.12. {S} Sending Post are to engage with the Disability Support Unit Coordinators at the Awardee’s Institution as soon as practical to assist with the process.

## 8.4. Visa obligations

- 8.4.1. AAPS Awardees sign a contract between themselves and the Commonwealth of Australia. A condition of their Scholarship is that Awardees will leave the study country and not return for two years on completion or termination (refer to [section 8.6](#)). This condition supports the objectives of Australia’s aid program by supporting the Applicant to use the knowledge and expertise acquired during their Scholarship for capacity building in their home country.
- 8.4.2. {A} Awardees who hold a Student/Study visa/permit in the study country must uphold the visa conditions while studying and living in the study country or the visa may be cancelled, and the Scholarship terminated.
- 8.4.3. {A} Awardees are required to leave the study country and return to their home country within 14 days of their Scholarship end date, or before their visa expires, whichever comes first. Awardees that do not adhere to this requirement will be no longer be supported by DFAT after their Scholarship end date.
- 8.4.4. {A} The Receiving Post will advise, if necessary, the Department of Immigration in the study country that it has withdrawn support for an Awardee’s visa from 14 days after the end date of the Awardee’s AAPS.

- 8.4.5. {A} Awardees should note that in many cases the Scholarship conditions overlap with visa conditions. Breaching the visa conditions may result in cancellation of their visa and termination of their Scholarship. Similarly, if an Awardee breaches the conditions of their Scholarship, DFAT may withdraw its support for their visa.
- 8.4.6. {I} An Institution must notify the Receiving Post immediately by email if it becomes aware of an Awardee who is not upholding their visa obligations.
- 8.4.7. {R} When an Awardee does not uphold the conditions of their visa, the Receiving Post will advise the Awardee that their Scholarship is to be terminated and will also notify the Department of Immigration in the study country that DFAT has withdrawn its support for the visa.

## 8.5. Applying for a further student visa (extension)

- 8.5.1. In circumstances where an extension to an Awardee's Scholarship has been approved by DFAT, the Awardee must apply for a new visa to stay in the study country beyond their initial visa expiry date. DFAT must indicate its support by providing a letter or additional information to the Awardee to include in their visa application to the relevant authority.
- 8.5.2. {A} Awardees must obtain support from the Receiving Post before the Department of Immigration in the study country can consider the Awardee's application for a further student visa to remain in the study country past their initial visa expiry date.
- 8.5.3. {A} Cost of visa extensions are the responsibility of the Awardee.
- 8.5.4. {I} An Institution must request the Receiving Post to provide a letter of support or additional information for a further visa when DFAT authorises a variation that permits the Awardee to stay in the study country past their initial visa expiry date.
- 8.5.5. {I} The Institution should make sure the passport details of the Awardees and dependents (if any) are up to date in OASIS to enable DFAT's issuance of a correct letter of support.
- 8.5.6. {S} If the Sending Post approves an extension to an Awardee's Scholarship, they will provide a letter of support or additional information to allow the Department of Immigration in the study country to consider an Awardee's application for a further student visa.

## 8.6. Two-year exclusion rule

- 8.6.1. It is a condition of Australia Awards policy that Awardees do not remain in the study country or apply to return to the study country or travel to Australia, for anything other than short-term visits, for a minimum period of two years following completion or termination of the Scholarship, unless DFAT supports the return.

- 8.6.2. The calculation of the two-year exclusion period is cumulative, and any time spent in the study country or Australia during the two-year period will be added to the exclusion period.
- 8.6.3. {A} An Awardee must gain support from the Sending Post if seeking to return to the study country or travel to Australia for a period longer than three months within the two-year exclusion period.
- 8.6.4. {S} Sending Post will provide an Awardee with a letter of support if Sending Post supports the Awardee's short-term visit to the study country or Australia within the two-year exclusion period.

## 8.7. Early completion of the Scholarship

- 8.7.1. When studies are completed ahead of schedule, DFAT will discontinue financial support for the Awardee. This may affect the conditions of the Student visa/Study permit in the study country.
- 8.7.2. {I} An Institution must advise the Receiving Post and Sending Post of a revised Scholarship end date through OASIS
- 8.7.3. {I} An Institution must advise the Awardee that their completion travel to depart the study country must be booked within 14 days of their Scholarship end date.
- 8.7.4. {R} The Sending Post will advise the Department of Immigration in the study country that it has withdrawn support for the Awardees visa from 14 days after the end date of the Awardee's AAPS.

## 8.8. Debt to the Commonwealth

- 8.8.1. Awardees will incur a debt to the Commonwealth if they apply for a visa to remain in the study country or Australia longer term after the end of their Scholarship and within the two-year exclusion period. The amount of the debt will be the accrued costs of the Scholarship at the time any such visa application is made.
- 8.8.2. Due to privacy legislation and requirements, DFAT will not discuss an Awardee's debt to the Commonwealth with a third party (who is not relevant to the Scholarship or visa administration) unless the Awardee provides written consent for DFAT to do so.
- 8.8.3. {R} Sending Post will advise the Awardee of the accrued costs of their Scholarship (being the debt payable by the Awardee). When the Awardee has made satisfactory arrangements with DFAT's Finance section to repay the debt and has made an initial payment, DFAT will provide a letter of support to the Awardee to accompany their visa application.
- 8.8.4. {R} If the Awardee is not willing or able to enter into a satisfactory repayment arrangement or DFAT determines that the Awardee does not have the ability to repay the debt

- i. Suva Post will advise the Department of Immigration in the study country and inform the Department of Home Affairs in Australia that it does not support the Awardee's visa application; and
- ii. The Sending Post will advise the Awardee's partner government of the situation.

8.8.5. {A} The Awardee must advise DFAT (Suva Post) in writing within 14 days of receiving the advice of their debt whether they intend to proceed with their visa application and, if so, that they will make arrangements with DFAT's Finance section to repay the debt.

8.8.6. {A} If an Awardee with a debt stops making repayments, DFAT will notify the Department of Immigration and may take legal action.

**8.8.7.** DFAT does not have authority under the Australian Government's Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 to waive a debt to the Commonwealth. Only the Minister for Finance and Deregulation is able to make these decisions under the Act. Guidance on how to apply for a waiver can be found at [Act of grace payments, waiver of debts to the Commonwealth, Compensation for Detriment caused by Defective Administration \(CDDA\) | Department of Finance](#)

## 9. Disability inclusive support

### 9.1. Support for people with disability

- 9.1.1. The Australian aid program has specific strategic goals relating to participation in society by people with disability. DFAT's Development for All 2015-2020 strategy aims to ensure that people with disability are included in and benefit equally from Australia's development assistance.
- 9.1.2. This commitment is reflected in AAPS, which take a person-centric approach to providing disability inclusive support. DFAT strives to ensure accessibility for people with disability throughout the Scholarship process from application, through selection, pre-departure activities, the on-award experience, Scholarship completion and alumni engagement.
- 9.1.3. All Applicants, regardless of ability are to be assessed equally, without discrimination.
- 9.1.4. All Applicants and Awardees with disability are to be supported to enable participation in the AAPS on an equal basis with all other Applicants and Awardees.
- 9.1.5. Under Australian law, disability includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological and learning disability, physical disfigurement, and the presence in the body of disease-cutting organisms. More information on the Australian definition of disability and the rights of people with disability in Australia is available on DFAT's website and the Australian Human Rights Commission's website at [Disability Rights | Australian Human Rights Commission](#).

### 9.2. Applicants with disability

- 9.2.1. People with disability who are otherwise eligible are encouraged to apply for an AAPS. They will be considered equally, on merit, against all other Applicants.
- 9.2.2. {A} DFAT strongly recommends that Applicants with disability:
  - i. Disclose their disability when lodging an application; and
  - ii. Communicate to Sending Post any adjustments or assistance they will need to attend and participate before attending a selection interview
- 9.2.3. {S} Sending Post will:
  - i. Encourage people with disability, who are otherwise eligible for an AAPS, to apply;
  - ii. Ensure Applicants with disability are equally able to access the application and selection processes by providing reasonable adjustments and additional assistance;



- iii. Provide reasonable financial assistance to Applicants with disability where this assistance is essential to facilitate their participation on an equal basis with other Applicants.

- 9.2.4. All Applicants for an AAPS, including people with disability, are required to meet the eligibility criteria set out in [sections 2.1 - 2.2](#).
- 9.2.5. DFAT will always work in good faith to provide access to the AAPS for people with disability. However, in some rare cases, applicants may not be awarded a scholarship if the disability support required to enable their participation would impose an unjustifiable burden on the AAPS program.
- 9.2.6. In order to ensure the success of Applicants and Awardees with disability, DFAT engages with the Disability Support Unit Coordinators at the Institution. This coordinator assists DFAT in developing a Disability Support Agreement in consultation with Awardees and Sending Post to assess support needs and identify practical solutions to enable the successful selection and mobilisation of Applicants and Awardees with disability.

### 9.3. Principles for providing disability support for Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship Awardees

- 9.3.1. DFAT will provide additional support to Awardees with disability. This includes implementation and ongoing management of the Disability Support Agreement, which includes financial management of funding provided by DFAT, the purchase and provision of DSA items, correct use of OASIS and, as required, sourcing accessible accommodation, additional welfare and critical incident assistance, support related to Carers, etc.
- 9.3.2. This support only applies to Awardees with active Disability Support Agreements; it will not be approved for an Awardee with disability who has no Disability Support Agreement in place, i.e. has no requirement for DFAT funded reasonable accommodations to participate equally in their Scholarships.
- 9.3.3. The Disability support must form part of a DSA and is to be expensed in line with the Institution contract terms and conditions.
- 9.3.4. DFAT and Institutions will provide reasonable adjustments and accommodations to allow Awardees with disability to participate in AAPS on an equal academic basis.
- 9.3.5. DFAT aims to enable Awardees to develop disability management skills, greater independence and personal empowerment. These life-long skills assist Awardees in the study country and beyond, increasing the Awardee's individual development impact.
- 9.3.6. Disability Support Agreements outline reasonable accommodations funded by DFAT. The capacity to provide reasonable accommodations is limited by an Awardee's willingness to engage in the disability support process and disclosure of their needs and expectations.

- 9.3.7. Without exception, Awardees with a disability will not be approved for mobilisation until a Disability Support Agreement is uploaded to OASIS. Sending Post will be required to defer an Awardee if a Disability Support Agreement has not been developed, approved and uploaded to OASIS.
- 9.3.8. DFAT remains flexible in the provision of reasonable accommodations and will reassess support needs throughout the Scholarship period.
- 9.3.9. Standard Scholarship entitlements, such as contribution to living expenses and supplementary academic support, must not be used to fund disability support. Additional funds for disability support will be allocated as part of the Disability Support Agreement.
- 9.3.10. The Disability Support Agreement acts as an addendum to an Awardee's Scholarship contract and does not change any of the obligations pursuant to the Scholarship contract.

## 9.4. Assessing disability support needs

- 9.4.1. The disability assessment process, in which all stakeholders are engaged, identifies reasonable accommodations and related disability support required to develop a Disability Support Agreement. The cost of implementing a Disability Support Agreement must not exceed 1.5 times the cost of the academic component of the Scholarship.
- 9.4.2. Disability Support Agreements will outline the required level of support for pre-departure, during travel and for living and studying in the study country.
- 9.4.3. The Disability Support Agreement will be developed in consultation with the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution, Awardee, medical practitioners, and Sending Post then submitted to Suva Post for review and approval.

### Disability support process responsibilities

- 9.4.4. All parties must work closely to ensure the best outcome for Awardees with disability

- 9.4.5. {A} Awardees with disability will:
  - i. Through Sending Post, engage with the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution as early as possible in the process and while on Scholarship work closely with the Disability Support Unit Coordinator. This coordinator has been engaged by the Institution to provide expertise on the support of Awardees with disability;
  - ii. Participate in the Disability Support Process by completing the Disability Support Statement and providing all relevant medical documents, which will result in a Disability Support Agreement;
  - iii. Note that the process of conducting Disability Support Processes will require DFAT to share information about an Awardee's disability and support needs with the relevant Institution and relevant disability

service providers. This information is bound by Australian privacy laws and will be disclosed only for the purpose of facilitating equal access to education for Awardees with disability;

- iv. Provide a full medical report (no more than two years old and in English, or a certified translation) that establishes the nature of the disability and required support in the study country. This is a requirement to assess the need for reasonable adjustments and accommodations;
- v. Understand that developing Disability Support Agreements may take considerable time and their cooperation is essential to the efficient and effective implementation of reasonable adjustments and accommodations;
- vi. Understand that without a Disability Support Agreement in place DFAT will be required to defer Awardees with disability to a later Scholarship start date. This is to ensure all necessary and appropriate reasonable adjustments and accommodations can be put in place;
- vii. Understand a Disability Support Agreement can be reviewed at any stage of the Scholarship;
- viii. Where a Carer is required, work with Sending Post in consultation with Suva Post and the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution to develop a Carers' agreement and have the Carer sign the agreement (see [section 9.6](#));
- ix. Contact the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution with any concerns regarding disability support while on-Scholarship.

**9.4.6.** {S} Sending Post will:

- i. Facilitate the removal of barriers for Applicants with disability during the selection process;
- ii. Apply fair and transparent practices when considering applications from people with disability and access applications equally against all other Applicants, without discrimination;
- iii. Contact successful Awardees with disability and explain the Disability Support Process, ensuring they understand their obligations to provide recent and relevant information about their disability and the support they may need in the study country;
- iv. Provide all documents and contact information of Awardees with disability to the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution via RST, so a Disability Support Agreement can be developed;
- v. Understand that development of Disability Support Agreements may take considerable time and all required information must be provided to the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution at least four months before Semester 1 commencement dates;
- vi. Manage Awardee with disability expectations around timeframes, their commencement date and ensure they understand they may need to defer if a Disability Support Agreement has not been finalised in time for Semester 1 commencement dates;

- vii. Enable Awardees to provide and/or acquire a medical report (less than two years old and in English, or certified translation) that establishes the nature of the disability and fully discloses any pre-existing conditions. These documents must be uploaded to OASIS as soon as received;
- viii. Ensure Awardees with disability meet the placement requirements of their chosen Institution and advise Institutions they are seeking placement of an Awardee with disability as soon as the disability is disclosed;
- ix. Enable Student Contact Officers consult with the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution to arrange necessary support;
- x. Finalise the placement of an Awardee with disability only after agreeing, between DFAT, the Awardee and the Institution, on the nature of the support and reasonable adjustments and accommodations required and who will provide them;
- xi. Sending Post will be required to defer Awardees with disability to a later Scholarship commencement date if a Disability Support Agreement has not been finalised and uploaded to OASIS;
- xii. Assist Awardees with disability, and Carers, with visa application requirements including, but not limited to, meeting the costs of obtaining medical reports if required and liaising with the Department of Immigration in the study country on visa matters;
- xiii. Provide additional pre-mobilisation assistance, for example during placement help Awardees with disability select a suitable Institution;
- xiv. Seek Awardee's with disability agreement (signature) to Disability Support Agreements and upload finalised agreement to OASIS, and, where needed, arrange for Carers agreements to be put in place;
- xv. Review disability entitlement variations, submitted by Suva Post, and approve in line with the PGPA Act 2013 and delegated financial responsibilities;
- xvi. Ensure all aspects of OASIS are updated with travel details, Awardee and Carer details, and any other relevant information required by Institutions, or the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution. To ensure collaborative work utilise OASIS Journal Notes to add relevant information.
- xvii. Submit mobilisation request for all Awardee's with disability to DFAT Suva Post for mobilisation approval, and
- xviii. Manage the expenditure of Disability Support Agreement items that cannot be expensed through OASIS.

**9.4.7. {R} Suva Post will:**

- i. Provide advice for all Sending Posts, Institutions and the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution on the application of DFAT policy on Disability Support in the AAPS program, including during the Disability Support Process, the mobilisation, on-award and reintegration stages for Awardees with disability

- ii. In conjunction with Sending Post will manage the approval process for all Disability Support Agreements, including Amendments, and ensure entitlement variations are entered into OASIS for Sending Post action
- iii. Manage the mobilisation approval process for all Awardees with disability, to ensure all aspects of their disability support in the study country have been considered and all relevant information has been uploaded into OASIS, prior to mobilisation
- iv. Provide training in OASIS to ensure accurate financial management of Disability Support Agreement items

9.4.8. {I} Institutions will:

- i. Work closely with Sending Post to help ensure that the Awardee will be fully supported while studying with all necessary and appropriate reasonable adjustments (both academic and non-academic);
- ii. Alert the Institution's disability support unit as early as possible and engage them in the process of assessing the Awardees' needs;
- iii. Implement approved Disability Support Agreements to ensure non-academic reasonable accommodations are in place as soon as practicable or upon the Awardee with disability's arrival;
- iv. Adhere to the study country legislation regarding disability support and reasonable adjustments related to academic support;
- v. Refer the Awardee with disability to the Institution Disability Support Unit during the first week of IAP or prior IAP commencement in cases where the awardee is provided with an early mobilisation;
- vi. Be responsible for financially managing the Disability Support Agreement prescribed items in line with Institution financial systems, including the purchase, provision and ongoing management of support provided by DFAT;
- vii. Regularly connect with the Awardee with disability;
- viii. Seek Awardee with disability agreement (signature) for any approved amendments to Disability Support Agreements; and
- ix. Institutions must monitor the progress of all on-Scholarship Awardees with disability closely and inform DFAT if they require additional assistance to participate equally with other Awardees.

The Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution will:

- x. Work closely with Awardees with disability, Sending Post, Institutions, and Suva Post to ensure all related support for Awardees with disability is inclusive, adheres to the study country legislation and ensures equal participation in the Scholarship;
- xi. Assist in the development of the Disability Support Agreements for all Awardees with disability to be signed by DFAT, the Awardee and any relevant third parties;
- xii. Hold discussions with the Institution Student Contact Officer, Sending Post and Suva Post as part of the Disability Support Process. Discussions

should cover any additional assistance that an Awardee with disability may require for living and studying in the study country, and before they arrive on-campus;

- xiii. Confirm that the Institution is able to provide relevant reasonable academic adjustments for the Awardee with disability prior to mobilisation
- xiv. Recommend an alternative Institution where an Institution is not able to provide the necessary assistance for an Awardee with disability
- xv. Make contact with Awardees with disability before the end of the first study period (semester or trimester) to discuss the level of support they are experiencing and address any problems that may have arisen
- xvi. Provide ongoing support and advice to Suva Post, Sending Post, and Student Contact Officers around disability inclusive support as requested throughout the Scholarship
- xvii. Assist in the development of Disability Support Carer agreements in consultation with Sending Post to be agreed between the Awardee and Carer.

## 9.5. Reasonable adjustments and accommodations

- 9.5.1. For the purpose of this document, DFAT makes a clear distinction between reasonable adjustments and reasonable accommodations.
- 9.5.2. Reasonable adjustments are measures which an education provider is required to make to ensure Awardees with a disability can meet the academic standards of their course of study and participate on the same basis as Awardees without a disability. Reasonable adjustments might include changes to the way a person enrolls in a course, alterations to the physical environment and other facilities, and changes to the way training is delivered and skills are assessed.
- 9.5.3. Reasonable adjustments can only be made if this will not impose an unjustifiable hardship on a person or organisation (all factors are taken into account, including impact on the Awardee, or Institution, etc.).
- 9.5.4. To ensure the participation of Awardees with a disability, DFAT offers non-academic reasonable accommodations, which complement the legislated reasonable adjustments partner Institutions are obligated to provide.
- 9.5.5. Reasonable accommodations are the provision of support, modifications and/or adjustments that meet the individual needs of people with disabilities to ensure they enjoy and exercise all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis to others. Reasonable accommodations can include the provision of accessible transportation, sign-language interpreters, accessible meeting venues, and documents in accessible formats.

9.5.6. Reasonable accommodations are assessed on the same basis and at the same time as reasonable adjustments through the Disability Assessment Process.

9.5.7. {A} Awardees must be aware that, while Institutions are obliged to make reasonable adjustments to allow Awardees with disability to participate on a level playing field with other students, there is a limit to this obligation. For example, if an Awardee requires course materials in an accessible format, Institutions will provide alternative or accessible formats to enable participation. However, this does not necessarily mean that Institutions have to provide materials in an Awardee's preferred format.

### Responsibilities for reasonable adjustments and accommodations

9.5.8. Institutions have an obligation to provide Awardees with reasonable adjustments to support their academic endeavours.

9.5.9. DFAT provides non-academic reasonable accommodations. See below for clarification of the responsibilities of Institutions and DFAT.

### Reasonable adjustments

9.5.10. {I} Institutions are required to consult with Awardees with disability about their support and access needs to determine what reasonable adjustments are appropriate and necessary.

9.5.11. {I} Reasonable adjustments for academic support should be funded by Institutions through their standard disability support mechanisms. Typical examples of academic reasonable adjustments include:

- i. Access to and training in the use of assistive technology;
- ii. Access to lecture summaries, overheads or PowerPoint presentations;
- iii. Additional clarification of course materials by lecturers and tutors;
- iv. Advice about where to sit in particular lecture theatres and classrooms;
- v. Inclusive teaching strategies;
- vi. Communication through the Awardee's preferred method of communication;
- vii. Additional academic assistance or extra time in the lead up to exams and other assessments where deemed necessary by the Institution;
- viii. Alternative exam and assessment formats;
- ix. Accessible parking;
- x. Disability advocacy and support; and
- xi. Provision of tutors and note takers for disability support (tutoring or similar support for purely academic purposes can be funded through supplementary academic support as for all Awardees).

## Reasonable accommodations

9.5.12. {S} DFAT provides non-academic reasonable accommodations and inclusive support for Awardees with disability as required. Non-academic reasonable accommodations will be based on the needs identified by DFAT through an Awardee's disability assessment and may include:

- i. Accessible interviews;
- ii. Accessible pre-departure materials, procedures and programs, and support to attend pre-departure events where required;
- iii. Assistance to select an Institution and work with that Institution to access academic reasonable adjustments;
- iv. Assistance to find and access suitable housing;
- v. Alternative transport arrangements to and from the home country and in the study country;
- vi. Support for full-time, part-time or non-ongoing Carers;
- vii. Funds for equipment that is essential to the successful completion of an Awardee's Scholarship;
- viii. Additional funds for medical cover (at the discretion of the Sending Post); and
- ix. Limited access to additional medical support and care.

