



# Commonwealth Scholarships

## Selection & Administration Guidelines - 2008

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### 1. Purpose

These guidelines are designed to ensure that the University of Ballarat is compliant with the *Higher Education Support Act 2003* which requires that a higher education provider must maintain a Commonwealth Scholarship (CS) selection policy which is publicly available.

The guidelines underpin the equitable allocation of Commonwealth Scholarships which are intended to facilitate choice in higher education and increase participation of students from low socio-economic groups in higher education by providing financial assistance.

Ordinary-Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships (*Ordinary-CECS*) and Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships-Indigenous Enabling (*CECS-Indigenous Enabling*) are offered to assist with general education costs, Ordinary-Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships (*Ordinary-CAS*) and Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships-Indigenous Enabling (*CAS-Indigenous Enabling*) are offered to assist with accommodation costs, and Indigenous Access Scholarships (*IAS*) are offered to assist *Indigenous commencing students* with the initial expense of higher education especially those who have to relocate from regional and remote areas to undertake their studies.

### 2. Scope

These guidelines apply to all, undergraduate, nominated postgraduate, and Indigenous students in an enabling course who:

- are Australian citizens or hold a permanent humanitarian visa; *and*
- are enrolled at the University of Ballarat as a Commonwealth supported student (as defined in the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988*); *and*
- are enrolled in an enabling course, an undergraduate course of study or a graduate diploma (or equivalent postgraduate course of study) in an area of National Priority required for initial registration to practice in the chosen National Priority area at the University of Ballarat (*UB*). In 2008 *UB*'s FAST program qualifies as an enabling course, and the eligible graduate diploma courses are the Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) and the Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary).

### 3. Eligibility Requirements

#### 3.1 Basic Eligibility Requirements

- 3.1.1 A student will not be selected for an *Ordinary-CECS* or *Ordinary-CAS*, unless *UB* is satisfied that the student meets or, by the first *census date* of the *scholarship period* and before any *CS* payment is made, will meet the eligibility criteria for a *CS* as set out in these guidelines.
- 3.1.2 A student will not be selected for a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* or a *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* unless *UB* is satisfied that the student meets or, by the *course start date* of the *scholarship period* and before any *CS* payment is made, will meet the eligibility criteria for a *CS* as set out in these guidelines.
- 3.1.3 A student will not be selected for an Indigenous Access Scholarship unless *UB* is satisfied that the student meets or, at the time the student accepts the offer, and before any *CS* payment is made, will meet the eligibility criteria for a *CS* as set out in these guidelines.
- 3.1.4 A student is not eligible for an *Ordinary-CECS* if they have already received an *Ordinary-CECS* for the maximum duration of eight *scholarship periods*.



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- 3.1.5 A student is not eligible for an *Ordinary-CAS* if they have already received an *Ordinary-CAS* for the maximum duration of eight *scholarship periods*.
- 3.1.6 A student is not eligible for a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* if they have already received a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* for the maximum duration of two *scholarship periods*.
- 3.1.7 A student is not eligible for a *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* if they have already received a *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* for the maximum duration of two *scholarship periods*.
- 3.1.8 A student is not eligible for an *IAS* if they have previously received an *IAS*.
- 3.1.9 The maximum duration a student can have access to one or more *CS* is for a total of eight *scholarship periods*; with the exception of students awarded a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* and/or *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* progressing to an *Ordinary-CECS* and/or *Ordinary-CAS*, who can have access to one or more *CS* for a total of ten *scholarship periods*.
- 3.1.10 A student is not eligible for a *CS* unless the University of Ballarat is satisfied that the student is able to demonstrate low socio-economic status either:
- through being in receipt of a means-tested Commonwealth income support payment (such as Austudy, ABSTUDY, Youth Allowance, etc); *or*
  - on the basis of a comprehensive assessment conducted by *UB*. In making this assessment, *UB* is guided by Centrelink's determination of independence.
- 3.1.11 Students must not have completed the requirements of a course of study (with any higher education provider) regarded by the University of Ballarat to be equivalent to or higher than an Australian bachelor's award, unless *UB* considers each such award to be the only entry pathway to the current undergraduate course of study, or nominated graduate diploma, at *UB*.
- 3.1.12 Students must be undertaking a full-time study load (the Department of Education, Science and Training determines that a full-time study load is 75% of one EFTSL - Equivalent Full-Time Student Load), unless there are exceptional circumstances which prevent the student from studying full-time.
- 3.1.13 Students claiming to have exceptional circumstances which prevent them from studying full-time will need to substantiate any claim fully by providing (at the time of applying, or when proving ongoing eligibility) a written statement as to why they cannot study full-time, and one of the following:
- a written professional opinion providing assessment of the student's circumstances, assessment of inability to study full-time, the recommended level of part-time study, and the period of time to which this applies; *or*
  - a written explanation from the Course Coordinator or Head of School explaining how course restraints have precluded the student from studying full-time, and the period of time to which this applies.
- 3.1.14 Students eligible for a *CS* who undertake a component of their course overseas or with another education or training provider will not be precluded from accessing the scholarship, if it is approved by the University of Ballarat and will count towards the course requirements in which the student is enrolled.
- 3.1.15 A student is not eligible for an *IAS*, *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* and/or a *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* unless they are an *Indigenous* person. A person will be considered to be an *Indigenous* person for the purpose of a *CS* where the person:
- is of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; *and*
  - identifies as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; *and*
  - is accepted as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in the community in which he/she lives or has lived.



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### 3.2 Ordinary-CECS and Ordinary-CAS Eligibility Requirements

- 3.2.1 To be eligible for an *Ordinary-CECS* or *Ordinary-CAS*, a student must, by the first *census date* of the *scholarship period* meet the aforementioned basic eligibility requirements and:
- be an Australian citizen or the holder of a permanent humanitarian visa; *and*
  - be enrolled at the University of Ballarat as a Commonwealth supported student (as defined in the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988*); *and*
  - be enrolled in an undergraduate course of study (Note: in most cases honours years at *UB* are classified as being part of an undergraduate course of study), or a graduate diploma (or equivalent postgraduate course of study) in an area of National Priority required for initial registration to practice in the chosen National Priority area at *UB*. In 2008 the eligible graduate diploma courses are the Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) and the Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary).

### 3.3 CECS-Indigenous Enabling and CAS-Indigenous Enabling Eligibility Requirements

- 3.3.1 To be eligible for a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* or *CAS-Indigenous Enabling*, a student must, by the *course start date* of the *scholarship period* meet the aforementioned basic eligibility requirements in section 3.1 as well as:
- be an Australian citizen; *and*
  - be enrolled at the University of Ballarat as a Commonwealth supported student (as defined in the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988*); *and*
  - be enrolled in an eligible enabling course. In 2008 the University of Ballarat's FAST program qualifies as an enabling course; *and*
  - be an *Indigenous* person.

### 3.4 Additional CAS Eligibility Requirements

In addition to meeting the aforementioned eligibility requirements (section 3.2 and 3.3), the University of Ballarat must also be satisfied that *Ordinary-CAS* and *CAS-Indigenous Enabling recipients*:

- 3.4.1 within the four years immediately preceding the commencement of the current higher education course of study (including study within another program or at another provider, where the student has transferred):
- the student has lived in a rural or regional area of Australia for a total of at least three years; *or*
  - the student completed the final two years of schooling in a high school or college in a regional or remote area; *or*
  - it was necessary for the student to live away from their regional or remote home to complete the whole or the majority of their secondary schooling at a high school or college in a major city; *or*
  - the student has lived in a rural or regional area of Australia for a total of at least two years, and the student has relocated from the regional or remote area of Australia to undertake vocational education and training (eg TAFE) for a maximum of two years duration immediately preceding the commencement of their undergraduate course; *and*
- 3.4.2 it was necessary for the student to move from the regional or remote area in order to undertake higher education study; and as a result the student will incur or has incurred additional accommodation costs. Examples of necessity to move include, but are not limited to:
- the need for the student to attend classes or access other study related facilities on campus;
  - the distance from the student's home to the relevant campus;
  - the availability and quality of transport infrastructure between the student's home and the relevant campus;
  - limitations on the student's mobility due to disability and/or carer responsibilities; *and*



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- 3.4.3 attend a University of Ballarat campus (or a host institution approved by the University of Ballarat) on a regular basis for the majority of units of study in which they are enrolled in the *scholarship period*.

### 3.5 Indigenous Access Scholarship Eligibility Requirements

- 3.5.1 To be eligible for an *IAS* in addition to meeting the basic eligibility requirements in section 3.1, the student must:
- be an Australian citizen; *and*
  - be an *Indigenous* person; *and*
  - be a *commencing student* enrolled in an enabling program or an undergraduate course of study. In 2008 *UB's* FAST program qualifies as an enabling program.
- 3.5.2 When assessing for low socio-economic status, the University of Ballarat may take into account the range of disadvantages which may affect the immediate financial status of *Indigenous* students accessing higher education. Such factors may include geographical isolation, stability of financial status, and family circumstances, such as illness or bereavement which affect the level of family financial support.