9.5.13. {R} Suva Post assists Sending Post, managing contractors and Institutions by engaging with the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution who collaborates with all areas, including Awardees, to developing Disability Support Agreements, which ensure ongoing disability support throughout the life of the Scholarship.

9.5.14. Access to disability support funding ends five days after the completion of the Scholarship, in line with CLE entitlement.

## 9.6. Carers

9.6.1. DFAT provides some support for the Carer of Awardees with disability however, the provision of any care arrangements will be determined by Sending Post in consultation with the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution, the Awardee and Suva Post.

9.6.2. When assessing the need for a Carer, Sending Post, Suva Post and the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution will take into consideration existing care requirements and the technology and support services available in the study country, which may allow an Awardee to develop new disability management skills and live more independently.

9.6.3. {A} Awardees must assist in identifying a person to provide care. Where possible the best person to provide care in the study country is the person



that provides care in their home country. The Carer identified must be able to provide care in the study country context.

- 9.6.4. {A} Carers must be aware of the support provided by DFAT and agree to their role as Carer by signing a Disability Support Carers Agreement.
- 9.6.5. {A} Any funds provided by DFAT to support the Carer are to be used for that function, in full knowledge of the Carer.
- 9.6.6. A Carer must meet the following criteria:
- i. Be aged 18 or over prior to mobilisation;
  - ii. Not be a current AAPS Awardee;
  - iii. Be able to speak a basic level of English (Sending Post may provide some English language training prior to mobilisation);
  - iv. Be physically able to undertake the caring duties;
  - v. Be available for the required Scholarship duration; and
  - vi. Meet the visa requirements.
- 9.6.7. Where the spouse (de jure or de facto) of an Awardee with a disability is an Awardee's Carer, they must apply for the appropriate visa in the study country. Where an Awardee's Carer is not their spouse; the Carer should apply for a different visa according to the Immigration Department of the study country if required.
- 9.6.8. Applicants may be required to provide a Request Letter from Principal Awardee (email address, Postal Address & Phone contact to be included) to the Department of Immigration in the study country evidencing their Carer responsibilities. To further supplement this Request letter, it is advisable to either have a Disability Support Agreement from DFAT outlining their Caring role or a 'DFAT Carer Requirement Statement', provided by Sending Post.
- 9.6.9. DFAT will fully fund any visa costs associated with a Special Purpose Permit.
- 9.6.10. In addition, DFAT hold the expectation a full-time Carer will not seek additional work while in the study country.
- 9.6.11. {A} Should an Awardee choose to change Carers during their Scholarship period they are liable for all costs involved in mobilising their new Carer (except in exceptional circumstances). This may include airfares, health cover, any changes to accommodation requirements, including rental increases. Any changes to Carer must be discussed with the Student Contact Officer prior to any action taken.
- 9.6.12. Carer Support Packages must form part of the Disability Support Agreement. DFAT will fund the following Carer package.

**Table 1: Carer Support Package**

Entitlement	Description	Amount
Airfares – mobilisation and completion travel	Flights, to and from the study country, at the beginning and end of the Scholarship period	Fully funded – <i>in line with Awardee entitlements</i>
Reunion fares	<u>Only applicable in some cases</u> – return reunion fares. See <a href="#">section 9.7</a> for reference	Fully funded – <i>in line with Awardee entitlements</i>
Visa	All costs associated with gaining the most relevant visa	Fully funded
Basic medical cover	<u>Only supported by some institutions</u> . See <a href="#">section 10.7</a>	As per institutional allocation

## 9.7. Reunion airfares for Awardees with Carers

- 9.7.1. Reunion entitlements for Awardees with a disability do not differ from the entitlement for Awardees without disability. See [section 10.11](#) for further information.
- 9.7.2. Where the spouse (de jure or de facto) of an Awardee with a disability is an Awardee’s Carer, they are considered accompanied and neither Awardee nor Carer is entitled to a reunion airfare.
- 9.7.3. Where an Awardee’s Carer is not their spouse, both Awardee and Carer will be entitled to a reunion airfare. In these cases, both reunion fares must be taken at the same time and both are funded by DFAT.
- 9.7.4. Carer reunion fares, if applicable, must form part of the Disability Support Agreement.

## 9.8. Assistive Devices and Mobility Equipment

- 9.8.1. Awardees with a disability may require assistive devices or mobility equipment to ensure equal participation in academic studies and life in the study country.
- 9.8.2. Disability Support Agreements prescribe funding for all required devices or equipment to be managed by Institutions and in accordance with recommendations by relevant allied professionals in the study country.
- 9.8.3. In implementing the Disability Support Agreement, Institutions must organise the purchase and provision of devices and equipment as a priority. This includes the financial management of Disability Support funds provided by DFAT.
  - i. Funding cannot be transferred between items;

- ii. Funding must only be expensed up to the required limit only and upon recommendation from allied professionals and or/the Disability Support Agreement;
  - iii. Unused funding is not available for any other use;
  - iv. Should sufficient funding not be available in a specific item an entitlement variation may be raised. This can only occur with approval from the Disability Support Coordinator at their Institution in writing in consultation with Sending Post and Suva Post.
- 9.8.4. Institutions in consultation with Sending Post and Suva Post must manage the expectations of Awardees with disability regarding the purchasing of assistive devices or mobility equipment.
- 9.8.5. Awardees become the owner of devices or equipment purchased by DFAT and are responsible for all costs associated with maintenance or repair of equipment and devices, except that DFAT acknowledges the cost of maintenance for manual wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters can be high. Awardees with these devices may to claim maintenance assistance up to FJD\$500. This entitlement must form part of the Disability Support Agreement.
- 9.8.6. Awardees should consider purchasing insurance for assistive devices and equipment. This cannot be covered under the maintenance entitlement and is at the Awardee's own cost.
- 9.8.7. In the case of Institution transfers, support for the transport of assistive devices and mobility equipment may be provided. Student Contact Officers and Awardee must contact the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution to review and provide recommendation to DFAT on this matter.
- 9.8.8. DFAT will provide funding to cover additional baggage and freight costs, up to FJD\$1000, where these costs are associated with Awardees transporting assistive devices and mobility equipment to and from the study country. These freight charges must form part of the Disability Support Agreement.
- 9.8.9. If an Awardee chooses not to take equipment or devices home at the end of their Scholarship, it is their responsibility to dispose of the item.

## 9.9. Additional support to ensure success

- 9.9.1. To ensure the success of Awardees with disability there are several areas of additional support available as needed. Once accessed these must form part of the Disability Support Agreement.
- 9.9.2. The Disability Support Unit Coordinator must be part of reviewing the support process.

**Table 2: Summary of Additional Support to Students with Disabilities**

Additional Support	Description
<p>Pre-departure support {S}</p>	<p>Additional support may be required to ensure an Awardee with disability can participate equally in all pre-departure programs. This support may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible accommodation</li> <li>• Additional support for an accompanying Carer</li> <li>• Different travel arrangements</li> <li>• Presentation material in alternative formats</li> <li>• The purchase of adaptive technology, as approved by the Disability Consultant, for use during pre-departure training where this equipment is also required for use in the study country to support in course participation</li> </ul> <p>Sending Post should discuss options with the Awardee about how they would like to be included in the first instance; following these conversations they are able to contact Sending Post for advice.</p>
<p>Reduction in first semester study load {S} {I}</p>	<p>High-level disability support Awardees may be offered the option of part-time study in their first semester. This ensures their ability to integrate fully into their new accommodation, Institution and life in the study country. It also ensures they are able to learn and enable full participation in their Scholarship opportunity.</p> <p>Any extension past the first semester of a part-time study load must be recommended by the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution, supported by Suva Post and approved by Sending Post.</p> <p>This support is only available to high-level disability support Awardees.</p>
<p>Transport allowance</p>	<p>This support is to cover costs where limited accessible public training is available, as it promotes and assists with independent living.</p> <p>Assessed on an individual basis by the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution and only available to high-level disability support Awardees.</p>

## 9.10. Out of Scope

- 9.10.1. The intention of DFAT support is to remove barriers to education and promote independent living skills. The AAPS is not a medical program. Disability Support funding is not intended to treat a person's disability. The following items are not supported under a Disability Support Agreement:
- Cochlea implants
  - Medical interventions
  - Medications
  - Physiotherapy sessions
  - Management of ongoing health problems
  - Speech pathologist session to fix a stutter
  - Prescription glasses
  - Prosthesis
  - The purchase of a motor vehicle
  - Exercise activities, gym memberships, pool fees, etc.
- 9.10.2. DFAT provides basic medical cover for all AAPS recipients, regardless of disability status and within reasonable limits.
- 9.10.3. In the case of secondary impairments caused by new or pre-existing medical conditions, the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at their Institution may recommend limited reasonable accommodations, where that support is essential to enable participation.
- 9.10.4. DFAT will not fund surgery or other major medical treatment as a reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodations may only be to enable or continue an Awardee's academic participation, and be within reasonable limits of disability support, including cost limitations at [subsection 9.4.1](#).

### Health Conditions

- 9.10.5. The AAPS program draws a distinction between people with disability and people who are experiencing health issues. The distinction takes into consideration the overall aims of the AAPS program and the ability of an individual to successfully complete a Scholarship.
- 9.10.6. Where an Applicant or Awardee is unable to study due to an illness, they will not generally qualify for disability support. Each case is considered on individual basis.
- 9.10.7. Awardees with pre-existing conditions are advised to research their needs and determine what support is available in the study country or from their home country to support them while they are on Scholarship. It will be the

responsibility of the Awardee to meet any health costs not covered by the Basic Medical Cover (see [section 10.7](#)).

- 9.10.8. Experience demonstrates that Awardees experience heightened stress from undertaking a Scholarship in a foreign country, in a second language, with a different culture and a stringent academic regime. Awardees should be aware that underlying or dormant medical conditions are often revived by such stresses and should arrive prepared to deal with them.

### Elective medical treatment

- 9.10.9. DFAT will not provide funding for elective medical treatment to address an impairment.
- 9.10.10. If an Awardee seeks treatment of this sort, they are liable for all costs associated with the treatment.
- 9.10.11. DFAT has an expectation all Awardees will prioritise their studies and organise any optional medical treatment at times that do not negatively impact on their participation in their course (i.e. over semester breaks). See [subsection 14.6.4](#) for further information.
- 9.10.12. Receiving Post, Sending Post and the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at the Institution must ensure Awardees with disability understand what is out of scope and ensure Awardee expectations are managed appropriately.
- 9.10.13. {S} Receiving Post, Sending Post and the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at the Institution must ensure Awardees with disability understand what is out of scope and manage Awardee expectations.

### Medication

- 9.10.14. DFAT does not provide funding for ongoing medication for any AAPS recipient regardless of disability status. This includes medication for short-term or ongoing conditions.
- 9.10.15. All Awardees are encouraged to bring their own medication from home. Awardees must ensure they are compliant with Fiji, Vanuatu and Samoan laws when bringing prescription medication into Fiji, Vanuatu or Samoa.
- 9.10.16. All Awardees are encouraged to bring their own medical appliances from home and to have an adequate supply chain to support them throughout their Scholarship. Where disposable items are required for an appliance, Awardees are to ensure they can source those disposables from their home country or find compatible disposables in the study country. DFAT does not fund disposables.
- 9.10.17. DFAT does not provide funding for Awardees to purchase medication in their home country.
- 9.10.18. If an Awardee chooses not to bring their medication from home, and instead seeks a new/different medication in the study country they should first discuss this with their doctor and mitigate any risk for adverse side effects or

reactions that may have the potential to affect the Awardee's participation in and successful completion of their Scholarship.

- 9.10.19. If an Awardee is unable to study for a period of 6 weeks or more including due to the impact of a new medication, they will be required to suspend their Scholarship and return home to recover.

## 10. Scholarship fees and entitlements

### 10.1. Summary of Scholarship fees and entitlements

10.1.1. The costs covered by the Scholarship are detailed in each Awardee's Scholarship contract. These include fees that are common for all Awardees and costs that may be applicable depending on individual Scholarship conditions.

10.1.2. {I} All Scholarship costs are entered into OASIS by the Institution as part of the placement offer. Institutions are responsible for disbursing these funds to Awardees, or expending the funds on the Awardees behalf, as indicated in Table 3 below.

10.1.3. These costs are subject to change, and any variations from the costs of an Awardee's Scholarship must be recorded by the Institution in OASIS and be approved by the Sending Post as appropriate (see [Chapter 13](#)).

**Table 3: Summary of Scholarship costs**

Scholarship cost	Method of payment	Description
Academic Fees	Paid by the Suva Post directly to the Institution	Covers the course costs and all compulsory academic fees that apply to regional Awardees, including General Services Fees.
Mobilisation travel	Booked and paid for by Sending Post on behalf of the Awardee	Payment of a single economy class airfare to the study country from the home country via the most direct and economical route at the commencement of the Scholarship.  See <a href="#">section 10.10</a>
Visa expenses	Paid by Sending Post on behalf of the Awardee	Payment of visa processing and medical checks necessary for obtaining a visa to travel to the study country.
Introductory Academic Program (IAP)	Paid by the Receiving Post directly to the Institution	The 4-6-week Introductory Academic Program is provided by the Institution for Awardees when they arrive in the study country. The IAP is compulsory for all Awardees at study commencement. Failure to attend the Introductory Academic Program may result in the awardee forfeiting their Scholarship.  See <a href="#">section 12.1</a> .
Establishment Allowance	Paid by the Suva Post to the Institution to distribute to the Awardee	Is a contribution towards initial expenses such as rental bonds, textbooks, study materials etc. paid by the Institution when the Awardee arrives in the study country.



Scholarship cost	Method of payment	Description
		See <a href="#">section 10.4</a>
Contribution to Living Expenses (also referred to as a Stipend)	Paid by the Suva Post to the Institution to distribute to the Awardee	<p>A fortnightly Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) paid at a rate determined by DFAT at either the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unaccompanied or accompanied rate</li> <li>• accompanied rate is designed to contribute to support a family regardless of family composition. Additional family support to be provided by Awardee</li> </ul> <p>See <a href="#">section 10.6</a></p>
Medical cover	Paid by the Receiving Post to the Institution to provide for the Awardee	<p>Some AAPS Institutions offer medical cover to Awardees and where this is available it is provided to cover the DFAT Awardee's basic medical costs. Awardees may purchase, at their own expense, additional medical insurance to cover their families and ancillary services such as dentist, optometrist, physiotherapist, etc.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Section 10.7</a></p>
Supplementary Academic Support	Paid by Suva Post to the Institution to pay for on behalf of the Awardee	<p>This is a support service. These funds may be used by the Institution, where required, to assist an Awardee to successfully complete their academic studies. Awardees can also apply to the Institution for these funds to contribute towards activities that enhance their academic progress and achievement.</p> <p>Institutions may expend these funds at a rate of AUD\$300 per semester that the Awardee is on-Scholarship. These funds are expended by the Institution on behalf of the Awardee for eligible activities.</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 12.2</a></p>
COVID-19 Response	Paid by Sending Post to the Institution	<p>Covers the costs associated with awardees unable to return home due to border or flight restrictions due to COVID-19.</p> <p>See section <a href="#">10.2</a></p>
Completion travel	Paid by the Receiving Post to the Institution to then book and pay for on behalf of the Awardee	<p>Payment of a single economy class airfare from the study country to the home country via the most direct and economical route at the completion of the Scholarship.</p> <p>See <a href="#">Section 10.12</a></p>

Scholarship cost	Method of payment	Description
In-country preparatory programs	Paid by Suva Post	Institutions assess whether Awardees are required to undertake preparatory programs before commencing their main course of study.  See <a href="#">section 5.2</a>
In study country preparatory programs	Paid by Suva Post directly to the Institution	Institutions assess whether Awardees are required to undertake preparatory programs before commencing their main course of study.  See <a href="#">section 5.2</a>
Reunion airfare	Paid by Suva Post to the Institution to then book and pay for on behalf of the Awardee	Unaccompanied Awardees, whose Scholarship period is two years or more, are eligible for the reunion airfare.  See <a href="#">section 10.11</a>
Fieldwork	Paid by Suva Post to the Institution	Awardees undertaking a PhD or Master's (by research or coursework with a compulsory fieldwork component) are eligible for one return airfare to the home country to be covered by their Scholarship.  See <a href="#">section 12.3</a>
Disability Support	Paid by Suva Post to the Institution	Awardees assessed as eligible for Disability Support Arrangements are entitled to individual Reasonable Accommodations provided by DFAT.

## 10.2. COVID-19 Response

- 10.2.1. This entitlement applies to any awardee who has completed their scholarship but is unable to return home due to border and flight restrictions as a result of COVID-19
- 10.2.2. The entitlement covers additional costs for visa extensions or new visa costs and medical examinations to support visa application
- 10.2.3. The entitlement can be added when creating an entitlement or extension variation in OASIS. The entitlement will cover costs associated with extending the scholarship due to COVID-19 disruptions such as travel restrictions (either in their host country or the home country of the awardee) and can only be applied to awardees who remain in their host country until travel restrictions have been lifted and they are able to return home. Institutions must ensure that detailed explanations are provided in the comments field for each expense accrued as part of this entitlement.

### 10.3. COVID-19 Quarantine Cost

- 10.3.1. Suspended, accepted and deferred awardees mobilising to their study country to continue or commence their scholarship will be covered for all quarantine costs associated with their mobilisation
- 10.3.2. Quarantine costs associated with the return of awardees on completion of their scholarship will be covered only where the home country costs are not covered by their government.

### 10.4. Establishment allowance

- 10.4.1. Awardees are provided with a once-only Establishment allowance upon arrival in the study country. No re-establishment allowance is paid when an Awardee transfers between Institutions or returns from a period of Suspension. Sending Post must enter passport details into OASIS at least three weeks prior to the Recommended Arrival Date to ensure timely provision of the Establishment allowance.
- 10.4.2. The allowance is a contribution toward expenses such as rental bonds, textbooks, study materials – including IT equipment, laboratory coats, additional medical insurance and home contents insurance. It is paid in a lump sum for Awardees to use at their discretion.
- 10.4.3. {A} Awardees are required to come prepared with funds (in the study country's currency where possible) to ensure they have enough money to cover any costs that may be incurred before they receive their establishment allowance.
- 10.4.4. {A} Awardees should note that it may take a number of days for the bank to process opening up the bank account.
- 10.4.5. {A} Awardees should note that it may take a number of days for the bank to process the Institution's establishment allowance payment.
- 10.4.6. {I} The Institution must pay the full establishment allowance into a bank account nominated by the Awardee on their arrival in the study country or by the next banking day. The Institution will help Awardees open a bank account on arrival. If there are delays opening a bank account the Institution should manage the Establishment Allowance payment as they deem appropriate.

### 10.5. Transition allowance

- 10.5.1. Awardees undertaking the Bachelor of Laws (LLB program) and the Professional Diploma in Legal Practice (PDLP) at the Emalus campus, Vanuatu may be required to relocate to the Laucala campus to complete their studies in succession and within the timeframe specified in their Scholarship contract. In these exceptional circumstances, a once-only

transitional allowance is provided to those Awardees upon commencement of the PDLP program to assist with set-up costs.

- 10.5.2. The Transition allowance must be pre-approved at the beginning of the Scholarship rather than during Scholarship. The transition allowance will be distributed to the Awardee when the Awardee arrives in the study country to complete the PDLP degree requirement. This will cover Post should the Awardee not complete their studies.
- 10.5.3. The transition allowance will apply to Awardees undertaking the combined program (BCOM/LLB). However, Awardees will be provided the once-only transitional allowance upon their first transfer in the second study country to assist with set-up costs.
- 10.5.4. If Awardees return to the home country and undertake the PDLP program in the home country, the Transition allowance is not paid.
- 10.5.5. Awardees wishing to undertake the PDLP should make every effort when planning their study program to ensure that they finalise their PDLP component at the Emalus campus, Vanuatu during Semester 1.
- 10.5.6. Awardees receiving an accompanied CLE allowance will continue to be paid that rate whilst undertaking the LLB-PDLP or double degree programs provided that their dependants are with them in the study country. Awardees will need to provide supporting documentary evidence that their dependants are living with them in the same residential address in order to continue to receive the accompanied rate.
- 10.5.7. Any cost occurred including flights for dependants will be at the Awardees expense.

## 10.6. Contribution to living expenses (CLE)

- 10.6.1. A contribution to living expenses is paid to Awardees to help them meet everyday living costs such as accommodation, transport, food, entertainment and stationery (see [Annex B](#) for current rates).
- 10.6.2. Entitlement to the contribution to living expenses commences on the Awardee's date of arrival in the study country, which must be no more than 14 days before commencement of the Introductory Academic Program.
- 10.6.3. The contribution to living expenses is paid at two rates:
  - i. Unaccompanied rate. Paid to Awardees who are in the study country without dependants
  - ii. Accompanied rate. Paid to Awardees whose dependants accompany them to the study country and remain in the study country with the Awardee for 12 months or more. Approval for dependants to accompany the Awardee in the study country will not be given for less than 12 months.
  - iii. The accompanied rate is conditional. In order for an Awardee to receive the accompanied rate, all dependant family members must be living at the same residential address as the Awardee. Awardees must provide

sufficient supporting documentation and evidence that all dependant family members are residing at the same fixed residential address to DFAT. DFAT will take a number of steps should an Awardee fail to provide sufficient supporting documentation and evidence. This includes reverting the CLE rate back to the unaccompanied rate until such time the Awardee can supply the required documentation or consider this as an act of fraud where the Awardee's Scholarship will be terminated and the Awardee will incur a debt to the Commonwealth of Australia for the total accrued cost of their Scholarship.

- iv. If two AAPS Awardees are married to each other, both will receive the unaccompanied rate. When one of the couples has completed their award the remaining Awardee will receive the accompanied rate provided that the non-Awardee spouse remains in the study country. If the non-Awardee spouse has returned home, then the unaccompanied rate will continue to be paid to the Awardee.
- v. If two AAPS Awardees are married to each other and have their children accompanying and residing with them at the same residential address, one will receive the unaccompanied rate while the other will receive the accompanied rate for the shorter duration of award. When one of the couples has completed their Award, the remaining Awardee can apply for the accompanied rate provided that the non-Awardee spouse and children remain in the study country. If the non-Awardee spouse has returned home with their children, then the unaccompanied rate will be paid to the Awardee.

**10.6.4.** The contribution to living expenses ends five days after the completion or termination of the Scholarship. The completion of the Scholarship varies:

- i. For Awardees undertaking coursework studies, the contribution to living expenses will cease five days after final examination results are released;
- ii. For research Awardees, the contribution to living expenses will cease five days after the Awardee submits their thesis;
- iii. For Awardees departing before the release of their academic results, or for those who will be completing their thesis from their home country, the contribution to living expenses will cease five days after their departure from the study country. For the purposes of contribution to living expenses calculations, the Awardee's departure date therefore becomes the end date of their Scholarship.
- iv. {I} For Awardees returning home before the release of their academic results, RST should obtain assurance from the Awardee's supervisor that the Awardee is likely to achieve a satisfactory result before agreeing to an earlier departure.

**10.6.5.** Contribution to living expenses payments continue:

- i. During public holidays and semester breaks.

- ii. During periods of fieldwork/industrial attachment under the Scholarship.
- iii. During reunion visits to the Awardee's home country.
- iv. For up to six weeks if an Awardee is medically unfit to study, hospitalised or detained.

**10.6.6.** Contribution to living expenses payments will not be made:

- i. During periods of Scholarship Suspension
- ii. Where an Awardee is medically unfit to study, hospitalised or detained for more than six weeks

**10.6.7.** {A} Awardees are responsible for all their expenses in the study country including those of any family members. The contribution to living expenses is currently tax exempt.

**10.6.8.** {A} Awardees must notify Institutions immediately if there is an overpayment of the contribution to living payments. In this case the Awardee must make arrangements to repay the overpayment amount to the Institution immediately. Failure to do so will be considered as an act of fraud.

**10.6.9.** {I} The Institution must:

- i. Pay the contribution to living expenses fortnightly, in arrears, into a bank account in the study country nominated by the Awardee;
- ii. Make the first payment on the first available pay day of the Institution's payment period after the Awardee's arrival;
- iii. Make subsequent payments fortnightly in accordance with the Institution's fortnightly payment periods, and
- iv. Advise all Awardees of the need to obtain all requirements of the study country for banking purposes.

## 10.7. Medical Cover

**10.7.1.** {A} AAPS Institutions provide basic medical cover for Awardees only. This cover differs amongst institutions and may not cover all medical expenses incurred by Awardees during their scholarship period. Medical costs that are not covered by the basic medical cover must be borne by the Awardee.

**10.7.2.** {A} DFAT will pay for this cost directly to Institutions as part of the award entitlements, for Awardees only. Awardees must purchase medical cover for all family members accompanying them in the study country.

**10.7.3.** {A} The basic medical cover provided does not cover pre-existing conditions or services such as dental, physiotherapy or optical services (known as ancillary services). Awardees may purchase ancillary cover at their own expense.

10.7.4. {A} When an Awardee is on Suspension, the Institution, where applicable, will suspend the medical cover for the Suspension period, and reactivate the policy upon the Awardee's return to studies.

For awardees attending the University of the South Pacific (USP):

10.7.5. {A} All Awardees are covered under the USP Health Care Scheme during the tenure of their Scholarship. This scheme entitles Awardees to free consultations and free prescribed medicines during the semester only. More information about the Health Care Scheme provided by USP can be found at [Health Services - On Campus \(usp.ac.fj\)](http://usp.ac.fj/Health_Services_-_On_Campus)

10.7.6. Local private hospitalisation and overseas specialised treatment (evacuation) can be accessed upon approval from the SP.

For awardees attending the Fiji National University (FNU):

10.7.7. FNU has an on-site medical facility available to all students for general consultations, free of charge. Prescribed medicines will be covered by Awardees.

10.7.8. Basic medical cover for Awardees will include local private hospitalisation and overseas specialised treatment (evacuation).

10.7.9. Awardees with disabilities must organize basic medical cover for carers (if any), which can be added to the Awardee's basic medical cover.

10.7.10. {I} The Institution must:

- i. Arrange for the enrolment and payment of the cost of medical cover for Awardees, where applicable, for the duration of their stay in the study country
- ii. Ensure Awardees receive a copy of their cover details regarding the medical cover where applicable

10.7.11. {I} If an Awardee is accompanied the Institution must ensure that the Awardee understands that the medical cover does not cover dependants.

## 10.8. Visa costs

10.8.1. {S} Sending Post will cover the visa processing costs and the initial medical examination and/or character clearance(s) undertaken in the Awardee's home country to enable the student visa/study permit to be issued. DFAT will not pay the costs of any additional medical examinations. This includes where an examination is required for re-entry into the study country following a Scholarship Suspension, or an extension of the Scholarship requiring a new visa or passport renewal.

10.8.2. {S} Visa application costs for visa extensions are the responsibility of the Awardee.

## 10.9. Conditions that apply to travel

10.9.1. The following conditions apply to all travel (i.e. to the study country at the commencement of the Scholarship, from the study country upon completion of the Scholarship, fieldwork travel and reunion travel):

- i. Awardees are entitled to travel (i.e. airfares) between the regional or international airport closest to their home city or town, and the airport closest to the Institution where they will be studying;
- ii. With prior approval, DFAT may also cover the cost of travel (using public transport) between the airport and the Awardee's place of residence, either in the study country, or in the Awardee's home country, where the distance is greater than 250km. Post will be responsible for approving travel costs for Awardees who are in-country. If the Awardee is on Scholarship the Institution will need to submit a variation request in OASIS if additional funding is required;
- iii. Awardees are to travel by the most direct route and are entitled to the "best fare of the day" which is the cheapest economy class fare available during the period of travel;
- iv. Sending Post, Receiving Post and Institutions must advise the Awardee and the travel agent that once the ticket is purchased it cannot be varied without the approval of the Sending Post, Receiving Post or Institution;
- v. Sending Post, Receiving Post and Institutions should arrange travel routes that minimise the risk of the Awardee incurring visa problems in third countries while in transit or on stopover, unless unavoidable stopovers are not permitted. If unavoidable, DFAT will pay reasonable accommodation costs (including transport to and from the airport and accommodation only), though it should be checked first whether these costs are covered by the airline;
- vi. The Awardee is responsible for all external arrival and departure taxes, except where it is part of an unavoidable stopover, in which case, the taxes should be incorporated into the price of the ticket at the time of purchase; and
- vii. Awardees will not be permitted to deviate from these conditions in order to travel with dependants or family members.

10.9.2. The Scholarship does not cover costs for:

- i. Travel insurance while the Awardee is travelling to and from the study country or while studying in the study country (including for loss of possessions). Awardees are responsible for arranging their own travel insurance at their own expense and that of their accompanying dependant family members;
- ii. Travel of Awardees' dependants or family members;
- iii. Fees, additional taxes or fare differences related to changing travel dates or missing flights;



- iv. Transporting personal effects or excess baggage to and from the study country, or within the study country; and
- v. Other incidental costs incurred during Awardee's travel, including airport transfers not covered by [subsection 10.9.1.ii.](#)

## 10.10. Mobilisation travel

- 10.10.1. {A} All Awardees must contact the RST Officer at their Institution prior to leaving their home country to advise the RST officer of their arrival plans.
- 10.10.2. {A} All Awardees must have a plan for transport from their airport of arrival to their accommodation and must have booked accommodation for at least the first three nights' accommodation on arrival in the study country.
- 10.10.3. {S} The airfare for Awardees to travel to the study country is booked and paid for by the Sending Post. Sending Post record Awardees' travel and arrival details in OASIS, which then notifies Institutions/Receiving Post of these details.
- 10.10.4. {S} Sending Post are to arrange Awardees' mobilisation travel and must:
- i. Ensure Awardees arrive on or after the recommended date of arrival as specified in the Institution's placement offer. This is to be no more than 14 days before the Awardee is scheduled to commence the mandatory Introductory Academic Program or in-country preparatory program.
  - ii. Record an Awardee's travel details including the flight number and arrival time in OASIS as early as possible after finalising the travel booking, and by 10 December at the latest for Awardees commencing in semester one unless there has been a delay in finalising the placement or issuing a visa.
  - iii. Amend an Awardee's travel details as soon as possible in OASIS if their arrival details change.
  - iv. Confirm that each Awardee has communicated their arrival plan to the RST Officer at their Institution.
- 10.10.5. {S} If a Sending Post does not provide timely and accurate advice to the Institution and additional costs are incurred, the Institution may pass these onto the Sending Post.
- 10.10.6. {S} Additional costs must be discussed with and approved by Suva Post. If dependents are mobilising after the Awardee, the Sending Post is responsible for providing letters of support or additional information for the dependents so they may apply for a visa to accompany the Awardee in the study country.

## 10.11. Reunion airfare

- 10.11.1. The reunion airfare provides unaccompanied Awardees with return travel to their home country for a reunion visit during Institution semester breaks. The number of reunion airfares an Awardees is entitled to is determined by

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the duration of the Scholarship. Refer to [Table 4: reunion airfare entitlement table](#) for more information.

10.11.2. Eligibility for the reunion airfare entitlement will be confirmed in the letter of offer and contract, entered in OASIS by Sending Post, and agreed to by the Awardee when they sign their Scholarship contract.

10.11.3. Extension of a Scholarship, including an honours year extension, does not entitle an Awardee to an additional reunion travel entitlement.

10.11.4. {A} To be eligible for the reunion airfare, Awardees must:

- i. Be unaccompanied for the duration of the Scholarship OR
- ii. Be unaccompanied in the study country for twelve months
- iii. If family members have at any time accompanied the Awardee in the study country as a dependant, to access reunion they must be unaccompanied for twelve months from the date of dependant/s departure from the study country.
- iv. Be enrolled for a minimum of two academic years in the study country (the academic year can include in-study country preparatory programs).

10.11.5. {A} If an Awardee wants to return home at any other time, they may do so at their own expense, but it must not have an adverse effect on their academic progress. Awardees must keep the Institution informed of their travel arrangements.

10.11.6. {A} Awardees entitled to fieldwork (see [subsection 12.3.6](#)) may not claim a reunion airfare in the year in which they undertake their fieldwork, if the fieldwork location is in their home country.

10.11.7. {A} If an Awardee decides to bring their family after they have arrived in the study country, they must inform RST who will process the change in OASIS.

10.11.8. {A} Where an Awardee decides after they arrive in the study country that they wish to have their family accompany them, they must forfeit their reunion airfare entitlement by signing the form at [Appendix A](#).

10.11.9. {A} If an Awardee is found to have accessed reunion airfare(s) while their immediate family (dependants) are living with them in the study country, this will be investigated for fraud which may result in a termination of the Awardee's Scholarship and possible criminal charges. Please refer to Glossary for a definition of dependant.

10.11.10. The number of reunion airfare entitlements varies depending on the duration of the Scholarship. The table below shows when the entitlement may be claimed.

10.11.11. Awardees are to travel by the most direct route and are entitled to the "best fare of the day" which is the cheapest economy class fare available during the period of travel.

10.11.12. Reunion airfares do not accrue and must be used by the end of each eligible academic year.

10.11.13. If an Awardee commences in January, the reunion travel must be taken at the end of the first academic year.

If an Awardee commences mid-year the travel can be deferred to the Christmas break *in the following year*. For example, an Awardee who commences in July 2020 on a two-year program is eligible to travel back home in July 2021. However, the Awardee can choose to defer his/her travel and fly home for the Christmas break in 2021.

**Table 4: Reunion Airfare Entitlement Table**

Length of scholarship and reunion airfare entitlement at end of each year

Length	End of year 1	End of year 2	End of year 3	End of year 4
1 year	No			
1.5 years	Yes			
2 years	Yes	No		
2.5 years	Yes	Yes		
3 years	Yes	Yes	No	
3.5 years	Yes	Yes	Yes	
4 years	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

10.11.14. {A} Once an Awardee qualifies for the reunion airfare, they must contact the RST at their Institution to arrange travel. If the Awardee is not using the reunion airfare during the Institution semester break, the Awardee must provide the RST with written approval from the Awardee's faculty or research supervisor for the period of travel, and assurance that it will not interfere with their study program.

10.11.15. {I} The Institution must record the approved reunion airfare in OASIS.

### Independent Travel

10.11.16. {A} Awardees must advise the RST in advance of all overseas travel not covered under the reunion airfare entitlements.

10.11.17. {A} Awardees are responsible for arranging their own travel insurance associated with any independent travel

## 10.12. Completion travel

10.12.1. {I} The Institution is responsible for providing an estimate of the return home travel costs at the time of making the placement offer. It is also responsible for arranging and paying for the Awardee to travel home at the completion of their Scholarship in accordance with [section 10.9](#). Awardees are to travel by the most direct route and are entitled to the 'best fare of the day' which is the cheapest economy class fare available.

10.12.2. {I} The Institution must arrange the Awardee's return home travel so that they depart the study country before their visa expires or within 14 days of the Scholarship end date, whichever comes first.

- 10.12.3. {I} If required, the Institution must be able to obtain confirmation from the travel agent who has booked the Awardee's travel home that the Awardee has completed the travel. The Awardee is not permitted to make any change to the completion travel ticket, including cashing in the ticket. The travel agent must notify the institution immediately if there is a 'no show' for a scheduled travel. The Institution should notify DFAT immediately that there was a 'no show' for completion travel.
- 10.12.4. {I} In some cases it may be appropriate to include quarantine and other in-home country related COVID-19 related costs as part of completion travel. Institutions should contact the receiving post, for guidance, where appropriate if prior guidance is unavailable.
- 10.12.5. {A} Awardees who fail to make travel arrangements to depart the study country within 14 days of their Scholarship end date (if it comes before their visa end date) will forfeit their right to the completion travel entitlement and will be reported to the Department of Immigration in the study country.

## 11. General support services

### 11.1. Standards for support services

- 11.1.1. The Institution is required to provide support services to Awardees, which are not less than the requirements of the National Standards for International Students of that Institution as defined in the Institution's contract with DFAT.

### 11.2. Arrival in the study country

- 11.2.1. Unless the Awardee has indicated that they do not require airport reception, the Institution will meet Awardees on arrival at the arrival terminal of their final destination and take them to their initial accommodation. Costs incurred to meet Awardees will be at the Institution's expense.

- 11.2.2. {S} Sending Post arrange the Awardee's travel to the study country and must:

- i. Ensure Awardees arrive on or after the recommended date of arrival as specified in the Institution's placement offer. This is to be no more than 14 days before the Awardee is scheduled to commence the mandatory Introductory Academic Program or in-study country preparatory program.
- ii. Record an Awardee's travel details including flight number and arrival time in OASIS as early as possible after finalising the travel booking, and by 10 December at the latest for Awardees commencing in semester one unless there has been a delay in finalising the placement or issuing a visa.
- iii. Amend the Awardee's travel details as soon as practical in OASIS if the arrival details change.
- iv. Confirm that each Awardee has communicated their arrival plan to the RST Officer at their university.

- 11.2.3. {S} If Sending Post do not provide timely and accurate advice to the Institution and additional costs are incurred, the Institution may pass these costs onto the Sending Post.

- 11.2.4. {A} Awardees must notify the Institution if their flight is delayed or where they miss a connecting flight so the Institution can change the airport pick-up arrangements and advise temporary accommodation accordingly.

### 11.3. Accommodation

- 11.3.1. Awardees are responsible for arranging their own long-term accommodation and for the costs of all accommodation in the study country for themselves and their family. Upon request, institutions will arrange initial

accommodation for Awardees for a period of at least 14 days from when they arrive in the study country.

11.3.2. Awardees with disability may have special requirements in relation to accommodation and this will impose different responsibilities on Sending Post, Receiving Post and Institutions (see [Chapter 9](#)).

11.3.3. {A} After the Awardee has accepted their Scholarship offer, they are required to immediately contact the Institution if they would like to be accommodated on-campus (even if for the first semester). Institutions may have a ballot system for on-campus accommodation and will require an early indication of interest.

11.3.4. {A} All Awardees are to prepare a plan for their transport and accommodation when they arrive in the study country. The Awardee is to share this plan with the RST at their Institution at least fourteen (14) days before their planned arrival in the study country.

### Initial accommodation

11.3.5. {A} Awardees must notify Institutions if they do not require initial accommodation to be arranged for them. They must do this by email at least three (3) weeks before arriving in the study country. If they fail to advise the Institution, the awardee will be responsible for all associated costs of that accommodation.

11.3.6. {A} Awardees with accompanying dependant family members must make their own arrangements for accommodation of family members.

11.3.7. {A} Awardees with accompanying family members may ask the Institution to include the family members in the initial accommodation booking. Institutions are not required to make accommodation arrangements for family members.

11.3.8. {I} The Institution must arrange initial accommodation for Awardees, unless the Awardee advises otherwise in writing.

11.3.9. {I} The initial accommodation must:

- i. Be moderately priced
- ii. Be clean and secure
- iii. Be furnished and have heating or cooling as necessary
- iv. Have access to cooking facilities or to appropriate food outlets

11.3.10. {I} Institutions should provide Awardees with details of local shops, food outlets, public transport and other services near the accommodation.

11.3.11. {I} The Institution may offer to help arrange initial accommodation for family members if an Awardee is accompanied. These expenses are to be paid by the Awardee.

## Long-term accommodation

11.3.12. {A} Awardees are advised to begin looking for accommodation before they leave their home country. However, they should not enter into a legally binding contract or lease before arriving in the study country and without having viewed the accommodation.

11.3.13. A number of websites and internet-based agencies provide assistance for Awardees to find accommodation in the study country. Awardees should only use reputable organisations and may seek advice from the RST Officer at their Institution about which organisation to use for the particular location of the Institution.

11.3.14. {I} The Institution must advise Awardees about:

- i. Availability and costs of residential colleges, international houses or hostels attached to the Institution, including accommodation suitable for people with disability or special needs
- ii. The range of private accommodation options available, including accommodation suitable for people with disability or special needs.
- iii. Information on tenancy requirements, tenancy protection, establishing utility connections, and rental prices including additional costs such as gas or electricity.

## 12. Academic support

### 12.1. Introductory Academic Program

- 12.1.1. The Introductory Academic Program (IAP) is mandatory for all awardees. It is intended to provide Awardees with support during their first weeks in the study country; prepare them for study in the study country; enhance their ability to meet the demands of their studies and maximise the likelihood of success in their course by the Scholarship completion date. The IAP may enable an Institution to monitor an Awardee's capability and identify those who may need further assistance during the course of their studies.
- 12.1.2. The Introductory Academic Program will be conducted over a four to six-week period.
- 12.1.3. {A} Attendance at the Introductory Academic Program is compulsory for all Awardees. Failure to attend the Introductory Academic Program may result in the termination of the Scholarship.

### 12.2. Supplementary academic support

- 12.2.1. A limited amount of Supplementary Academic Support (SAS) is available where the Institution, Awardee or Sending Post identifies that assistance is required in line with the Institution's academic requirements. Funds may be used for:
- i. Tutoring or other academic support
  - ii. SAS entitlements can be used for domestic academic training or workshops directly related to the Awardees main course of study and this includes to attend conferences (**attendance fees only**) where the conference is in the study country or in the Awardees home country. SAS entitlements may not be used for attending conferences in a third country and cannot be used for airfares to any conferences
  - iii. Editing theses, printing and binding costs.
- 12.2.2. Supplementary academic support is accrued at F\$150 every six months (i.e. F\$300 a year) for the period of the Scholarship. The accrued funds may be expensed at any time during the Scholarship. The funds, however, cannot be expensed in advance (e.g. if an activity happens during the first semester of a Scholarship, the associated costs cannot exceed the actual accrued amount of F\$300).
- 12.2.3. {A} Awardees wanting to access the SAS funds must contact RST at their Institution and gain approval for the use of these funds. If the Institution approves the use of the funds, the Institution will advise the Awardee whether the Institution will



pay the approved funds directly to the service provider, or if the Awardee can be reimbursed upon the Awardee's presentation of original receipts.

- 12.2.4. {I} When determining the activity to be funded, the Institution is expected to consider, but not be limited to, whether:
- i. The assistance to be funded with the SAS can be provided at no cost through the Institution's academic support mechanisms or
  - ii. The Awardee has sufficient remaining accrued funds for the activity after all previous costs against this entitlement have been expensed in OASIS
- 12.2.5. {I} Once the Institution has approved expenditure of SAS funds for an Awardee, the Institution must either:
- i. Pay the costs of the approved activity directly to the service provider, or
  - ii. Reimburse the Awardee upon presentation of original receipt(s) for the agreed support service.
- 12.2.6. {I} Supplementary academic support funding must not be used:
- i. To purchase IT hardware, specialised software or textbooks (Awardees may use the establishment allowance for this purpose), or
  - ii. To meet the expenses of adjustments made for Awardees with disability (as this is the Institution's responsibility), or
  - iii. Towards any associated costs for fieldwork/field trips or study tour units (either selective or compulsory)
- 12.2.7. {I} The Institution must monitor the provision of the entitlement and maintain records of expenditure for each Awardee in OASIS. According to its contract with Institutions, DFAT may audit these records at any time.

### 12.3. Fieldwork

- 12.3.1. For the purpose of the AAPS, fieldwork is defined as firsthand observations and data collection made in the field as opposed to those observed or collected in the controlled university environment.
- 12.3.2. The fieldwork entitlement is only a contribution to Awardees' fieldwork costs (as detailed in [subsection 12.3.6](#)). The fieldwork entitlement only applies to Awardees enrolled in a Master's by Research, a PhD or a Master's by Coursework which has a compulsory research by fieldwork component. The fieldwork entitlement must be included in the Institution's initial offer.
- 12.3.3. Fieldwork must be undertaken in the study country or the Awardee's home country. In exceptional cases, Sending Post may agree to an Awardee undertaking fieldwork in another country within the region. If fieldwork in a country outside the Awardee's home country or region is approved, DFAT will contribute a maximum of A\$1000 to cover travel costs only.