## 4. Applications

- 4.1 Students may apply for one or more *CS*. However only one scholarship will be awarded per applicant, with the exception of *Indigenous* students who may hold either an *Ordinary-CECS* or *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* and where eligible, an *Ordinary-CAS* or *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* and where eligible, an *IAS* concurrently.
- 4.2 Students can apply for both a *CS* and a University of Ballarat Financial Aid Scholarship. However, only one scholarship will be awarded per *recipient*, with the exception of the University of Ballarat Dr Mary Atkinson Scholarship, University of Ballarat Regional Relief Scholarship, and the University of Ballarat Free Computer Equity Scheme which can be awarded concurrently with a *CS*.
- 4.3 Students currently in receipt of an *Ordinary-CECS* may apply for an *Ordinary-CAS*. However, should they be successful in their application, they must relinquish their *Ordinary-CECS*, with the exception of *Indigenous* students.
- 4.4 Applicants who do not provide the required application and supporting documentary evidence for their application by the due date will be ineligible.
- 4.5 Students who were in receipt of a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* or *Ordinary-CECS*, and/or *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* or *Ordinary-CAS* at another provider, wishing to move to an *Ordinary-CECS* and/or *Ordinary-CAS* offered by *UB*, will be required to go through the application process.

## 5. Assessment and Selections

- 5.1 Applications will be assessed against weighted criteria as established by *UB* in accordance with the Department of Education, Science and Training Guidelines for Commonwealth Scholarships.



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- 5.2 Low socio-economic status is the prime criterion and will be assessed according to a combination of factors such as: Centrelink payment or low income; Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status; parents' educational background; own educational background; caring responsibilities; distance required to travel to attend classes; disability; and personal circumstances.
- 5.3 Special consideration will be given to *Indigenous* students not awarded an *IAS* and applying directly for an *Ordinary-CECS* and/or *Ordinary-CAS* to ensure a fair proportion of the *CS* are awarded to *Indigenous* students. A fair proportion means that the proportion of scholarships to be awarded to *Indigenous* students should be at least equal to the proportion of all eligible *Indigenous* applicants. That is, if there are 100 total eligible applicants for 20 scholarships and 20 eligible applicants are *Indigenous*, a minimum of four *Indigenous* applicants (20% of total *Indigenous* eligible applicants) should be awarded scholarships.
- 5.4 Students in receipt of a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* and/or a *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* who are progressing to an undergraduate course at the University of Ballarat:
- will be allocated an *Ordinary-CECS* and/or an *Ordinary-CAS* providing the student continues to meet the eligibility criteria outlined above;
  - with the exception of students who have received a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* and/or a *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* at another institution, in which case *UB* will give priority when allocating *Ordinary-CECS* and/or *Ordinary-CAS*.
- 5.5 In allocation of the *IAS*, the University of Ballarat will consult with *UB's* Aboriginal Education Centre and give priority to students who have to relocate to attend the University and are in accordance with the additional *CAS* Criteria (section 3.4).
- 5.6 Where a student is awarded an *IAS*, the student will also receive either an *Ordinary-CECS* or *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* and if eligible, an *Ordinary-CAS* or *CAS-Indigenous Enabling*, except where a student is in receipt of the *ABSTUDY* Residential Costs Option, in which case if awarded an *IAS*, the student will also receive either an *Ordinary-CECS* or *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* only.
- 5.7 The selection process will be administered by Student Services with input from Equity and Equal Opportunity, the Aboriginal Education Centre, and other staff from *UB*. The Finance Portfolio is responsible for payment to successful applicants.
- 5.8 The selection process will be reviewed annually.

## 6. Scholarship Payments

- 6.1 If successful in being awarded an *Ordinary-CECS* and/or *Ordinary-CAS*, students will receive the scholarship payments up to a maximum of eight *scholarship periods*, provided they continue to meet the ongoing eligibility requirements. One payment totalling 50% of the annual value will be made within six weeks of the student accepting the *CS*. Thereafter, one payment totalling 50% of the annual value for the *CS*, will be made in each six month period as soon as practicable after, or within six weeks after the student's first *census date*.
- 6.2 If successful in being awarded a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* and/or *CAS-Indigenous Enabling*, students will receive the scholarship payments up to a maximum of two *scholarship periods*. One payment totalling 50% of the value will be made as soon as practicable after, or within six weeks after, the student's *course start date*. The remaining 50% payment will occur in the following six month period, provided the student is still eligible. For enabling courses that are six months or less in duration, the student will only receive 50% of the value of the scholarship.