- 12.3.4. Fieldwork which is to take place in more than one location in the study country or in the Applicant's home country must be identified in the Awardee's approved research proposal.
- 12.3.5. The CLE will continue to be paid in the study country.
- 12.3.6. For fieldwork undertaken outside the study country, only the international return airfares to the airport closest to the fieldwork location will be funded during the Scholarship period. For fieldwork undertaken in the study country, only the return travel from the Awardee's city or town of residence to the fieldwork location (where this is outside the city or town of residence) will be funded. Funding will only be provided for return travel to the first location where fieldwork is undertaken in multiple locations. Funding for all other costs associated with fieldwork should be sought from other sources available to Awardees, including their academic faculty budget. DFAT will not cover costs which Institutions typically cover other research students.
- 12.3.7. PhD Awardees are entitled up to three trips that can be either reunion or fieldwork. Master's Awardees are entitled up to two trips that can be either reunion or fieldwork. The number of fieldwork trips required is determined by the Institution (supervisor) subject to the nature of the research.
- 12.3.8. If fieldwork is conducted in the Awardee's home country, the Awardee is not eligible for reunion airfares in the year fieldwork is undertaken (i.e. a PhD Awardee undertakes fieldwork in year 2 is not entitled to reunion airfare in that year but is eligible at the end of years 1 and 3).
- 12.3.9. If fieldwork is conducted in a third country or in the study country, the standard reunion entitlement applies.
- 12.3.10. For Awardees with disability, all fieldwork must include a management plan approved by the Institution.
- 12.3.11. Fieldwork must be undertaken during the Awardee's period of studies such that the total period of the Scholarship does not exceed the length of the course of studies as registered in the award offer.
- 12.3.12. The maximum period which may be approved for fieldwork is 12 months.
- 12.3.13. Fieldwork must not result in an extension to the Scholarship.
- 12.3.14. {I} The Institution must record the fieldwork details in OASIS at the process placement stage. Failure to do so may result in funds for fieldwork not being approved.
- 12.3.15. {I} The Institution (and Awardees) should first investigate if some of the costs can be obtained from other sources (such as the Institution's research funds).
- 12.3.16. {I} The Institution must seek approval from the Sending Post (and it may also require approval from the partner government, where relevant) for fieldwork to be undertaken in a third country.
- 12.3.17. {I} The Institution is responsible for organising fieldwork travel for the Awardee. Up to two return economy class airfare for a Master's Awardee and up to three for a PhD may be approved for the Awardee to undertake fieldwork essential to their program.

- 12.3.18. {I} The Institution must record the actual travel costs and details in OASIS once it has been booked.
- 12.3.19. {I} If an Awardee becomes ill or is unable to return from their fieldwork as planned, the RST should apply the Suspension Policy ([section 13.4](#)).
- 12.3.20. {S} Sending Post must give careful consideration to the implications of approving fieldwork.
- 12.3.21. {A} Awardees must communicate with and provide all relevant information on the fieldwork to the RST to assist the Institution in organising fieldwork travel. Failing to notify the RST may result in the cancellation of an Awardee's CLE entitlement.
- 12.3.22. {A} An Awardee who is undertaking fieldwork outside of the study country and who has dependants with them in the study country must consult RST regarding their dependents staying in the study country or travelling with the Awardee.
- 12.3.23. {A} If an Awardee becomes ill or unable to complete their research as planned, they must immediately advise their RST and the Suspension policy will be applied (refer [section 13.4](#)).

## 12.4. Fieldtrips

- 12.4.1. Some programs of study require a component of the course or subject to be undertaken in the home country, e.g. Education course may require a teaching practicum.
- i. This is regarded as a fieldtrip and is undertaken in the home country
  - ii. The entitlement for this is one return airfare and the CLE continues to be paid in the study country
  - iii. The fieldtrip cannot take place in a final semester of award otherwise the CLE will be forfeited
- 12.4.2. {I} DFAT will only cover the cost of travel for fieldtrips where they are a compulsory requirement of the Awardee's study program (i.e. not part of an elective course). The Institution must record the cost as part of the academic fees in OASIS at the process placement stage (see [Chapter 5](#)). Failure to do so may result in funds for the fieldtrip not being approved.
- 12.4.3. {I} If a fieldtrip to a country outside of the study country or the Awardee's home region is approved by the Sending Post, DFAT will contribute a maximum of one return airfare to contribute towards travel costs only.

## 12.5. Work attachments, placements or work experience

- 12.5.1. The maximum period of a work attachment is 12 months.
- 12.5.2. Work attachments must be undertaken either in the study country or the Awardee's home country, noting that the Awardee is responsible for all

costs. In exceptional cases, Sending Post may agree to work attachments taking place in another country within the region.

- 12.5.3. Work attachments must be undertaken during the Awardee's period of studies such that the total period of the Scholarship does not exceed the length of the course studies. Work placements should not result in an extension to the Scholarship.
- 12.5.4. Work experience to gain membership of a Fijian, Samoan, or Vanuatu professional association will not be supported, where the experience could be undertaken in the Awardee's home country to gain membership of the relevant association in that country.
- 12.5.5. {I} The Institution must include the requirement for a work attachment in the Institution's original placement offer in OASIS (see [Chapter 5](#)).
- 12.5.6. {I} The Institution will continue to pay the contribution to living expenses allowance during the work attachment, irrespective of any payment the Awardee may receive from the hosting organisation.
- 12.5.7. {A} The Awardee is responsible for:
- i. All costs associated with the work attachment
  - ii. Ensuring that any work undertaken complies with the study permit, student visa conditions of the study country

## 12.6. Academic progress

### Satisfactory academic progress

- 12.6.1. Satisfactory academic progress means that the Awardee has passed all subjects for the given period or has recorded satisfactory progress in a research program.
- 12.6.2. {I} Institutions must:
- i. Maintain an up-to-date record of each Awardee's academic progress in OASIS, as required under the Institution's contract with DFAT
  - ii. Monitor and record academic progress of Awardees at the end of each semester (or session); and
  - iii. Ensure that the Awardee is on schedule to complete their course by the Scholarship completion date and is maintaining an appropriate study load.

### Unsatisfactory academic progress

- 12.6.3. If an Awardee fails a subject or fails to make satisfactory progress in a research program, in any two semesters (or sessions), the Awardee must show cause as to why they should not have their Scholarship terminated (see [section 13.9](#)).
- 12.6.4. {A} An Awardee's Scholarship may be terminated if they fail to make satisfactory progress. If an Awardee fails to make satisfactory academic

progress, they must sign and comply with the Institution's strategy and action plan to address the reasons for failure.

12.6.5. {A} If an Awardee does not comply with the plan or continues to fail to make satisfactory academic progress the Scholarship may be terminated.

12.6.6. {I} If an Awardee fails a subject, or fails to make satisfactory progress in a research program, the Institution must:

- i. Record in OASIS at the end of each semester (or session) which subjects the Awardee has failed or note that they have not made satisfactory progress in a research program
- ii. Put in place a strategy and action plan in consultation with the Awardee, to help them address the reasons for failure and remain on-schedule to complete their course by the completion date. The action plan could include for example:
  - Supplementary academic support (e.g. additional tuition)
  - Enrolling in non-standard sessions (e.g. summer school)
  - Reducing the Awardees workload in one semester and overloading in another (if the Awardee is capable)
  - Enrolment to repeat/replace failed subjects
  - Course downgrade
- iii. Ensure that the action plan is signed/acknowledged by both the Awardee and the Institution, and that the action plan is uploaded into OASIS.
- iv. Request approval for the action plan, through OASIS, from the Sending Post (including approval of any additional funds required for additional courses or supplementary academic support).

12.6.7. {S} Sending Post must monitor advice from Institution in OASIS and, where an Awardee has been identified as failing to make satisfactory progress, liaise with the Institution to ensure funding is available for appropriate academic support to be provided.

## Study load

12.6.8. Awardees are not permitted to undertake a part-time study load for any reason other than extenuating circumstances. Only on approval from Sending Post, Institutions may allow Awardees to enrol in less than a full-time load (but must undertake a minimum of two courses/units) in any standard study period (i.e. semester) if:

- i. There are compassionate or compelling reasons for reducing the load
- ii. The reduced load is part of the Institution's strategy and action plan
- iii. The Awardee has studied, or plans to study, extra units in another study period and has provided a copy of their approved study plan to the RST.

- iv. The Awardee has only a few units left to complete, and these do not constitute a full-time load
- v. Prerequisite units are not available in that study period.
- vi. Underpinning all the above, studies should be completed within the original award offer duration.

12.6.9. {A} Awardees may seek approval from RST to spread their workload over more teaching periods (i.e. use non-standard sessions – summer, autumn, winter) where an Institution offers non-compulsory study periods, or to reduce their workload if they are having trouble adjusting.

12.6.10. {I} The Institution must ensure the Awardee follows an enrolment plan that will allow them to complete within the expected duration in the normal course of events.

## 13. Variations to the terms of enrolment

### 13.1. Scholarship conditions and terms of enrolment

- 13.1.1. Scholarships are awarded to recipients to obtain specified qualifications in order to contribute to development outcomes in their home country. The proposed course and the length of the Scholarship are agreed by DFAT and in some instances, the partner government, following advice from Institutions. The terms of the AAPS, and enrolment at the Institution, are then agreed to by the recipient by signing the letter of offer and contract with the Commonwealth of Australia.
- 13.1.2. Variations to the Awardee's terms of enrolment which affect the basis on which the Scholarship was granted (e.g. change to field of study) will only be considered if they are the only options available to enable the Awardee to successfully complete their program of study. All variations must be approved by the relevant Delegate of the Sending Post within DFAT.
- 13.1.3. Variations will not be approved after the end date of a Scholarship.
- 13.1.4. The types of variations that will be considered by DFAT are detailed separately in this chapter.
- 13.1.5. {A} Awardees are advised that variations to the terms of their enrolment will be considered in light of the Scholarship's aim of contributing to the development of the Awardee's home country, and that the Awardee's tertiary education is intended to provide skills valuable to this aim. An Awardee's personal aspirations are of secondary importance.
- 13.1.6. {S} All variations are managed and processed in OASIS by the Sending Post and the Institution. The only exception to this requirement is for terminations, which are approved by Suva Post in consultation with Sending Post.
- 13.1.7. {S} Sending Post will determine if partner government approval is required for a variation, after which they may approve variations in accord with the relevant policy and in accord with financial delegations.
- 13.1.8. {S} Sending Post will endeavour to respond to variation requests within 2 weeks, depending on the complexity of the request, detail of information provided, and the priorities of the Sending Post.
- 13.1.9. {I} Institutions must seek timely approval from Sending Post as variations frequently involve the commitment of new funds. The only exception to this is for terminations, which are approved by the DFAT Delegate responsible in Suva Post in consultation with Sending Post and in some other cases where variations require Sending Post to negotiate with other parties, such as partner governments.
- 13.1.10. {I} Institutions must lodge variation requests as early as practical in OASIS. Which must be at least six weeks before the Scholarship completion date if the Awardee is in the last semester of their Scholarship. Variations

submitted less than four weeks before payment batch process due dates may not be approved prior to the due date of the payment batch.

13.1.11. {I} Institutions are to keep Awardee's OASIS records up-to-date, particularly when seeking variations (e.g. details of dependants, passport details etc.).

13.1.12. {I} When deciding if a variation is necessary, the Institution should assess the options available to produce the most effective outcome. Before submitting a variation in OASIS relating to academic failure, Institutions must ensure they have investigated and reported the following to DFAT (using the OASIS journal notes facility):

- i. Scope of the academic difficulty including identification of the specific academic issue (e.g. statistics, essay writing, exams, attendance, research or time management);
- ii. Reasons for the failure, for example family stress, academic stress or health issues;
- iii. Actions to be taken by both the Awardee and Institution to address the issues in the form of an action plan to address the shortcoming. For example, if an Awardee is suffering financial stress, the plan would identify counselling and financial management plans put in place, if research skill support is needed the plan would list extra academic support attended by the Awardee and the outcomes of that support;
- iv. How realistic is it that the Awardee will successfully complete the current course; and
- v. Any option to downgrade the academic award, and if this is being considered.

## 13.2. Withdrawals

13.2.1. An Awardee may withdraw from their study program and forfeit their AAPS before or after their arrival in the study country.

13.2.2. {A} An Awardee that wishes to withdraw from their Scholarship must provide this advice in writing to:

- i. The Sending Post if the Awardee has not departed for the study country
- ii. The Institution if the Awardee is in the study country.

13.2.3. {A} Awardees who withdraw from their Scholarship have 14 days to leave the study country. Awardees should contact the RST Officer at their Institution to arrange their return home travel. If the Awardee does not return home, they will incur a debt to the Commonwealth for the Scholarship costs (see [section 8.8](#)).

13.2.4. {S} Sending Post are responsible for processing pre-departure withdrawals in OASIS.



- 13.2.5. {I} Institutions are responsible for notifying Sending Post and Receiving Post and gaining their approval to process withdrawals for Awardees in the study country who wish to withdraw from their Scholarship.
- 13.2.6. {I} Institutions must notify the Immigration Department in the study country of the Awardee's withdrawal if the Awardee is in the study country

### 13.3. Extensions

- 13.3.1. An extension is any increase to the length of a Scholarship and is requested by the Institution in OASIS and approved by the Sending Post.
- 13.3.2. Apart from an Honours year extension, only one extension to a maximum of six months may be approved for the duration of the Scholarship. A request for extension will not be considered for a study program that is only one academic year long.
- 13.3.3. Extensions will only be approved if there are legitimate reasons, including unforeseen and exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the Awardee and the Institution. Critical incidents and welfare issues are often best addressed with a Suspension.
- 13.3.4. The option to extend an AAPS will only be considered if:
- i. the Awardee is already in the second or subsequent year of their course;
  - ii. the Awardee is expected to achieve the qualification as a consequence of the extension;
  - iii. the Institution deems an extension to be the only acceptable strategy to achieve the qualification;
  - iv. the Awardee has failed a subject and the Institution has implemented a strategy to help them complete their study program on time and address the reasons for the failure; and
  - v. The extension request has been lodged in accord with the instructions at [subsection 13.1.9](#).
- 13.3.5. {A} If an extension to the Scholarship is approved, the Awardee will be responsible for paying any costs associated with gaining a new visa.
- 13.3.6. {A} It is the Awardee's responsibility to ensure that they contact the Immigration Department in the study country in sufficient time to apply for a new visa to extend their stay in the study country.
- 13.3.7. {A} Awardees are not permitted to self-fund an in-study country extension to their Scholarship. They are permitted to self-fund an extension to complete in their home country, if the Institution allows.
- 13.3.8. {S} Sending Post must maintain thorough records of extension requests, approvals and rejections in OASIS, including the rationale for the decision, which must be in line with the extension policy.
- 13.3.9. {I} The Institution should consider all possible options to avoid the need for an extension in situations where an Awardee is not likely to finish their studies on time. These options include:

- i. Suspension of their AAPS;
  - ii. Supplementary academic support;
  - iii. Enrolling in non-standard sessions (e.g. summer school) to repeat failed subjects;
  - iv. Course downgrade;
  - v. Overloading in subsequent semesters only if the Awardee is capable and the Institution approves this;
  - vi. Completion of studies from home, particularly for research courses. In such cases the Awardee would not receive any further funding from DFAT; and
  - vii. Termination of the Scholarship if the Awardee has failed a subject or failed to make satisfactory progress in a research program in any two semesters during the Scholarship period.
- 13.3.10. {I} Where an extension is recommended, the Institution must ensure that appropriate support, monitoring and counselling strategies are in place that will enable the Awardee to complete within the revised duration.
- 13.3.11. {I} The Institution must submit a study plan signed by the Awardee and the Institution together with the extension variation for the Sending Posts consideration. Research students must submit a letter of support from their supervisor along with a detailed submission timeline.
- 13.3.12. {I} If the Awardee is unlikely to achieve the desired outcome with the assistance provided, the Institution should recommend termination of the Scholarship to the Sending Post.
- i. {I} The Institution should fund all or part of the expense of extending an award where the Institution has failed to:
    - ii. Adequately monitor the Awardee's progress;
    - iii. Take mitigating action where the reasons for requiring the extension occurred before the last two semesters of study;
    - iv. Provide appropriate academic supervision and support to the Awardee to enable them to complete the Scholarship on time; and
    - v. Has inadequately or incorrectly provided academic counselling to an Awardee.
- 13.3.13. {I} Institutions must maintain thorough records on extension requests, approvals and rejections in OASIS.

## 13.4. Suspensions

- 13.4.1. A Scholarship may be suspended if deemed necessary (e.g. for health reasons, or family reasons).

- 13.4.2. A Scholarship may be suspended more than once, but the total period of all Suspensions must not exceed 12 months, except in the circumstances outlined in [subsection 13.4.3](#).
- 13.4.3. All Suspensions are processed on a case-by-case basis. If an Awardee is ready to recommence his/her studies and approved by Post, the Awardee must return to their studies at a logical time. Sending Post and Institution must ensure, when viewing the dates for the Awardee to return, that the Awardee recommences their studies at the beginning of a semester. For example, an Awardee was suspended for health reasons on the 16 August 2018 and was to return in mid-August 2019 but could not recommence their studies mid semester. Therefore, even if it means that the Suspension period would exceed the allowed 12-month period, the Awardee must return to their studies at the beginning of the following semester.
- 13.4.4. Suspension variations are requested by the Institution in OASIS and approved by the Sending Post.
- 13.4.5. If an Awardee has already been granted an extension of their Scholarship, a Suspension will not be granted if it will result in additional cost.
- 13.4.6. If a Suspension is approved, no contribution to living expenses or other fees or entitlements will be paid for the period of Suspension. Contribution to living expenses ceases on the day the Suspension takes effect.
- 13.4.7. Awardees may use their reunion airfare entitlement in advance to fund their return home trip. In the absence of a reunion entitlement DFAT will fund the Awardee's return trip airfare. The Awardee is responsible for their dependents' airfares.
- 13.4.8. Where a Suspension results in an Awardee having to repeat subjects for which fees have already been incurred, the request will be handled as a Suspension with an extension. No further requests for an extension will be permitted for the remainder of the Scholarship.
- 13.4.9. {A} If a Suspension of the Scholarship is approved, the Awardee must:
- i. Return to their home country (with their family if accompanied) immediately for the period of the Suspension unless medically unfit to do so
  - ii. Remain in contact with the Sending Post in-Country during the period of the Suspension
  - iii. Seek prior approval of DFAT and the Institution before returning to the study country at the end of the Suspension period
  - iv. Contact the Institution at least two months before they intend returning to the study country, to agree upon their Scholarship recommencement date
  - v. Contact the department of Immigration in the study country about visa requirements
- 13.4.10. {A} If a Suspension is granted on medical grounds, the Awardee will be required to undergo a medical examination to determine if they are fit to

travel and to resume full-time study in the study country. This examination will be at the Awardee's expense. A Suspension will not be granted for an Awardee to undergo and/or recover from elective surgery (see [subsection 14.6.4](#)).

- 13.4.11. {A} Sending Post will decide after receipt of the medical report if the Awardee can return to full time studies.
- 13.4.12. {A} Awardees may be required to provide documentary evidence of their fitness to study to DFAT and the Institution before approval will be given for their return to the study country and before a return flight will be booked on their behalf.
- 13.4.13. {A} Awardees are not permitted to remain in the study country whilst on Suspension for any reason including undertaking an internship or any other courses related or unrelated to their study program irrespectively of being able to financially support themselves.
- 13.4.14. {A} If a Suspension to the Scholarship is approved, the Awardee will be responsible for paying any costs associated with gaining a new visa.
- 13.4.15. {S} Sending Post are to assess Suspension requests in line with this policy and seek approval from partner governments where applicable.
- 13.4.16. {S} If a Suspension is granted on medical grounds, the Sending Post may be required to assist the Awardee in-Country during the period of Suspension (see [sections 15.5](#) and [17.5](#)).
- 13.4.17. {S} Instruct the Institution to advise the Department of Immigration in the study country that the Awardee' Scholarship has been suspended and that DFAT no longer supports the Awardee holding a Study Permit/Study visa until such time the Awardee is ready to recommence full time studies.
- 13.4.18. {I} The Institution should assess a Suspension request giving consideration to the remaining duration of the Scholarship and the likely effects of the Suspension (especially the break from study) on satisfactory completion of the course.
- 13.4.19. {I} Requests for Suspension are to be lodged by the Institution as early as possible in OASIS and are to include the revised Scholarship completion date and any additional costs, including the cost of return airfares for the Suspension in the absence of the reunion entitlement.
- 13.4.20. {I} The Institution should organise Suspension travel to the airport closest to the Awardee's closest home and invoice DFAT for the cost. Suspension travel should be organised as soon as possible after the Suspension has been approved by DFAT.
- 13.4.21. {I} If the Awardee:
- i. Has their Scholarship suspended due to illness or accident, they will need an assessment of their health and capacity to manage their studies before they return from suspension. Where the Awardee has not returned home because they were unfit to travel, the Institution must help organise this assessment

- ii. If deemed fit to return to their studies, the Institution must assist the Awardee with any visa requirements if required.

13.4.22. {} Institutions must advise the Department of Immigration in the study country that the Awardee's Scholarship has been suspended and that DFAT no longer supports the Awardee holding a Study Permit until such time the Awardee is ready to recommence their studies.

## 13.5. Transfers

- 13.5.1. A transfer between courses or to another campus is subject to Sending Post approval, and where relevant, partner government approval. Transfers will only be considered where there is no alternative option available, and the transfer is in line with the priority areas as identified in the relevant country or region profile.
- 13.5.2. The course or campus transfer must not result in an extension of time to the Scholarship.
- 13.5.3. Only one transfer request may be approved per Awardee.

### Change to field of study

- 13.5.4. A change to the field of study is not permitted (e.g. a request for a transfer from an arts to a science degree). However, an Institution may recommend that an Awardee change to a different course within the same field of study at an Institution that would be more appropriate to the Awardee's and country priority needs.

### Course transfer

- 13.5.5. A course transfer is entered in OASIS by the Institution where the Awardee is enrolled and approved by the Sending Post.

13.5.6. {} A course transfer is used to transfer an Awardee from one course to another at the same Institution (at the same or lower level). Institutions are required to provide a strong justification before seeking approval from the Sending Post for a transfer.

### Institution or Campus transfer

- 13.5.7. An Institution or campus transfer is used if the Awardee is transferring (at the same or lower level) to a different Institution or campus within the same Institution.
- 13.5.8. This may involve a transfer to another country (e.g. for USP)
- 13.5.9. Acceptable reasons for a transfer are:
  - i. Movement of an academic supervisor (research Awardees);
  - ii. The Institution or campus ceases to offer the course;
  - iii. Course downgrades; and

- iv. The Awardee fails to meet the entry requirements of their university after they have completed pre-course English or other preliminary courses, but they meet the entry requirements of a similar course offered at another Institution.

13.5.10. For Awardees with disability, the RST must contact the Disability Support Unit Coordinators at the Institution before commencing any preparations for transfer.

13.5.11. {A} If a campus transfer is approved, the Awardee must meet any costs associated with the transfer (e.g. costs of relocating).

13.5.12. {S} Sending Post may approve a transfer only if:

- i. The transfer Institution is an Institution contracted with DFAT
- ii. The new course is considered by the Sending Post to be consistent with the country program priorities and partner government requirements (where applicable)
- iii. It will not result in an extension of time to the Scholarship
- iv. The Awardee is likely to successfully complete the Scholarship.

13.5.13. {I} If the course to which an Awardee transfers is shorter than the original course, the receiving Institution/campus must reduce the duration of the Scholarship in OASIS and advise the Awardee of their Scholarship in line with their reduced study period.

## 13.6. Upgrades

13.6.1. Awardees are generally not permitted to upgrade to a higher-level course (either within the same Institution or at another Institution) during or after completion of their Scholarship. However, the following upgrades are permitted, subject to Sending Post and partner government approval where relevant (please note that not all Sending Posts allow for an upgrade):

- i. where an Institution has recommended an Awardee to be invited to undertake an Honours program
- ii. Awardees undertaking a Master's program may be permitted, in very exceptional circumstances, to upgrade to a PhD program if they meet the strict requirements as outlined in [subsections 13.6.2 – 13.6.9](#).

### Upgrade to a PhD

13.6.2. DFAT would prefer for the placement into the PhD to be confirmed during the Scholarship application phase. However, as this is not always possible, the following outlines the criteria and procedures Sending Post will apply when considering a request for a Scholarship to be upgraded to a PhD.

13.6.3. This policy recognises that building the research capacity in a developing country will contribute to its economic development and poverty reduction. Allowing upgrades from a Master's to a PhD program should mean that the

Awardee's contribution to their home country's research capacity will be enhanced.

13.6.4. Final approval by Sending Post will be affected by the Awardee signing a deed of amendment to their acceptance of offer contract with DFAT. The deed of amendment will be sent to the Awardee via the Institution to be signed and returned to DFAT for the delegate to sign. Sending Post will file one original and return two to the Institution (one for its file and one for the Awardee).

13.6.5. {A} The Awardee must submit their request for the upgrade to their Institution including all supporting documentation, a minimum of 30 days before the Awardee's Scholarship completion date (DFAT will not support Awardees remaining in the study country pending any decision on approvals for an upgrade).

13.6.6. {A} The Awardee must submit the following with their request for an upgrade:

- i. Clear written justification for the upgrade, including evidence that they are likely to return to a position in their home country or region which will enable them to pass on their research skills (e.g. evidence of previous relevant employment in an academic or research environment; a letter of potential employment in such an Institution on return home);
- ii. Evidence that they will be able to enhance research links between their home country, Australia and the study country; and
- iii. A brief proposal, including a project timeline, demonstrating how the PhD will be completed within the total of four years, including how the Master's studies to date have contributed to achieving that deadline.

13.6.7. {A} Once the Sending Post has given in-principle approval for an upgrade, the Awardee must subsequently provide evidence that they have been accepted into the proposed PhD program before final approval by the Sending Post can be given.

13.6.8. {A} If approval for the upgrade is given, the Awardee must apply for and self-fund a further Study Permit in the study country beyond the end date of their initial visa if required (see [section 8.5](#)).

13.6.9. {S} Sending Post and the partner government where applicable, may consider upgrades of exceptional Awardees from a Master's to a PhD on a case-by-case basis under the following criteria:

- i. The PhD will be undertaken at the same Institution at which the Awardee is studying a Master's program under the Scholarship; and
- ii. The upgrade will result in the study period (and hence the Scholarship duration) not exceeding four years in total (i.e. the equivalent duration had the Institution's initial offer been for the PhD).

13.6.10. {S} Sending Post must advise the Receiving Post if an upgrade is approved, and upload the deed of amendment, signed by the Awardee, in OASIS.

13.6.11. {I} The Institution must:

- i. Submit the request for an upgrade, including all supporting documentation listed at [subsection 13.6.6.](#), to Sending Post at least 30 days before the Awardee’s Scholarship completion date;
- ii. Ensure the supervisor and the Institution’s chair of the Research Committee or equivalent supports the upgrade;
- iii. Upload in to OASIS copies of all half-yearly reports submitted by the supervisor to the research committee or equivalent.

13.6.12. {R} In the event that an upgrade is approved, if necessary, the Receiving Post will provide a letter of support or additional information for the Awardee to apply for a further visa to remain in the study country beyond the initial visa end date.

## 13.7. Reductions

13.7.1. A variation to reduce the length of a Scholarship may be required for a number of reasons:

- i. An Awardee completing their study ahead of time (A finalisation variation may also be used for this purpose).
- ii. Conditions of the Scholarship not being met
- iii. In the case of articulated courses, the first course is completed but not at a sufficient level to undertake the second course.

13.7.2. {I} The Institution must advise the Sending Post and Receiving Post of a revised Scholarship end date via OASIS and advise the Awardee that DFAT will remove support for their visa 14 days after their revised Scholarship end date.

13.7.3. {I} The Institution will advise the Immigration Department in the study country that DFAT is withdrawing support for the Awardee’s visa 30 days after the end date of the Awardee’s Australian Awards Pacific Scholarship.

## 13.8. Entitlement variations

13.8.1. An entitlement variation is used to:

- i. Add courses (pre-course English or articulating courses)
- ii. Add entitlements (fieldwork, reunion airfare etc.)
- iii. Remove entitlements (reunion airfare etc.)
- iv. Edit dates for courses or the Scholarship, which in turn impacts on the value of entitlements
- v. Increase or decrease the value of entitlements.

13.8.2. Variation must be raised before the Scholarship end date or they will not be approved.



- 13.8.3. {S} If an entitlement variation is required before the Awardee departs for the study country, the Sending Post is responsible for entering the entitlement variation.
- 13.8.4. {S} A deferral variation must be raised before the Awardee arrives in the study country.
- 13.8.5. {S} All variations in OASIS must be processed as soon as possible.
- 13.8.6. {I} Institutions entering entitlement variations should provide details about why the variation is required to assist the Sending Post in its decision-making.
- 13.8.7. {I} Institutions must raise variations in OASIS as soon as possible to allow Posts sufficient time to process and seek approval.
- 13.8.8. {I} Entitlement variations for PhD, Master's by Research or Master's by Coursework with a mandatory fieldwork component should include an updated study plan with timeframes demonstrating that academic completion is likely in the revised time period requested in the variation.

## 13.9. Terminations

- 13.9.1. DFAT will terminate a Scholarship where an Awardee:
  - i. Does not make successful academic progress and remedial strategies have not been successful;
  - ii. Has infringed or failed to meet the conditions of the Scholarship;
  - iii. Is excluded by the Institution from the course or study units due to academic failure or from remaining at the Institution because of misconduct (as defined by the Institution);
  - iv. Has completed the maximum period of English language training available under the Scholarship and still has insufficient English language ability for entry to the academic program;
  - v. Is unable to continue a program due to serious illness or incapacity for medical/mental health reasons, and the Awardee does not voluntarily withdraw;
  - vi. Conducts themselves in a manner which is considered to have transgressed acceptable community standards in the study country;
  - vii. Applies for a different visa (other than the student visa/permit);
  - viii. Is found to have committed an act of fraud; and
  - ix. Is found guilty of a crime.
- 13.9.2. DFAT reserves the right to terminate a Scholarship without a supporting recommendation from the Institution where, in DFAT's view, the continued funding of the Awardee would be an inappropriate use of Australian Government funds.
- 13.9.3. In some cases, an Awardee may be offered the opportunity to downgrade, or withdraw from their Scholarship, before a termination is pursued.

- 13.9.4. {A} The Awardee will receive a letter of intent to terminate from DFAT (Suva Post in consultation with Sending Post) advising:
- i. Of the recommendation for their Scholarship to be terminated
  - ii. That the Awardee has 14 days from the date of the letter to provide a statement detailing the reasons why the Scholarship should not be terminated (the letter of appeal should be sent directly to the DFAT Delegate responsible in Suva Post and Sending Post)
  - iii. That if DFAT proceeds with the termination, the Awardee will no longer be eligible to hold a student visa/permit for the study country.
- 13.9.5. {A} If an Awardee does not appeal the termination, their AAPS will be terminated upon approval by DFAT Delegate responsible in Suva Post in consultation with Sending Post.
- 13.9.6. {A} If the Awardee appeals, DFAT (Suva Post in consultation with Sending Post) may:
- i. Reject the appeal, in which case DFAT’s decision is final
  - ii. Accept the appeal, in which case the Awardee may continue with their course of study but must liaise with RST at their Institution in relation to meeting any conditions advised by DFAT.
- 13.9.7. {A} Where DFAT (Suva Post in consultation with Sending Post) decides to terminate the Awardee’s Scholarship, the Awardee:
- i. Will receive a formal letter of termination to advise that the Scholarship has been terminated
  - ii. Must leave the study country and return to their home country within 14 days of their Scholarship termination.
- 13.9.8. {A} Awardees should be aware that if their Scholarship is terminated, this constitutes a breach of their visa conditions and Institutions must refer the Awardees details to the in the relevant authority in the study country for visa cancellation. If Awardees do not depart the study country within 14 days after their Scholarship is terminated, they will incur a debt to the Commonwealth for the total accrued cost of their Scholarship. Awardees will be required to submit a copy of their passports to Sending Post to ensure they have complied with this policy.
- 13.9.9. {A} Awardees should be aware that if their Scholarship is terminated, the contribution to living expenses ends five days after the termination of the Scholarship.
- 13.9.10. {I} The Institution must:
- i. Immediately advise the Sending Post and Receiving Post via OASIS if it becomes aware of any circumstances that may be grounds for termination, including those detailed in [subsection 13.9.1](#).
- 13.9.11. {I} If DFAT decides not to terminate the Awardee’s Scholarship, the Institution must:

- i. Liaise with DFAT about any conditions to be imposed on the continuation of the Awardee’s Scholarship
  - ii. Liaise with the Awardee about complying with any conditions on continuation of their Scholarship.
- 13.9.12. {I} If DFAT terminates the Scholarship, the Institution must assist the Awardee to make arrangements to return home within 14 days and arrange for the Awardee’s Contribution to Living Expenses to cease 5 days after the termination date stated in the final termination letter (see [subsection 13.9.7](#)).
- 13.9.13. {I} Institutions must refer the Awardees details for visa cancellation.
- 13.9.14. {S} Where DFAT decides there are grounds for termination, as outlined in [subsection 13.9.1](#), it will provide the Awardee with a letter of intent to terminate the Scholarship.
- 13.9.15. {S} If an appeal is received from the Awardee, the DFAT Delegate responsible in Suva Post in consultation with Sending Post will consider the appeal and either:
- i. Accept the appeal, in which case the DFAT Delegate responsible in the Sending Post must:
    - Consult with the Institution about whether conditions are to be imposed on continuation of the Scholarship to ensure satisfactory completion of the Awardee’s study program.
    - Advise the Awardee of the outcome in writing, including any conditions imposed on the continuation of their Scholarship
    - Provide copies of correspondence to the Awardee about his/her appeal to the RST at the relevant Institution and Receiving Post.
  - ii. Reject the appeal, in which case the DFAT Delegate responsible in Suva Post in consultation with Sending Post must:
    - Send a letter of termination to the Awardee
    - Provide a copy of the letter to the Institution, Receiving Post and the Department of Immigration
    - Instruct the Institution to advise the Department of Immigration that the Awardee’s Scholarship has been terminated and that DFAT no longer supports the Awardee holding a Study Permit.
- 13.9.16. {R} Once Sending Post provides a copy of the final termination letter, Receiving Post will finalise and process the termination on OASIS

## 14. Welfare Incidents

### 14.1. What is a Welfare Incident?

- 14.1.1. A welfare incident is any event or situation (not listed in [section 15.1.3](#)) that adversely affects, or has the potential to adversely affect, an Awardee's ability to successfully complete their Scholarship.
- 14.1.2. A range of situations may qualify as welfare incidents including:
- i. Any incident where a complaint is lodged, or an Awardee is otherwise accused, of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying;
  - ii. Any incident where an Awardee lodges a complaint or otherwise alleges they have been the victim of harassment, sexual harassment or bullying;
  - iii. Any time that an Awardee is diagnosed with a serious or chronic illness (including mental illness), or admitted to hospital in a non-emergency situation;
  - iv. Any time that an Awardee notifies that they are pregnant;
  - v. Any time an Awardee is referred for counselling;
  - vi. Any time an Awardee is the victim of crime overseas;
  - vii. Any time that an Awardee is un-contactable and has been absent from all classes for one full week without explanation;
  - viii. Any time an Awardee's accompanying family member in the study country is involved in (what would otherwise be) a critical incident;
  - ix. Any time that an Awardee notifies that a member of their family has died overseas; and
  - x. A natural disaster that occurs outside the study country and may affect an Awardee (i.e. in the home country of Awardees). Approaches for responding in these situations are outlined [Chapter 16](#).
- 14.1.3. If a member of the Awardee's family is involved in a critical or welfare incident, the Awardee is responsible for all associated costs and arrangements regarding the family member(s) involved in the incident.

### 14.2. DFAT Notification and Procedure for Welfare Incidents

- 14.2.1. Without exception, Institutions must notify the Sending Post by email copied to Receiving Post, as soon as possible within business hours when they become aware of any welfare incident that has the potential to affect the Awardees' ability to successfully complete their Scholarship. Institutions are required to provide only sufficient information to enable the Sending Post to be satisfied that appropriate action and supports have been put in place to ensure the welfare of the Awardee.
- 14.2.2. There is no exception to this requirement.

- 14.2.3. Notification must follow this process outlined in this section.
- 14.2.4. {I} The Institution must first update the OASIS journal with a record of the welfare incident.
- 14.2.5. {I} Journal notes must be clear, factual and compliant with all relevant Commonwealth legislation and regulations. Institutions should consider the privacy of the Awardee and their family and ensure that personal information, and in particular sensitive information as defined in section 6 of the Privacy Act 1988, is only included in journal notes to the extent it is reasonably necessary to adequately describe the welfare incident and action taken.
- 14.2.6. {I} Once the OASIS journal is updated, the Institution should also send an e-mail to the Receiving Post, bringing the incident to the attention of the Receiving Post.
- 14.2.7. {I} For any incident involving Awardees with disability, the Institution must copy the Disability Support Unit Coordinator at the Institution into all emails.
- 14.2.8. {I} E-mail notifications must have the following subject line: WELFARE INCIDENT – Awardee’s surname – Awardee’s OASIS number. (E.g.: WELFARE INCIDENT – JONES – ST0001234).
- 14.2.9. {I} Institutions are expected to notify the Sending Post but should include in their e-mail notifications to the Receiving Post, managing contractors or Case Managers (if applicable).
- 14.2.10. {I} Where an Institution’s first notification of a welfare incident comes from a Case Manager, the Institution must inform DFAT that they were advised of the incident by the Case Manager.

### 14.3. Principles for managing welfare incidents

- 14.3.1. DFAT’s management of welfare incidents is based on an early-warning approach that allows us to ensure appropriate support for Awardees facing health, welfare or academic issues.
- 14.3.2. This approach puts supporting Awardees first, but also acknowledges that DFAT ultimately bears the financial and reputational risk associated with an Awardee failing to complete their AAPS. The key to this approach is prompt notification of the key aspects of a welfare incident.
- 14.3.3. Awardees should be made aware that the capacity of DFAT and Institutions to support them in difficult times is limited by their own prompt disclosure of welfare incidents.
- 14.3.4. When deciding whether to report an incident and what information to provide, DFAT asks Institutions and managing contractors and Case Managers to consider whether a reasonable person would anticipate that a particular incident has the potential to affect an Awardee’s capacity to successfully complete their AAPS. If the answer is yes, then the incident should be reported.

## Privacy

- 14.3.5. DFAT respects Awardee’s privacy. However, in order to ensure they are properly supported in times of crisis, DFAT also requires the disclosure of welfare incidents.
- 14.3.6. Awardees agree, when they sign their AAPS contract, that Institutions, managing contractors and Case Managers can share personal information about them and their dependants with DFAT, including sensitive information as defined in the Privacy Act 1988. This enables Institutions, managing contractors and Case Managers to notify DFAT of welfare incidents to the extent that the welfare incident has the potential to affect the Awardee’s ability to successfully complete their Scholarship.
- 14.3.7. DFAT does not require full disclosure of all personal and sensitive details of a welfare incident. DFAT needs only enough information that is reasonably necessary to understand and assess any risk to the Awardee and to be confident that they are being appropriately supported. The purpose of the disclosure of information is to enable DFAT and others to properly manage welfare incidents affecting Awardees and their Scholarship conditions. DFAT will not use or disclose the information for any other purpose.

## 14.4. Welfare Incident – General Responsibilities

- 14.4.1. DFAT’s primary concern is the welfare of Awardees. DFAT expects all parties to respond to welfare incidents effectively, professionally, and in strict adherence to the policies and procedures outlined in this chapter.
- 14.4.2. Once reported, welfare incidents are managed on a case-by-case basis. However, there are some general procedures, outlined in this section, which must be followed for all welfare incidents.
- 14.4.3. {A} DFAT respects the privacy of all Awardees. However, in order to ensure that DFAT and Institutions can provide relevant support and assistance, DFAT recommends Awardees bring all welfare incidents to the attention of the RST if the welfare incident has the potential to affect the Awardee’s ability to successfully complete their Scholarship.
- 14.4.4. {A} DFAT also recommends that Awardees bring all critical and welfare incidents involving their family members to the attention of their RST, if the welfare incident has the potential to affect the Awardee’s ability to successfully complete their Scholarship.
- 14.4.5. {A} Awardees should be aware that they will not be penalised for reporting welfare incidents. Any information that may then be passed onto DFAT will only need to be information that is reasonably necessary for DFAT to understand and assess any risk to the Awardee and to be confident that they are being appropriately supported. DFAT will not use or disclose the information for any other purpose.

- 14.4.6. {I} Institutions are responsible for notifying DFAT of welfare incidents. In particular:
- i. RST must ensure that the Sending Post and Suva Post is notified of all welfare incidents as per processes and timelines outlined in [section 14.2](#).
  - ii. DFAT considers the RST to be the primary contact for all welfare incidents.
  - iii. DFAT expects Institutions to have appropriate protocols in place to ensure that RST are notified immediately should another area of the Institutions become aware of an issue before the RST. In such cases, Institutions must ensure that personal privacy concerns do not prevent RST, and through them DFAT, being made aware of the general details of welfare incidents.
  - iv. It is the responsibility of each Institution to ensure that an officer will be available to respond to any welfare incidents which occur when the RST Officers are away from the office.
- 14.4.7. {I} Management and Response:
- i. Work with the Awardee to establish a response or strategy to help them address the welfare incident and/or minimise the ongoing effect of the incident on their studies.
  - ii. Continue to monitor the welfare incident, keep up-to-date records including OASIS journal notes, and report regularly to DFAT.
  - iii. If necessary, intervene early with the Awardee to discuss options, to manage their study load during a difficult time such as altered study plans, tutoring or short-term Suspensions.
  - iv. In addition to these general procedures please see [sections 14.4 through 14.11](#) which outline the responsibilities of all parties in response to different types of welfare incidents.
- 14.4.8. {I} If a welfare incident becomes or leads to a critical incident, Institutions must escalate the incident immediately by following the notification and procedural requirements in [Chapter 15](#). If an incident is escalated, DFAT may request the Institution to provide additional information about the original welfare issues and how the Institution responded.
- 14.4.9. {S} Where a Sending Post is made aware of a welfare incident, by any party other than the RST Officer, they must inform the RST Officer and Suva Post as soon as possible within business hours.
- 14.4.10. {S} Once notified of a welfare incident the Sending Post may be requested to work with the Institution to develop a strategy to ensure the incident is managed appropriately.
- 14.4.11. {S} Managing contractors (either in the home country or overseas) have an obligation to ensure that the Scholarship programs they administer are managed effectively and efficiently. This includes responding appropriately to welfare incidents in accordance with the process outlined in this chapter.

14.4.12. {S} Where a managing contractor or Case Manger is made aware of a welfare incident, DFAT has an expectation that:

- i. Managing contractor or Case Manager must inform the relevant RST Officer and the Sending Post as soon as possible in business hours.
- ii. Case Managers may also notify their immediate supervisor, in addition to notifying the relevant RST Officer.
- iii. After the relevant RST Officer is notified the Managing Contractor or Case Manager should work with the RST Officer to develop a strategy to help the Awardee manage and respond to the welfare incident.

## 14.5. Conflict, Harassment and Bullying

- 14.5.1. During their time in the study country Awardees may experience interpersonal conflict with friends, family, colleagues or staff at their Institution. DFAT considers all serious incidents of conflict to be welfare incidents.
- 14.5.2. Similarly, all incidents of harassment and bullying, that involve an Awardee in any capacity, are also considered welfare incidents. This includes the lodging of complaints of harassment or bullying by or against any Awardee.
- 14.5.3. In the Scholarships context, harassment and bullying may be described as repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards an Awardee, or a group of Awardees, that creates a risk to physical or mental health, safety and well-being. It includes behaviour (generally a pattern of behaviour) that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates another Awardee. Harassment and bullying could be sexual in nature, could be based on gender, race, religion or disability or could be unconnected to any particular characteristic of an individual.
- 14.5.4. Further information about bullying and harassment, including information on strategies to deal with bullying and harassment, is available on the Australian Human Rights Commission's website at: [Violence, Harassment and Bullying | Australian Human Rights Commission](#)
- 14.5.5. Management of bullying and harassment that involves Awardees (in any capacity) will be based on the severity of the incident.
- 14.5.6. In the event that an Awardee is involved (in any capacity) in a serious interpersonal conflict, harassment, bullying or complaints, DFAT has the following expectations:
- 14.5.7. {A} Awardees are expected to act respectfully, treat others with dignity and avoid behaviours that could be considered threatening or harassing. DFAT has an expectation that, as responsible adults, Awardees have the capacity to mediate any minor interpersonal conflict they might experience, e.g. minor disputes within shared accommodation.



14.5.8. {A} However, Awardees are not expected to remain silent if they are being made to feel uncomfortable or unsafe, and should report to their RST Officer as soon as possible if:

- i. They are being made to feel threatened or unsafe
- ii. They are experiencing prolonged or repeated harassment or bullying, or
- iii. They feel they are being treated unfairly and their own efforts to resolve the matter have been unsuccessful.

14.5.9. {I} Institutions must:

- i. Ensure the safety and wellbeing of all Awardees and, when possible, any accompanying family members;
- ii. Facilitate the provision of support to the Awardee and, when possible, any accompanying family members. Support may include access to counselling services; and
- iii. Manage the incident as per the Institution's standard conflict resolution and bullying and harassment policies.

## 14.6. Health Issues and Scheduled Hospitalisations

14.6.1. Awardees may experience physical or mental health problems whilst they are on Scholarship. Physical and mental health issues can significantly affect an Awardee's ability to concentrate, focus, organise themselves and keep on track with their studies.

14.6.2. Minor health problems are managed by the Awardee.

14.6.3. More serious or chronic health problems (including scheduled tests or treatments in a hospital) will constitute welfare incidents and will impose responsibilities on an Institution.

14.6.4. Because of the potential for complications and long-term recovery periods which may affect an Awardee's ability to complete their Scholarship, DFAT strongly recommends that Awardees do not undergo elective surgery whilst on-Scholarship in the study country. DFAT will not approve a Suspension or extension for an Awardee who has chosen to undergo elective surgery in the study country, nor will DFAT provide any Contribution to Living Expenses for Awardees who are unable to study for extended periods while recovering from elective surgery.

14.6.5. Institutions are to report all serious or chronic health problems as early as possible. Where details are not confirmed (for example if an Awardee is waiting for test results) notification should not be delayed. RST Officers can include in their notification an outline of what information is not yet available. The earlier DFAT is notified the more likely it is that the Awardee will be appropriately supported.

14.6.6. If an Awardee experiences a change in their health, DFAT has the following expectations:

- 14.6.7. {A} Awardees are to monitor their own health and to manage any minor health problems themselves.
- 14.6.8. {A} However, Awardees should report to their RST Officer as soon as possible if:
- i. They have questions about their medical cover;
  - ii. They are unsure where or how to access medical services;
  - iii. They are required to have medical tests which require admission to hospital, including day procedures;
  - iv. They are diagnosed with a serious condition or a chronic illness;
  - v. They become pregnant and it may affect their study program; and
  - vi. They are made aware that they will have to attend hospital for treatment in the near future.
- 14.6.9. {A} Awardees who suspend their Scholarship and return home on medical grounds must stay in contact with DFAT and must seek prior approval from DFAT and their Institution before returning to the study country.
- 14.6.10. {I} Institutions must:
- i. Ensure all Awardees are aware of the nearest medical and counselling facilities, either on or close to campus, and how to access those facilities;
  - ii. Ensure Awardees are aware of other health and wellbeing facilities and services, such as the Institution's on-campus health and fitness centre or local remedial therapy practices; and
  - iii. Notify DFAT, as per the procedures outlined in [section 14.2](#), as soon as they are informed that an Awardee is experiencing a serious or chronic health issue or requires hospitalisation.

### Long term illness

- 14.6.11. If an Awardee experiences serious or chronic health problems and is unable to study or is hospitalised, DFAT will continue to provide Contribution to living expenses payments for six weeks.
- 14.6.12. Beyond this six-week period Awardees who are unable to study due to serious or chronic health problems should suspend their AAPS until they have recovered see [section 13.4](#)). This does not apply to Awardees who have undergone elective surgery in the study country, see [subsection 14.6.4](#) above.

### Medical costs

- 14.6.13. All Awardees are provided with basic medical cover (see [section 10.7](#)) to meet their basic medical costs while on Scholarship.

- 14.6.14. However, medical cover differs amongst Institutions and may not cover all medical expenses incurred by Awardees during their Scholarship period, coverage of pre-existing conditions is at the discretion of the provider.
- 14.6.15. Medical cover does not cover medical costs of an Awardee while they are travelling outside of the study country – Awardees must arrange their own travel insurance for that travel.
- 14.6.16. Awardees are liable for any additional medical costs not covered by the medical cover.
- 14.6.17. If an Awardee or their dependants are unable to meet their medical expenses in the study country, DFAT may consider suspending their Scholarship before requiring them to return home to recover. In assessing whether an Awardee should be suspended DFAT will consider whether, on balance, the cost of their medical expenses is greater than the cost of returning home.

## 14.7. Death of an Awardee’s family member

- 14.7.1. DFAT does not provide any form of financial assistance to Awardees in the event that a family member dies either in the study country or overseas.
- 14.7.2. However, DFAT understands that the death of a family member can be a traumatic event that may affect an Awardee’s capacity to successfully complete their studies.
- 14.7.3. If required, the Sending Post may facilitate the provision of support to the Awardee in the event that a family member accompanying the Awardee dies in the study country. Any support provided by the Sending Post will be entirely at their discretion.
- 14.7.4. In the event that an Awardee’s family member dies the following additional responsibilities apply.
- 14.7.5. {I} Institutions must facilitate the provision of support to the Awardee and, when possible, any accompanying family members. Support may include access to counselling services.
- 14.7.6. {I} Sending Post may approve an Awardee’s use of a Reunion Airfare entitlement in advance if the Awardee needs to return home for the funeral of a family member. Sending Post must approve the travel and be notified in advance of an Awardee’s departure date.
- 14.7.7. {I} The use of the Reunion Airfare entitlement should be noted in the OASIS journal.

## 14.8. Pregnancy

- 14.8.1. In order to maximise Awardees’ chances of successfully completing their AAPS, DFAT strongly recommends that pregnant Awardees defer or suspend their award before resuming their studies in the study country after the birth of their child (see [sections 6.2](#) and [13.4](#)).

- 14.8.2. Deferral or Suspension allows Awardees time to recover, to put in place any necessary adjustments or care arrangements, and to organise a visa for their dependants if required.
- 14.8.3. If a pregnant Awardee does not defer or suspend, DFAT will not provide any financial assistance beyond the standard Scholarship entitlements, or after the Scholarship end date. This includes:
- i. On-Scholarship Awardees;
  - ii. Completing Awardees; and
  - iii. Awardees waiting to give birth and Awardees waiting for their child to obtain a visa.
- 14.8.4. {A} On-Scholarship Awardees are encouraged to:
- i. Notify their RST Officers of their pregnancy;
  - ii. Consider suspending their AAPS before resuming their studies in the study country after the birth of their child; and
  - iii. Keep their RST Officers apprised of their condition.
- 14.8.5. {I} Institutions must ensure that all Awardees are made aware of the nearest medical and counselling facilities, either on or close to campus, and how to access those facilities.
- 14.8.6. {I} Institutions may approve an Awardee’s use of a Reunion Airfare entitlement in advance (if the Awardee is entitled to the Reunion airfare) if the Awardee wishes to suspend and return home in order to give birth. Sending Post must be notified in advance of an Awardee’s departure date.
- 14.8.7. {I} The use of the Reunion Airfare entitlement for this purpose should be noted in the OASIS journal. A medical certificate must be cited before an Institution approves the use of Reunion Airfare entitlement in this way.

## 14.9. Referral to Counselling Services

- 14.9.1. Undertaking a Scholarship in another country can present new challenges, which can be stressful for Awardees, especially in the initial months. Awardees may be referred to counselling services to help them adjust to life in the study country and to the demands of its Institutions.
- 14.9.2. All referrals to counselling services should be considered welfare incidents and should be dealt with in accordance with the general notification and procedural requirements outlined in [sections 14.2](#) and [14.4](#).

## 14.10. Victim of Crime Overseas

- 14.10.1. Where an Awardee is the victim of crime whilst on-Scholarship but overseas (e.g. on holiday or doing fieldwork) it is considered a welfare incident.

- 14.10.2. {A} In addition to reporting the offence to relevant local authorities, DFAT advises all Awardees to inform the Sending Post.
- 14.10.3. {A} Awardees are responsible for organising their own travel insurance for travel outside of the study country.
- 14.10.4. {I} When the Awardee returns to the study country, Institutions must meet with the Awardee to determine if they require access to counselling services.
- 14.10.5. {S} Sending Post must notify the Receiving Post, Suva Post and the relevant Institution as per the standard procedure outlined in [section 14.2](#).
- 14.10.6. {S} If appropriate, the Sending Post may facilitate the provision of support to the Awardee in order to enable them to return to their studies in the study country.
- 14.10.7. {S} Awardees will not be entitled to financial compensation from DFAT if they are victims of crime overseas. Any support provided by the Sending Post will be entirely at their discretion.

## 14.11. Absent Awardee

- 14.11.1. If an Awardee has been reported to the RST Officer as not attending classes for one week and all attempts by the Institution to contact the Awardee have failed, this is a welfare issue.

- 14.11.2. {R} The Receiving Post will:

- i. Work with the Institution to locate the Awardee and establish their wellbeing
- ii. Work with the Institution and Sending Post to recommend a suitable course of action based on the Awardee's situation and wellbeing
- iii. Notify the necessary authorities (including the Department of Immigration in the study country) if the Awardee cannot be located.

## 15. Critical incidents

### 15.1. What is a critical incident?

- 15.1.1. A 'critical incident' is an event or situation happens to an Awardee while they are on-Scholarship that adversely affects, or has the potential to adversely affect, an Awardee's ability to successfully complete their Scholarship.
- 15.1.2. DFAT's primary concern with any critical incident is the welfare of Awardees. DFAT expects all parties to respond to critical incidents effectively, professionally, and in strict adherence to the policies and procedures outlined in this chapter.
- 15.1.3. The following events or situations are always critical incidents:
- i. Any suspected breach of the study country's laws by an Awardee, which results in the Awardee being questioned, detained or charged with any criminal offence;
  - ii. Any time that an Awardee is the victim of a crime in the study country;
  - iii. Any incidence of domestic violence involving an Awardee, either as a victim or a perpetrator;
  - iv. Any time that an Awardee is admitted to hospital in an emergency and is in a serious condition. For non-serious conditions that may include hospital admission, please refer to Welfare Incident policy (see [Chapter 14](#)); and
  - v. The death of an Awardee while they are on-Scholarship, in the study country or overseas.
- 15.1.4. This chapter outlines the notification procedures for critical incidents, the roles and responsibilities of all parties and the response and management processes for all critical incidents.
- 15.1.5. This chapter delineates some responsibilities between Sending Post, managing contractors and Case Managers because of the sensitive nature of critical incidents. However, Sending Posts have overarching responsibility for ensuring compliance with their requirements in this chapter.
- 15.1.6. A welfare incident is any other event or situation (not listed in [subsection 15.1.3](#)) that adversely affects, or has the potential to adversely effect, an Awardee while they are on-Scholarship. Welfare incidents are covered in [Chapter 14](#).  
Disasters in the study country are outlined in [Chapter 16](#) of this document.

## 15.2. Role of Regional Scholarships Team (RST) Officers

- 15.2.1. {} It is expected that notifications of critical incidents will generally be made by Institutions' RST Officers.
- i. Institutions should have appropriate protocols in place to ensure that RST Officers are notified immediately should another area of the Institution become aware of an issue before the RST Officer.
- 15.2.2. {} It is the responsibility of each Institution to ensure that an officer will be available to respond to any critical incidents which occur when the RST Officers are away from the office.
- 15.2.3. {} RST Officers must ensure that the Receiving Post and Sending Post are notified of every critical incident immediately as per the processes in [section 15.5](#).
- 15.2.4. {} For any incident involving Awardees with disability, the Institution must copy the Disability Support Unit Coordinator into all emails.
- 15.2.5. {} DFAT considers the RST Officer to be the primary contact for all critical incidents and expects Institutions to have appropriate protocols in place to ensure that RST Officers are notified immediately should another area of the Institutions become aware of an issue before the RST Officer. In such cases, Institutions must ensure that personal privacy concerns do not prevent the RST Officer, and through them DFAT, being made aware of critical incidents.
- 15.2.6. {} Institutions will have regard to the impact of the critical incident on the wider student community and manage any negative repercussions, including through social media. RST Officers should have a communication strategy in place to identify social media allies and manage stakeholders among the wider community.

## 15.3. Notification of critical incidents

- 15.3.1. {} The Receiving Post must be notified immediately when Institutions become aware of a critical incident that adversely affects, or has the potential to adversely affect, an Awardee's ability to successfully complete their Scholarship including out of hours, on weekends and on public holidays. Email [australiaawardspacific@dfat.gov.au](mailto:australiaawardspacific@dfat.gov.au)
- i. There is no exception to this requirement.
- 15.3.2. {} During business hours, notification should be by a phone call to the Receiving Post followed by an e-mail that clarifies all the relevant information sent to [australiaawardspacific@dfat.gov.au](mailto:australiaawardspacific@dfat.gov.au)

- 15.3.3. {I} All email notifications must have the following subject line: CRITICAL INCIDENT – Awardee’s surname – Awardee’s OASIS Number. (E.g.: CRITICAL INCIDENT – JONES – ST0001234).
- 15.3.4. {I} Out of office hours notification must be by email which provides all the relevant information.
- 15.3.5. {I} Out of office email notifications will receive an out of office message with an emergency contact phone number for the Suva Post. At the RST’s discretion, they must elect to also call the emergency number, for instance, where an immediate response from DFAT is necessary.
- 15.3.6. {I} Out of office hours email notifications should also include an out of hours contact phone number for the RST Officer or relevant contact person at an Institution. The out-of-hours contact phone numbers should also be found on the OASIS Post Contact list.
- 15.3.7. {I} Notification should include only sufficient detail about the Awardee and the incident to enable DFAT to assess and manage the Awardee and to ensure appropriate support is in place. Information gaps should be also noted. See [subsections 15.5.2](#) and [15.5.3](#) for more information on the expected content of notifications.
- 15.3.8. {I} Institutions are to notify the Receiving Post and Sending Post only and may not notify Managing Contractors or Case Managers. It is the responsibility of the Sending Post to notify all other parties.
- 15.3.9. {I} Where an Institution’s first notification of a critical incident comes from a Case Manager, the Institution must inform DFAT that they were advised of the incident by the Case Manager.
- 15.3.10. {I} In such cases, the Institution may copy in the Case Manager when they provide e-mail notification to Posts. If copied in the Case Manager must not forward this e-mail on to any other party.
- 15.3.11. {S} Managing Contractors and Case Managers in the study country have an obligation to ensure that the Scholarship Programs they administer are managed effectively and efficiently. This includes responding appropriately to critical incidents and strictly complying with the processes outlined in this Chapter.
- 15.3.12. {S} Receiving Post and Sending Post should have appropriate protocols in place to ensure that RST Officers are notified immediately should they become aware of an issue before the RST Officer is aware. In such cases, Sending Post must ensure that personal privacy concerns do not prevent RST Officer and Suva Post/Receiving Post being notified of a critical incident that has the potential to affect the ability of the Awardee to successfully complete their Scholarship.
- 15.3.13. {S} Where a Managing Contractor or Case Manager becomes aware of a critical incident, they must immediately inform the relevant RST Officer.
- 15.3.14. {S} After the relevant RST Officer is notified the Managing Contractor or Case Manager must not take any further action until instructed by DFAT.



- 15.3.15. {S} Where a managing contractor or Case Manager cannot contact the RST Officer, they should contact the Receiving Post immediately as per the processes in [subsections 15.3.1 – 15.3.7](#).
- 15.3.16. {S} Case Managers may notify their immediate supervisor in the study country, in addition to notifying the relevant RST Officer.
- 15.3.17. {S} Posts are responsible for ensuring that Managing Contractors and sub-contractors, including Case Managers are aware of their responsibilities under this handbook.
- 15.3.18. {A} An Awardee must immediately contact their RST Officer if they are involved in a critical incident, or if they become aware of a critical incident involving another Awardee.
- 15.3.19. {A} Accompanied Awardees must ensure their family members understand that they should contact the Awardee’s RST Officer immediately if the Awardee is involved in a critical incident and unable to make contact themselves.
- 15.3.20. {R} If contacted, the Receiving Post will provide instructions to the Managing Contractor or Case Manager on responding to the critical incident.
- 15.3.21. {R} The right to notify the Sending Post is reserved for DFAT. The Receiving Post will manage, at their discretion, all notification of and communication
- i. Within DFAT
  - ii. With ministers
  - iii. With any relevant Managing Contractors and Case Managers
  - iv. With relevant Whole-of-Government parties, including as appropriate the Department of Immigration in the study country and
  - v. With relevant diplomatic missions, including Consulates and High Commissions.

## 15.4. Principles for managing critical incidents

- 15.4.1. The Receiving Post will act as the primary liaison between all relevant parties in the course of managing and responding to a critical incident.
- 15.4.2. Responses to all critical incidents involving Awardees are based on the following principles:
- i. Support for the Awardee: This may include medical, emotional, legal or financial support for the Awardee and/or their family members
  - ii. Protection of privacy: The privacy of the Awardee should be respected. Only information that is reasonably relevant to supporting and managing the Awardee should be collected, used or disclosed; and
  - iii. Rule of Law: Consistency with the legal framework of the relevant study country’s jurisdiction. All parties will endeavour to support the Awardee and their family to understand the operation of laws.

## Privacy

- 15.4.3. DFAT respects Awardees' privacy. However, in order to ensure they are properly supported in times of crisis, DFAT also requires the disclosure of critical incidents to the extent that the critical incident has the potential to affect the Awardee's ability to successfully complete their Scholarship.
- 15.4.4. Awardees agree, when they sign their AAPS contract, that Institutions, Managing Contractors and Case Managers can share personal information about them and their dependants with DFAT, including sensitive information as defined in the Privacy Act 1988. This enables Institutions, managing contractors and case managers to notify DFAT of critical incidents. DFAT will not use or disclose the information for any other purpose.
- 15.4.5. DFAT does not require full disclosure of all personal and sensitive details of a critical incident. DFAT needs only enough information to understand and assess the risk to the Awardee and to be confident that they are being appropriately supported. The purpose of the disclosure of information is to enable DFAT and others to properly manage critical incidents affecting Awardees and their Scholarship conditions.

## Domestic and Gender Violence

- 15.4.6. DFAT takes seriously all incidents of domestic and gender violence.
  - i. Awardees should be aware that domestic and gender violence constitutes an offence under most AAPS countries' law. This may be different to the legal framework in their home country.
  - ii. Any incidence of domestic or gender violence involving an Awardee, either as a victim or a perpetrator, is a critical incident.
  - iii. Any such incident should be dealt with sensitively and appropriately and in adherence with the procedural requirements outlined in this chapter.

## 15.5. Critical incident response and management

- 15.5.1. Critical incidents are managed on a case-by-case basis. However, there are some general procedures, outlined in this section, which must be followed for all critical incidents.

15.5.2. {I} The Institution should confirm key details when they notify DFAT of a critical incident. Ideally this should include:

- i. Who the Awardee is;
- ii. What happened, where and when;
- iii. The Awardee's current situation;
- iv. What support has already been provided by the Institution;

- v. Confirmation of whether or not the Awardee is presently accompanied in the study country, and the current situation of any accompanying family members; and
- vi. Known next steps.

- 15.5.3. {I} Notification should not be delayed while Institutions seek to fill information gaps. If key details are unclear or awaiting confirmation, this should be highlighted as part of notification.
- 15.5.4. {I} After notification, record the critical incident as a journal note in the Awardee's OASIS record.
- i. The journal note should be entered immediately after notifying DFAT of the incident and should record what time DFAT was notified.
  - ii. Journal notes must be clear, factual and compliant with all relevant country's or Commonwealth legislation and regulations. Institutions should consider the privacy of the Awardee and their family and ensure that personal information, and in particular sensitive information as defined in section 6 of the *Privacy Act 1988*, is only included in journal notes to the extent it is reasonably necessary to adequately describe the critical incident.
  - iii. Journal notes should be updated regularly until the critical incident is resolved.
- 15.5.5. {I} After updating OASIS, create and maintain a critical incident report.
- i. This report must be regularly updated until the incident is formally closed.
  - ii. The Institution must be prepared to provide the report to DFAT at short notice
  - iii. This report should be resubmitted to DFAT every time it is updated by the Institution.
- 15.5.6. {I} Once an incident is formally closed the Institution must ensure the report is complete and submit this final version to the Receiving Post. A template report is provided in [Appendix B](#) of the Policy Handbook.
- 15.5.7. {I} A copy of all critical incident reports should be kept on file by the Institution.
- 15.5.8. {I} Ongoing, Institution must work closely with DFAT to manage and respond to the critical incident.
- 15.5.9. {I} Institutions will have regard to the impact of the critical incident on the wider student community and manage any negative repercussion, including through social media.
- 15.5.10. In addition to these general procedures, please see [sections 15.6 - 15.8](#) which outline the responsibilities of all parties in response to different types of critical incidents.

DFAT expects that all parties will comply with both the general procedures outlined above and the incident-specific processes outlined below.

## 15.6. Awardees who are victims of or charged with a crime in the study country

- 15.6.1. {I} In their immediate response, Institutions shall:
- i. Confirm the wellbeing, safety and whereabouts of the Awardee and any accompanying family members;
  - ii. Ensure that the Awardee and their accompanying family members are provided with information about access to medical services, counselling and other support services as required;
  - iii. Ensure that the Awardee is offered information regarding legal representation. This may be by the Institution itself or by third party such as staff at a University Law School, a pro-bono legal service, or Legal Aid;
  - iv. Acknowledge that DFAT does not fund legal assistance;
  - v. Facilitate the provision of any necessary additional support to the Awardee or their family (where possible) as directed by Sending Post; and
  - vi. Consider and action the appropriate ongoing management procedures for this incident (see [subsections 15.6.3 – 15.6.9](#)).
- 15.6.2. {I} Institutions must keep DFAT informed of the dates and the outcomes of any court hearings. Including where an Awardee is required to appear as a witness.
- 15.6.3. If an Awardee is detained for more than six weeks the Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) will be suspended.
- i. This involves the Awardee’s Scholarship being suspended and could have implications for their student visa/permit.
- 15.6.4. Awardees charged with an offence but released on bail pending a trial or hearing may continue their Scholarship, at DFAT’s discretion.
- 15.6.5. DFAT will review the status of their Scholarship once there is an outcome to the charges.
- 15.6.6. Awardees found guilty of a criminal offence in the study country will have their Scholarship terminated.
- 15.6.7. Awardees who are victims of crime may require additional support, which may include
- i. Providing the Awardee referrals for counselling services if required
  - ii. Liaising with the Receiving Post if any other support is considered appropriate; and;

- iii. If necessary, discussing options such as altered study plans, tutoring or short-term Suspensions to allow the Awardee to successfully manage their study load during a difficult time.

15.6.8. Awardees will not be entitled to financial compensation from DFAT if they are victims of crime in the study country.

15.6.9. Awardees who are charged with a criminal offence may also require support, particularly to ensure a successful completion of their award if they are not found guilty of an offence.

## 15.7. Unexpected or emergency hospitalisation of an Awardee

15.7.1. Awardees may experience physical or mental health problems whilst they are on Scholarship.

15.7.2. More serious or chronic health problems and planned admissions to hospital are welfare incidents (see [Chapter 14](#)).

15.7.3. Any instance where an Awardee is admitted to hospital unexpectedly or in an emergency is a critical incident. This includes for example any time that:

- i. An Awardee is injured and taken to hospital;
- ii. An Awardee is taken to hospital without a referral;
- iii. An Awardee is taken to hospital because of an unexpected health emergency, and
- iv. An Awardee has a pre-existing condition (or was already scheduled to attend hospital for tests or treatment) but their health condition changes, and they are admitted to hospital earlier or unexpectedly.

15.7.4. {I} Where an Awardee is admitted to hospital unexpectedly or in an emergency, Institutions should:

- i. Monitor the Awardee's health and progress closely;
- ii. Ensure the treating doctor is aware of the limitations of the Awardee's medical cover and if any exclusion clauses apply;
- iii. Ensure that the Awardee is aware of any limitations of the medical cover, the Awardee's responsibilities for any medical or hospital costs that are not covered and the cessation of their CLE after six weeks of hospitalisation; and
- iv. Provide regular updates to DFAT by updating and re-submitting the critical incident report as often as required.

15.7.5. {S} Sending Post may be required to:

- i. Liaise with the Awardee's next of kin in-country
- ii. Collect and provide to Suva Post additional medical history from the Awardee's home.

15.7.6. {I} Where an Awardee is seriously ill or hospitalised and is unable to study for an extended period of time, the Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) must be ceased by the Institution after six weeks.

- i. This involves the Awardee's Scholarship being suspended and has implications for their Study permit/Student visa and their ability to remain in the study country.

15.7.7. {I} Where an Awardee is likely to be hospitalised for six or more weeks, Institutions must:

- i. Notify DFAT as soon as possible in advance of the six-week deadline that an Awardee is likely to be unfit to return to their studies;
- ii. Work with DFAT to make a determination regarding whether the Scholarship should be suspended or terminated on the grounds of illness or incapacity;
- iii. Action the Suspension or termination of the Scholarship as appropriate; and
- iv. Provide the Awardee with assistance to return home and, if possible, return to their studies once their health has improved (if possible). See [section 17.5](#) for more detail.

15.7.8. {A} AAPS medical cover does not cover all conditions. Awardees should check for limitations. Awardees are responsible for any medical costs incurred that are not covered by the medical cover.

15.7.9. {A} Where an Awardee is seriously ill or hospitalised and is unable to study for an extended period of time, the Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) must be ceased by the Institution after six weeks. The Awardee will be responsible for all living expenses once the CLE ceases.

15.7.10. {S} Sending Post may be required to provide the Awardee with assistance to return home and, if possible, return to their studies once their health has improved (if possible). See [section 17.5](#) for more detail.

## 15.8. Death of an Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship Awardee

15.8.1. DFAT is deeply saddened by the death of any Awardee.

15.8.2. If an Awardee passes away, in the study country or overseas, DFAT expects all parties to demonstrate appropriate cultural sensitivity, act with discretion and professionalism, and strictly comply with the additional responsibilities outlined in this section.

15.8.3. {I} Where an Awardee is accompanied, Institutions must:

- i. Make immediate contact with the accompanying family members and inform the Suva Post and Sending Post;
- ii. If the accompanying family members are not in the study country at the time, confirm their whereabouts if possible;

iii. Facilitate the provision of support to accompanying family members. Support may include access to counselling services, financial support or help organising travel home;

iv. Ascertain the accompanying family's wishes for dealing with the body and inform the Sending Post and Suva Post; and

v. Being sensitive to the Awardee's cultural traditions, implement the accompanying family's wishes.

15.8.4. {I} Where the Awardee was unaccompanied, Institutions should:

i. Confirm this for the Sending Post and Receiving Post;

ii. Implement the wishes of the Awardee's next of kin as communicated to the Institution by Sending Post;

iii. If required, liaise with the Police and/or hospital about the circumstances of the death; and

iv. This information must be passed on to the Sending Post and Suva Post as it is received by the Institution.

15.8.5. {I} Institutions will not contact the relevant High Commission or Consulate directly in response to the death of an Awardee without first informing Suva Post and Sending Post, who will facilitate any such discussions.

15.8.6. {I} If repatriation of the Awardee's remains is required, Institutions must, in consultation with the Sending Post and Suva Post:

i. Seek advice from the Diplomatic/Consular representative concerning the requirements for returning the body to the Awardee's home country; and

ii. Enquire whether the Diplomatic/Consular representatives have a preferred provider of funeral and repatriation services and, if so, make the necessary arrangements with that provider if at all possible.

15.8.7. {I} Institutions may be instructed by the family to make funeral arrangement within the study country.

i. At their discretion, and in accordance with the wishes of any accompanying family members, pass details of funeral arrangements on to relevant Awardees, Institution staff and students, and/or community organisations if appropriate.

ii. This information should not be made public without first confirming with both the Awardee's next of kin and both Suva Post and Sending Post.

15.8.8. {I} If costs are going to be incurred in arranging repatriation of remains or funeral services in the study country, Institutions must:

i. Inform Suva Post and Sending Post in writing, in advance, of all arrangements and costs;

ii. Monitor costs and ensure that all costs being incurred are reasonable and appropriate;

- iii. Liaise with Suva Post and Sending Post as costs are incurred; and
- iv. Submit separate invoices (outside of OASIS) to Suva Post and Sending Post for approved costs.

15.8.9. {I} As necessary, Institutions will make arrangements for the Awardee's possessions, including:

- i. Placing the personal effects of the deceased Awardee in the hands of the Public Trustee while awaiting instruction from the next of kin
- ii. Facilitating access to Awardee's bank account for the next of kin.

15.8.10. {S} As requested Suva Post and Sending Post may be required to:

- i. Liaise with and provide support to next of kin in-country;
- ii. If required, pass on the next of kin's wishes to Suva Post;
- iii. Assist with in-country arrangements as appropriate; and
- iv. Liaise with the Partner Government or nominating authority where relevant.

15.8.11. {R} The Receiving Post will:

- i. Provide all reasonable support to accompanying family in the study country;
- ii. Notify and liaise with the relevant Sending Post, Suva Post, Managing Contractor and Diplomatic/Consular representatives;
- iii. Pass on any information required by the Institution to carry out its obligations;
- iv. Reimburse pre-approved associated costs, unless an insurance claim is pending following an accident;
- v. In consultation with Suva Post and Sending Post, prepare a letter of condolence from DFAT to the next of kin; and
- vi. Communicate with Ministers and other government departments where necessary



## 16. Disasters

### 16.1. Types of disasters

16.1.1. Disasters may include, but are not limited to:

- i. Floods
- ii. Cyclones or other significant weather events
- iii. Bushfires
- iv. Earthquakes
- v. Volcanoes
- vi. Tsunamis

### 16.2. Disasters – Critical Incidents

16.2.1. Any natural disaster in the study country that affects Awardees should be considered a critical incident.

### 16.3. Disasters – Welfare Incidents

16.3.1. Any natural disaster in the home country or region of Awardees should be considered a welfare incident.

16.3.2. When a natural disaster occurs, the responsibilities of Awardees, Institutions and DFAT are different to other welfare or critical incidents. The appropriate processes are outlined in this chapter.

### 16.4. Disasters in the Study Country

16.4.1. Any natural disaster in the study country that affects Awardees should be considered a critical incident.

16.4.2. If a natural disaster affects, or is predicted to affect, any campus that is hosting Awardees the following responsibilities apply.

16.4.3. {A} All affected Awardees must make contact with their RST Officer as soon as possible.

16.4.4. {I} Institutions must:

- i. Consider the wellbeing of Awardees and any accompanying family members as paramount. This includes ensuring affected individuals:
  - Have safe and secure accommodation;
  - Have access to information regarding emergency relief funding where appropriate/available;
  - Have access to counselling services; and

- Are able to return to their studies with minimum disruption.
  - ii. Notify Suva Post and Sending Post immediately when it becomes aware of a natural disaster
  - iii. Prepare a group critical incident report to DFAT noting:
    - The number of affected Awardees;
    - The status (e.g. health, wellbeing and location) of all Awardees;
    - The anticipated disruption to the academic year;
    - If there is prior warning of a natural disaster, what steps are being taken to ensure the welfare of affected Awardees; and
    - If at all possible, the report template included at [Appendix B](#) should be used.
  - iv. Continue to monitor the situation, keep up-to-date records of the natural disaster and its implications for Awardees; and
  - v. Report regularly to the Sending Post.
- 16.4.5. {I} If there is prior warning of a natural disaster, notification should be by phone and email and should follow the standard procedure for notification of any critical incident as outlined in [section 15.3](#) of this document.
- 16.4.6. {I} If there is no prior warning and the natural disaster affects electricity or telecommunications infrastructure, DFAT will accept non-standard notification. However, DFAT does expect all affected Institutions to make contact with the Sending Post as soon as possible.

## 16.5. Disasters in an Awardee’s home country

- 16.5.1. Any natural disaster in an Awardee’s home country or region should be considered a welfare incident.
- 16.5.2. If a natural disaster affects, or is predicted to affect, an Awardee’s home country or region the following responsibilities apply.
- 16.5.3. {A} If you are conducting fieldwork outside the study country in an area that experiences a natural disaster please contact your RST immediately.
- 16.5.4. {A} If you are concerned about the welfare of friends and family in your home country DFAT advises you to speak to your RST Officer.
- 16.5.5. {A} If you are scheduled to return to your home country within 14 days of a disaster please contact your RST Officer to confirm your travel arrangements.
- 16.5.6. {I} If any Awardees are conducting fieldwork outside the study country in an area that experiences a natural disaster, DFAT should be notified as per the processes outlined in [section 14.2](#).
- 16.5.7. {I} If an Awardee reports to their RST Officer concerns about disasters overseas, DFAT should be notified as per the processes outlined in [section 14.2](#).

- 16.5.8. {I} Facilitate the provision of support to any affected Awardees and any accompanying family members (where possible).
- 16.5.9. {I} Support may include access to counselling services.
- 16.5.10. {I} If necessary, intervene early with the Awardee and discuss options such as altered study plans, tutoring or short-term Suspensions to allow the Awardee to successfully manage their study load during a difficult time.
- 16.5.11. {I} If an Awardee is due to return to their home country within 14 days of a natural disaster contact Suva Post and Sending Post to confirm it is safe for the Awardee to return.
- 16.5.12. {I} If necessary, following consultation with DFAT, Institutions may approve an Awardee's use of a Reunion Airfare entitlement in advance to enable the Awardee to return home on compassionate grounds for a short period of time.
- 16.5.13. {I} The use of the Reunion Airfare entitlement for this purpose should be noted in the OASIS journal.
- 16.5.14. {I} The Awardee and Institution will need to agree on the period of absence. In some cases, it may be more appropriate for the Institution to suspend the Scholarship.
- 16.5.15. {S} If travel is restricted or considered unsafe the Sending Post should contact Suva Post and the Receiving Post as soon as possible so that this information can be passed on to Awardees in the study country.
- 16.5.16. {R} If advised by the Receiving Post that travel is restricted or considered unsafe for Awardees to return, pass this information on to all relevant Institutions.

## 17. Return home

### 17.1. Finalisation of studies

- 17.1.1. The finalisation of studies occurs on the Scholarship end date.
- 17.1.2. The end date of a Scholarship is determined by the release date of the final results or the day the Awardee leaves the country, whichever comes first.
- 17.1.3. The Scholarship end date is defined differently for coursework and research Awardees:
  - i. Coursework Awardees: either the date advised by the Institution that examinations results are released, or the date the Awardee departs the study country, whichever comes first
  - ii. Research Awardees: either the date the Awardee submits their thesis/research work for external examination prior to their Scholarship end date, or the date the Awardee departs the study country if they are submitting their thesis from home, whichever comes first
- 17.1.4. {A} Awardees will continue to be paid the contribution to living expenses for five days after the Scholarship end date.
- 17.1.5. {A} Awardees who return home prior to submitting their thesis/research work will have a maximum period of two years or as per Institutions requirements from their final departure date to submit.
- 17.1.6. {I} Institutions must update and finalise every Awardee's OASIS record within 14 days of the Scholarship end date. See [subsection 17.7.2](#) for more information on completing an OASIS record.
- 17.1.7. {I} If a PhD or Master's by Research Awardee returns home before submitting their thesis, Institutions must record that the record is finalised pending results.

### 17.2. Return home briefing

- 17.2.1. Institutions are encouraged to offer Awardees a return home briefing and completion ceremony where the Awardee is unable to attend a formal graduation ceremony.
- 17.2.2. Where the graduation ceremony is held sometime after the completion of studies, there is no award entitlement to cover costs of graduates returning for the graduation ceremony.
- 17.2.3. {I} Where a return home briefing is undertaken, Institutions should:
  - i. Arrange the return home briefing as soon as possible at the beginning of an Awardee's final study period (e.g. their final semester or trimester);
  - ii. Ensure Awardees are aware that DFAT will not provide financial support beyond their Scholarship end date;

- iii. Be sensitive to the circumstances the Awardee will encounter upon departure and returning to their home country;
- iv. Provide advice and assistance where possible on reintegration, encouraging Awardees also to revisit their Reintegration Plans;
- v. Encourage the Awardee to join their local Australia Awards alumni association to remain connected; and
- vi. Invite the Sending Post or Receiving Post (whichever is appropriate) representatives to any events in which Awardees are participating, particularly the completion ceremony.

### 17.3. Final departure date

- 17.3.1. Awardees are required to leave the study country and return to their home country within 14 days of their Scholarship end date, or before their visa expires, whichever comes first.
- 17.3.2. Immigration authorities in some regional Pacific countries will penalise Awardees if they leave after their visa end date. These breaches could incur heavy financial penalties which are the responsibility of the Awardee.
- 17.3.3. Regardless of the end date, DFAT will withdraw support for the Awardee 10 days after their Scholarship end date.
- 17.3.4. {A} Awardees must contact the RST Officer at their Institution to arrange their return home travel to leave the study country within 10 days of their Scholarship end date.
- 17.3.5. {A} Awardees are responsible for any changes to the return travel arrangements once their Scholarship period ends, including for any costs incurred (e.g. if the flight has been changed).
- 17.3.6. {I} Institutions must book the completion travel for all Awardees.
- 17.3.7. {I} If an Awardee fails to make arrangements with their Institution to book their return home travel to leave the study country within 10 days of their Scholarship end date, or if an Awardee fails to board their flight, the Institution must notify the Sending Post and Suva Post.

### 17.4. Remaining in the Study Country after the Scholarship end date

- 17.4.1. As outlined in [Chapter 8](#), Awardees are not permitted to remain in the study country or apply to the Study country for anything other than short-term visits, for a minimum period of two years after their Scholarship end date unless DFAT supports the return.
- 17.4.2. Awardees are not permitted to extend their Study visas/permits past their Scholarship end date to enable them to remain in the study country. This includes, for example, staying on to attend a formal graduation ceremony.

17.4.3. After completing their studies, Awardees are not permitted to remain in the study country with accompanying family members who may be working or studying.

17.4.4. Where an Awardee and their spouse are both in the study country on Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships, the completing Awardee must get permission from the Sending Post to remain in the study country until their spouse completes their Scholarship.

17.4.5. {A} Where an Awardee intends to remain in the study country while their spouse completes an AAPS, the Awardee who finishes first must:

- i. Notify their RST Officer as early as possible in advance of their completion, ideally at the beginning of their final study period (e.g. their final semester or trimester)
- ii. Transfer to a dependant visa at their own expense.
- iii. Abide by the two-year exclusion period starting from the date that both Awardees depart the study country when the second Scholarship is complete.

17.4.6. {I} Where an Awardee intends to remain in the study country while their spouse completes an AAPS, the completing Awardee's Institution must:

- i. Contact Suva Post and Sending Post to obtain letters of support or additional information for the Awardee who is completing to transfer on to a dependant visa and forward this letter to the Awardee;
- ii. If both Awardees are attending the same Institution, the completion travel entitlement may be added to the spouse's record in OASIS. A variation must be created in each record reducing the amount in the completing Awardee's record and increasing the amount in the spouse's record. The reasons for both variations should be recorded in the journal notes in each OASIS record. This must be done before the completing Awardee's OASIS record is finalised;
- iii. If the Awardees are at different Institutions, the completing Awardee's Institution must liaise with the spouse's Institution to complete the necessary OASIS variations in both records. Suva Post and Sending Post should be included in all correspondence; and
- iv. Book return home travel for both Awardees when the second Scholarship is complete.

## 17.5. Returning home due to illness or accident

17.5.1. Where a Scholarship is terminated or suspended due to accident, incapacity or illness, in most cases the Awardee will be required to return home. This is in compliance with the conditions of the Student visa/Study permit.

17.5.2. Where an Awardee is required to suspend and return home on the grounds of illness or incapacity, DFAT will provide funds for a return airfare in the absence of a reunion entitlement.

## Fit to travel

17.5.3. Awardees, along with their doctor, must assess whether an Awardee is fit to travel.

17.5.4. {A} Awardees must:

- i. Demonstrate their fitness to travel with a medical certificate;
- ii. Cooperate with the Institution and DFAT to organise travel home;
- iii. Once at home, stay in contact with the Sending Post about the status of their health and their capacity to return to their studies; and
- iv. Demonstrate that they are in good health and have the capacity to manage their studies by attending a medical assessment before they return to the study country.

17.5.5. {A} Awardees should contact Suva Post and Sending Post for advice on whether they need to update visa status.

17.5.6. {I} Institutions must:

- i. Help the Awardee to make bookings for their flight home;
- ii. Ensure the airline is informed of the nature of the Awardee's illness and is consulted on any arrangements that may need to be made, bearing in mind the Awardee's right to privacy;
- iii. Ensure the Awardee has medical clearance to travel;
- iv. Ensure the Sending Post is advised of the Awardee's travel details; and
- v. Inform the Sending Post if Customs or Immigration clearance is required.

17.5.7. {I} Institutions may help the Awardee organise the safe packing, transport or storage of their personal belongings.

17.5.8. {S} The Sending Post must:

- i. Make arrangements for the Awardee's arrival home and their care during transit through a third country (if required);
- ii. Liaise with the Awardee and their family to provide reasonable support and assistance to repatriate the Awardee; this may require ensuring the Awardee will be met at the airport and can travel home from the airport safely;
- iii. Ensure there is a management strategy in place for when the Awardee arrives home; this may require encouraging the Awardee to seek local medical treatment if required, keeping in regular contact with the Awardee to monitor their recovery, and ensuring the Awardee understands the conditions around their return to the study country (including seeking the prior approval of DFAT);
- iv. Where the Scholarship is suspended, organise an assessment of the Awardee's health and their capacity to manage their studies before they return from Suspension;

- v. Approve Awardees returning to study country only when they are able to demonstrate they are fit to study and travel, and are likely to successfully complete the remainder of their Scholarship;
- vi. Help the Awardee obtain a new visa if they are deemed fit to return to their studies if required; and
- vii. Work with Suva Post to manage arrangements if the Awardee is deemed unfit to return to their studies, or if the Awardee decides to withdraw from their Scholarship.

### Medical escort home

- 17.5.9. Some Awardees that are deemed fit to travel may need a medical escort home. This may be a requirement of the Awardee's doctors or hospital, the airline, or another party.
- 17.5.10. Suva Post in consultation with Receiving Post may approve funding for a medical escort. The provision of such funding is at the discretion of Post and Receiving Post.
- 17.5.11. Any expenditure by the Institution on medical escorts requires prior written approval from Suva Post. Approval will only be granted if a medical certificate noting the requirement for a medical escort has been provided.
- 17.5.12. If an Awardee needs a medical escort, then they, the Institution and DFAT have the following responsibilities.
- 17.5.13. {A} Awardees must:
- i. Demonstrate that they require a medical escort by providing a medical certificate;
  - ii. Cooperate with the Institution and DFAT to organise travel home for both themselves and their escort;
  - iii. Once at home, stay in contact with the Sending Post about the status of their health and their capacity to return to their studies; and
  - iv. Not return to the study country without the prior approval of DFAT and their Institution.
- 17.5.14. {I} Institutions must:
- i. Arrange for an appropriately qualified medical/nursing escort. If possible, the escort should be the same gender as the Awardee; and
  - ii. Seek Suva Post and Sending Post approval in writing if a medical escort is to be contracted through a commercial nursing agency and ensure workers compensation is included as part of the contractual arrangement.
- 17.5.15. {S} The Sending Post must:
- i. Inform the nominating authority (if appropriate) and next of kin if it is decided that a medical escort is required, bearing in mind the Awardee's right to privacy.



17.5.16. {R} The Receiving Post must:

- i. Where appropriate, provide funds for the costs of the medical escort (noting that the provision of funds is at DFAT's discretion, and a medical certificate noting the need for an escort must be provided).

## 17.6. Awardees who are unfit to travel

17.6.1. In some circumstances Awardees may be unfit to travel due to illness, incapacity or long-term hospitalisation.

17.6.2. In the case that an Awardee is unfit for travel and remains in the study country on a visa other than the Study permit/Student visa DFAT is not required to provide discretionary financial support for the Awardee.

17.6.3. If an Awardee is unfit to travel while on-Scholarship or upon completion of their Scholarship, the Awardee, the Institution and DFAT have the following responsibilities.

17.6.4. {A} Awardees must:

- i. Provide a medical certificate to RST which clearly states they are unfit to travel and advises an estimated date that they should be fit;
- ii. If required, make necessary visa arrangements with the Department of Immigration in the study country to either extend or transfer to an appropriate visa and meet all costs associated with the visa change;
- iii. Be responsible for all costs associated with their stay in the study country beyond the Scholarship end date;
- iv. Remain in contact with RST while they are in the study country; and
- v. Depart the study country as soon as they are fit to travel.

17.6.5. {I} Institutions must:

- i. Inform Sending Post and Receiving Post as per the notification procedures for welfare incidents as set out in [Section 14.2](#);
- ii. Provide medical certificates and any other supporting information to the Sending Post and Receiving Post as soon as possible;
- iii. If required, obtain from the Sending Post a letter of support or additional information and forward this to the Awardee;
- iv. Remain in contact with the Awardee and, continue to provide pastoral care while they remain in the study country, continue to monitor the Awardee's condition and provide regular updates to Sending Post and Receiving Post;
- v. If an Awardee has completed their Scholarship, withdraws, or their Scholarship is terminated, the Institution must organise the Awardee's return home travel using the Awardee's completion travel allowance as soon as they are fit to travel (see [Section 17.5.3](#)); and
- vi. Liaise with the Department of Immigration as necessary.

17.6.6. {S} The Sending Post must make contact with the Awardee's next of kin.

17.6.7. {R} The Receiving Post must:

- i. Liaise with the Sending Post as necessary.

### Dependants that are unable to travel

17.6.8. DFAT will not provide additional financial support for Awardees that are unable to study or travel because a dependant is unwell or unable to travel.

## 17.7. Finalisation and completion of a Scholarship record in OASIS

17.7.1. As outlined in [subsection 17.7.2](#), Institutions must update and finalise the OASIS records for every Awardee within seven days of the Scholarship end date or the Awardees departure whichever comes first.

17.7.2. The finalisation of Awardee records could form an important KPI in the performance of Institutions.

17.7.3. {I} Within seven days of an Awardee's scholarship end date or departure, whichever comes first, the Institution must complete the following in OASIS:

- i. Academic completion details;
- ii. Awardee's travel details;
- iii. Follow-up home country contact address (including e-mail address);
- iv. Expense all costs associated with the Scholarship; and
- v. Scholarship finalisation.

17.7.4. The completion of a Scholarship record is an automatic process run by OASIS. The process occurs at the end of the next full pay period after the Scholarship end date. For example, if an Awardee's studies are finalised on 15 March 2020, the completion will occur on 31 December 2020. If the studies are finalised on 15 December 2020, the completion will occur on 30 June 2021.

17.7.5. {I} All expenses must be entered into OASIS before the completion of a Scholarship record in OASIS.

## 17.8. Requests for academic transcripts

17.8.1. When an Awardee submits their Scholarship application form, they agree to authorise DFAT, or its appointed managing contractor, to access or obtain information, including copies of relevant academic records and reports, to monitor their academic performance while on Scholarship in the study country.

17.8.2. Third parties (i.e. anyone outside the Institution other than DFAT, the Sending Post and managing contractor) are not permitted to access academic transcripts.

17.8.3. {S} Where partner governments require an Awardee's academic results, the Sending Post can ask the Awardee to send the transcript directly to the partner government.

## 18. Alumni

- 18.5.1. There are DFAT supported alumni networks in more than 20 countries and regions.
- 18.5.2. {A} Australian Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates host a variety of networking and professional development events to promote alumni, and to encourage them to stay in touch with one another, their study country and with Australia.
- 18.5.3. {A} As part of an Australia Awards global alumni community, alumni are strongly encouraged to stay connected by:
- Making contact with post in their home country;
  - Participating in alumni activities and events held by Post;
  - Signing up for online platforms that enable networking amongst alumni, and between alumni, Australia and the study country; and
  - Joining their local alumni network
- 18.5.4. {A} Alumni are encouraged to join their local alumni network and to take part in post-award monitoring and evaluation activities (for example, participating in surveys and maintaining their Reintegration Plans).
- 18.5.5. {I} Institutions should encourage AAPS recipients to stay connected with the Institution, supervisors and peers, including by joining the Institution's alumni network.
- 18.5.6. {I} Institutions should also encourage Awardees to join the local alumni network when they return home and to keep in contact with the Sending Post.
- 18.5.7. {S} The Sending Post should actively engage with their alumni. Guidance on good practice activities and advice on alumni engagement is available from the Alumni Manager, Australia Awards and Alumni Branch.

## ANNEX A: Introductory Academic Program (IAP)

The IAP is mandatory for all Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship holders. The program aims to assist students to make the transition from their home country to the study country and prepares them to undertake tertiary education in the Australian setting.

The course combines an academic program, welfare and cultural understanding and assists students to understand the study country's education system. Students will consolidate their language proficiency, sharpen their academic skills and gain an understanding of academic culture, particularly with reference to the tertiary Institution they are attending.

Larger Institutions will conduct IAPs for Australia Awards Pacific Scholarship students only while some other Institutions provide a short introductory program for Australia Awards Pacific scholars after which the students join the broader orientation and enrolment program for all international students at that Institution.

The following topics will be covered over a three (3) to six (6) week period, this list is not exhaustive, and Institutions will incorporate other Institution specific activities.

- An introduction to living in the study country, which includes aspects such as history, local culture, language and ideas of tolerance;
- Introduction to student support services staff and services including counselling, student union, and student associations;
- Familiarisation with the local environment including campus tour, Institution culture, Institution services and facilities, local do's and don'ts, local area transport;
- Networking sessions to meet other international and domestic students and develop the types of friendships that will provide them with a network to draw on during their time in the study country;
- Institution specific requirements for academic success and good academic conduct, in particular essay writing, note taking, referencing, presentation skills, critical thinking, research techniques, study skills and report writing. This may also introduce awardees to the Institutions' remote/virtual learning systems and social media expectations;
- Living in the study country – opening bank accounts, an introduction to local shops and services, transport, campus familiarisation, student ID card, renewables, recycling and waste disposal, where to find embassies/consulates etc.;
- Library and IT services available at the Institution and computer skills development;
- Accommodation – where to find it, legal process/lease negotiation, arranging connection of services, obtaining furniture and household goods;

- Understanding the Australia Awards Pacific allowances and budgeting guidance;
- Medical cover, medical welfare and health services in the study country;
- Staying safe – personal security, sexual well-being, water safety and what to do in an emergency;
- Government and interaction with local agencies, such as police;
- Local food and foods from home;
- Visa issues;
- Introductions to academics, supervisors and coordinators and discussions about their expectations;
- A walking tour or familiarisation tour of the closest large town or city;
- Discussions on family entry, childcare and schooling;
- Sporting and interest groups; and
- Practice in oral presentation skills, networking skills and set up social media profiles.

It is our experience that the IAP sets students up for success in their scholarship. Data from previous years demonstrates that awardees who do not complete their scholarship or who fail academically are often those who have not completed an IAP.

## ANNEX B: 2021 CLE and Establishment Rates

Currency: Fiji (FJD)

Status	Old Rate	New Rate as at 01/07/21
Unaccompanied	532	607.60
Accompanied	980	1118.60
Establishment Allowance	2039	2324

Currency: Vanuatu (VUV)

Status	Old Rate	New Rate as at 01/07/21
Unaccompanied	61,632	66,270
Accompanied	100,380	108,000
Establishment Allowance	304,108	328,436

Currency: Samoa (WST)

Status	Old Rate	New Rate as at 01/07/21
Unaccompanied	714	735
Accompanied	1204	1240
Establishment Allowance	4002	4122

## APPENDIX A: Proformas for reunion airfare travel

[Address to the DFAT officer, Sending Post/managing contractor]

Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to inform you that I, [insert Scholar's full name], do not intend to bring my family to join me in [insert study country]. I therefore wish to claim the entitlement to a reunion airfare under my Scholarship.

I understand that the decision to provide this entitlement rests with DFAT staff at [insert Sending Post].

Yours sincerely,

.....

Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships Awardee's signature

Date.....

Awardee's name: .....

OASIS No. ....

Witnessed by:

..... Date.....

.....

Print name and title

[Address to the DFAT officer, Sending Post/managing contractor]



Dear Sir/Madam,

This is to inform you that I, [insert full name], wish to bring my spouse and or family to join me in [insert study country]. I therefore waive my entitlement to a reunion airfare under my Scholarship, as agreed in the contract between DFAT and myself.

Details of my family members are as follows:

Full Name (as shown in the passport)	Date of birth	Relationship to me (spouse, son, daughter)	Country of citizenship	Passport number	Issue date	Expiry date

I understand that by waiving my entitlement, I can no longer claim any reunion airfare during the period of my Scholarship.

Yours sincerely,

..... Date.....

Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships Awardee's signature

Awardee's name: .....

OASIS No. ....

Witnessed by:

..... Date.....

Witness' signature

.....

Print name and title

## APPENDIX B: Critical incident report

(To be maintained by Institution until incident is closed.)

NAME OF AUSTRALIA AWARDS PACIFIC SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE:	OASIS REFERENCE:
CITIZENSHIP:	INSTITUTION:
GENDER:	COURSE OF STUDY:
SCHOLARSHIP START DATE:	SCHOLARSHIP END DATE:
SUMMARY OF INCIDENT:	
REPUTATIONAL RISKS:	
CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS:	
RECORD OF MEDIA INTEREST/REPORTING:	
COSTS INCURRED:	
STUDENT CONTACT OFFICER'S NAME:	DATE:

## APPENDIX C: AAPS Institution websites

University of the South Pacific	<a href="http://www.usp.ac.fj">www.usp.ac.fj</a>
Fiji National University	<a href="http://www.fnu.ac.fj">www.fnu.ac.fj</a>
University of Papua New Guinea	<a href="http://www.upng.ac.pg">www.upng.ac.pg</a>
Pacific Adventist University	<a href="http://www.pau.ac.pg">www.pau.ac.pg</a>
PNG Maritime College	<a href="http://www.pngmc.ac.pg">www.pngmc.ac.pg</a>
PNG University of Technology	<a href="http://www.unitech.ac.pg">www.unitech.ac.pg</a>
University of Goroka	<a href="http://www.uog.ac.pg">www.uog.ac.pg</a>
Divine Word University	<a href="http://www.dwu.ac.pg">www.dwu.ac.pg</a>
University of Natural Resources & Env	<a href="http://www.unre.ac.pg">www.unre.ac.pg</a>

## APPENDIX D: COVID-19

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this Appendix is to specify additional responsibilities that institutions and awardees must comply with as a result of changes to the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships (AAPS) program generated by COVID-19.
- 1.2. The requirements set out in this Appendix are in addition to all of the obligations applicable under this AAPS Policy Handbook and will apply:
  - ii. for as long as the host country governments have in place policies and procedures that seek to restrict travel movement of individuals to reduce the incidence of COVID-19; and
  - iii. until awardees depart their study country to return to their country of origin.
- 1.3. The contents of this Appendix must be read in conjunction with the contents of the AAPS Policy Handbook and AAPS Contract. If there is any inconsistency between the obligations specified in this Appendix of the AAPS Policy Handbook and the AAPS Contract, the obligations specified in this Appendix will take precedence but only to the extent of the inconsistency.

### 2. Key Principles

- 2.1. The key principles underlying this Appendix are as follows:
  - i. the health and wellbeing of the study country and AAPS student communities is paramount;
  - ii. the welfare of awardees participating in the AAPS program is a high priority for all governments.

### 3. Institutional Welfare Responsibilities

- 3.1. Institutions are required to provide appropriate levels of pastoral care to awardees this includes, but is not limited to:
  - i. support to new or deferred awardees arriving in their study country as part of their mandatory quarantine, e.g. provision of an introduction pack including emergency contact numbers and other essentials that may be required for a new arrival;
  - ii. access to counselling services, medical clinics and/or other support mechanisms which will assist awardees on arrival and during the term of their scholarship.
- 3.2. Institutions should notify DFAT of any welfare incidents which may have arisen in accordance with [Chapter 14](#) and any critical incidents in accordance with [Chapter 15](#).

### 4. Mode and Location of Study Delivery

- 4.1. COVID-19 has caused a profound shift in the modes of study delivery for awardees. While the objective of AAPS is for online study to represent less than 25% of the total study period, as stated in [subsection 2.5.5](#), COVID-19 has made this more difficult. While COVID-19 continues to impact awardees, this requirement is not mandatory.
- 4.2. A future review of this threshold will be considered in the context of current and future changes that are transforming the education sector and the study experience for awardees.

- 4.3. Study, including online study, is only permitted in the study country; with the exception of approved Fieldwork as stated in [section 12.3](#). Failure to comply with this requirement may result in termination in accordance with [section 13.9](#).

## 5. Extension Variations

- 5.1. In accordance with [section 13.3.3](#), COVID-19 is deemed an unforeseen and exceptional circumstance beyond the control of the awardee and the institution. As such, extensions beyond those referred to in [section 13.3.2](#), will be approved for awardees able to demonstrate COVID-19 has affected their studies or where awardees are unable to undertake their completion travel due to border and flight restrictions.
- 5.2. Where an extension is provided as a result of the impact of COVID-19 on an awardees' studies the visa costs (including mandatory medical examinations) will be funded in accordance with [clause 6.2 of Appendix D](#).

## 6. Visa Extensions

- 6.1. Awardees unable to return home at the conclusion of their scholarship due to COVID-19 border or travel restrictions will need to apply for a new visa in accordance with [section 8.5.2](#).
- 6.2. In accordance with [clause 5.1 of Appendix D](#), where the visa extension is a result of COVID-19 border or travel restrictions at the conclusion of the awardees scholarship, the costs of the visa extension, including related medical costs, will be funded as part of the awardees scholarship. Further details are included in [section 10.2](#)

## 7. Medical Cover

- 7.1. In accordance with [section 10.7](#), awardees, and carers (where applicable) should retain medical cover at all times.
- 7.2. All OSHC policies cover awardees and/or dependents and carers in the event they contract COVID-19.

## 8. Deferrals

- 8.1. In accordance with [section 6.4.2](#), COVID-19 is deemed an exceptional case which is beyond the control of the awardee. As such; deferrals greater than 6 months will be approved for awardees impacted by COVID-19 border or travel restrictions.
- 8.2. The deferral decision and timeframe, in such cases as noted in [clause 5.1 of Appendix D](#), is at the discretion of the sending post.

## 9. Suspensions

- 9.1. In accordance with [section 13.4](#), scholarships may be suspended if deemed necessary, e.g. health or family reasons.
- 9.2. Due to the impact of COVID-19 related global border and travel restrictions a scholarship may be suspended for a period in excess of 12 months. The 12-month maximum suspension period stipulated in [section 13.4.2](#) excludes COVID-19 related suspensions due to welfare issues, global border or travel restrictions.
- 9.3. Awardees on scholarship, who are unable to return home due to border or flight restrictions, will only be permitted to suspend their scholarship under exceptional circumstances. Once a scholarship is suspended all entitlements will cease immediately.

## 10. Reunion Travel

- 10.1. Due to COVID-19 border or travel restrictions awardees eligible for reunion fares, in accordance with [section 10.9](#), may not be able to travel on a reunion fare entitlement. In such cases where eligible awardees are unable to undertake reunion travel, they will not accrue an entitlement to utilise foregone reunion fares in future calendar years.
- 10.2. Any costs associated with quarantine and COVID-19 related medical tests, required to be completed to permit reunion travel, may be covered at sending Posts discretion.
- 10.3. Awardees that choose to utilise a reunion fare entitlement may be required to suspend their studies upon travel as they may not be permitted to return due to COVID-19 border or travel restrictions. This policy will be reviewed in response to any future changes in policy, the border entry requirements and international border and flight restrictions of the study country.

## 11. Completion Travel

- 11.1. Due to COVID-19 border and flight restrictions institutions may experience difficulties in booking awardee completion travel. This may require awardees who have completed their scholarship but unable to return home to seek an extension to the term of their scholarship until such time border and flight restrictions ease for the awardee to return home. In such instance's awardees:
  - i. should contact their respective Embassy, High Commission or Consulate-General to register their need to return home upon completion of their scholarship. In some cases, charter flights may be the only means of returning home;
  - ii. be ready to undertake completion travel promptly once notified of a flight or available flight options to return home.
  - iii. should be recorded as finalised in OASIS on the date of departure from their study country; and
  - iv. will continue to receive their CLE for five days after they depart their study country.
- 11.2. Once border and flight restrictions ease and awardees, and/or dependents and carers, are able to travel home; awardees must do so on the first available flight. Awardees who have had a scholarship extension as a result of being unable to return home, do not have the discretion to remain in their study country until the expiry of their visa. The cost of travel, for accompanying dependents, is not a valid reason to not travel.
- 11.3. Where an awardee is in the study country with dependents and/or a carer, the accompanying dependents or carer must not remain in the study country when the awardee has departed.
- 11.4. All other aspects of completion travel must be completed in accordance with the policy stated in [section 10.12](#).

## 12. Quarantine

- 12.1. Awardees travelling to their study country as part of their mobilisation travel, either commencing their scholarship or returning from suspension or fieldwork, will have any COVID-19 medical tests associated with their travel and mandatory quarantine costs, in their study country, funded as part of their scholarship.

- 12.2. Awardees departing their study country on completion travel will have any COVID-19 medical tests and mandatory quarantine costs, in their study country or their home country, funded as part of their scholarship.
- 12.3. COVID-19 related medical and quarantine costs in a third country is the responsibility of the awardee unless the travel is approved by the sending post.
- 12.4. Quarantine costs for carers will only be funded when travelling with the awardee.
- 12.5. COVID-19 related medical tests and quarantine costs associated with international travel for dependents are not funded as part of the scholarship.

## APPENDIX E: AUSTRALIA AWARDS PACIFIC SCHOLARSHIP CYCLE (ACCESSIBLE VERSION)

### PROGRAM CREATION

#### DFAT Suva Post

- Develop policy & guidelines
- Develop and manage scholarship online systems

#### DFAT Receiving Post

- Manage contracts with stakeholders where applicable
- Manage on-award students

#### DFAT Sending Post

- Incorporate feedback from alumni into program creation
- Establish desired program outcomes
- Promotional activities
- Liaise with partner governments to identify development objectives and capacity gaps and needs

### PROMOTION

#### Applicant

- Applicants learn about Australia Award Pacific Scholarships through advertisement (employer, newspaper, radio, media releases etc)

#### DFAT Sending Post

- Conduct in-country promotion targeting candidates in fields that align with the country's development objectives

#### Institutions

- Promote Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships and relevant courses

### AWARDEE SELECTION

#### Awardees

- Submit application form
- Short-listed applicants are interviewed
- Awardees accept offer
- Suva Post provide on-demand assistance to DFAT Sending Posts for selection process

#### DFAT Sending Post

- Receive enquiries and applications
- Conduct eligibility checks & shortlisting
- Arrange selection processes
- Check application documents
- Request placements at institutions
- Awardees accept offer
- Notify institutions of awardees with disability/special needs

### PRE-DEPARTURE

#### DFAT Receiving Post and Institutions

- Provide Sending Post with pre-departure materials



### **DFAT Sending Post**

- Notify applicants of selection outcomes
- Arrange in-country language training, learning support and/or other assistance
- Arrange awardees' travel to study country, assist with health checks and liaison with DFAT Receiving Post for visa requirements
- Work with Institutions on requirements for awardees with disability/special needs
- Provide pre-departure briefings

### **Institutions**

- Administer placement offers

## **ARRIVAL & ENROLMENT**

### **Awardees**

- Arrive in study country in time to undertake an Introductory Academic Program and commence their nominated course at host institution

### **Institutions**

- Assist awardees to become settled on arrival in study country
- Provide an Introductory Academic Program
- Provide awardees with assistance to select appropriate subjects

## **COURSE & OUTCOMES**

### **Institutions or Managing Contractor**

- Monitor awardee progress (including formal surveys)
- Identify and address any issues that may affect awardees' ability to complete their nominated course
- Notify DFAT Receiving Post and DFAT Sending Post of any awardee welfare or critical incidents that may affect an awardee's capacity to successfully complete their scholarship
- Develop variations to the scholarship for DFAT Sending Post approval
- Provide for academic and welfare support needs of awardees (including disability/special needs)

### **DFAT Sending Post**

- Authorise variations

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES**

### **Awardees**

- Participate in further education and professional development activities

### **Institutions or Managing Contractor**

- Provide support services as part of their international student program

## **GRADUATION & RETURN HOME**

### **Awardees**

- Upon completion of studies, return to home country for at least 2 years

### **DFAT Sending Post**

- Establish contact with new returnees and provide reintegration assistance
- Provide access to the Australia Awards Alumni Network (AAAN)
- Assist partner organisations in implementing reintegration plans where possible

### **Institutions or Managing Contractor**

- Arrange awardees return travel
- Notify DFAT Sending Posts of awardees' departure dates
- Provide advice and assistance on reintegration in home country

## **ALUMNI**

### **Awardees**

- Participate in alumni activities, promotional activities and pre departure briefings for new awardees
- Act as ambassadors to promote the Australia Awards Pacific Awards and Australia in the wider community

### **DFAT Sending Post**

- Provide professional assistance to alumni

### **Scholarships and Alumni Branch**

- Provide funding for alumni activities
- Provide support to DFAT Posts on alumni engagement

## **MONITORING & EVALUATION**

### **Awardees**

- Awardees participate in on-course and post course surveys

### **DFAT Sending Posts**

- Conduct tracer studies to measure effectiveness of the Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships, including linkage and leadership outcomes
- Conduct reviews and evaluations as determined by DFAT policy

*Monitoring and evaluation at all stages of the cycle feed into program design, selection and appointment, and provides the basis for reporting to the Minister and Parliament*