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- 6.3 The *IAS* is a once-only scholarship payment. Students will receive their payment in two instalments. One instalment totalling 50% of the value will be made as soon as practicable after the student has accepted the offer of the scholarship. The remaining 50% instalment will occur as soon as practicable after, or within six weeks after, the student's first *census date*, provided the student is still eligible.
- 6.4 Scholarship payments will be deposited into the student's designated bank account.

## 7. Conditions of the Commonwealth Scholarships

- 7.1 Ongoing eligibility will be assessed bi-annually for the *CS*, with the exception of the *IAS*. If circumstances change which render a student holding a *CS* ineligible according to eligibility requirements specified in section 3, the *CS* will be terminated.
- 7.2 The ongoing eligibility assessment of previous *CS recipients* (who may have been awarded a scholarship using different benchmarks) will be assessed using the current selection guidelines and benchmarks. Where changes have occurred, the changes will be interpreted to the advantage of the student.
- 7.3 Students that receive the first payment of an *IAS*, but for legitimate and genuine reasons, do not meet the eligibility requirements at the student's first *census date*, may not be required to repay the first scholarship payment. However, as they are no longer eligible the second payment will be forfeited.
- 7.4 It is the responsibility of the student to maintain current contact details, including email, in the University of Ballarat Student Administration System. If a student cannot be contacted by mail, email or telephone for the purpose of assessing ongoing eligibility, and as a result their eligibility cannot be determined in the allowed time-frame, their scholarship will be terminated, unless section 7.6.2 applies.
- 7.5 Applications for transfer of *CS* to the University of Ballarat will not be considered. Students transferring from another university must apply anew to *UB*.
- 7.6 Students allocated a *CS* may suspend their *CS* if they take approved Leave from Studies, or claiming other exceptional circumstances. A *CS* may be approved for *suspension* for up to a twelve month period at any one time; however no limit exists on overall *suspension* time. *Commencing students* who defer their course are not permitted to suspend their *CS*, with the exception of students progressing from a *CECS-Indigenous Enabling* and/or *CAS-Indigenous Enabling* to an *Ordinary-CECS* and/or *Ordinary-CAS*; in which case a maximum of twelve months *suspension* may be allowed.
- 7.6.1 For scholarship *suspension* when taking approved Leave from Studies, the following applies:
- payments are not accessible while a student is on Leave from Studies; *and*
  - upon the student's recommencement of study, payments are made following the confirmation of their ongoing eligibility as of the next *census date* in either Teaching Period one or Teaching Period three, provided the twelve month maximum period allowed for *suspension* of the scholarship has not been exceeded.
- 7.6.2 In the event that a student fails to supply personal information relevant to assessing ongoing eligibility, their *CS* will be suspended for six months. However if in the *scholarship period* immediately following, the student fails to supply the required information again, the *CS* will then be terminated.



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- 7.6.3 For scholarship *suspension* due to other circumstances, students must provide a written request to the Equity Project Officer including their reason for wanting to suspend their scholarship, the period for which they want to suspend their scholarship, and a written professional opinion (medical, legal etc) in support of their application, as appropriate.
- 7.7 Termination of a CS will occur:
- if a student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria; *or*
  - once the maximum duration of a CS has been reached; *or*
  - if the student has had access to one or more CS for the maximum duration; *or*
  - once the maximum scholarship *suspension* period (twelve months) has been exceeded, and the student does not return to study after approved Leave; *or*
  - if the University of Ballarat determines that the student:
    - has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress and there are no extenuating circumstances; *or*
    - has committed serious misconduct during a course of study whilst attending the University of Ballarat including, but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information.

### 8. Review

Unsuccessful applicants may make a formal request in writing to the Vice-President (Student and Learning Support) within seven days of being notified of the decision. A review will be based on procedural grounds only (i.e. whether the information provided in the application was correctly assessed, and whether the selection criteria and the selection process were correctly applied in accordance with the Selection & Administration Guidelines). If a review is undertaken, additional information (not previously submitted in the application) will not be considered.

### 9. Associated Documents

- Commonwealth of Australia Guidelines for Commonwealth Scholarships
- University of Ballarat Commonwealth Scholarships and UB Financial Aid Scholarships Applicant Information– 2008
- University of Ballarat Financial Aid Scholarships Selection and Administration Guidelines-2008
- University of Ballarat Equity and Financial Aid Scholarships Online Application– 2008

### 10. Glossary

<b>CAS</b>	Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship ( <i>includes Ordinary-CAS and CAS-Indigenous Enabling</i> )
<b>CAS-Indigenous Enabling</b>	Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship-Indigenous Enabling ( <i>new in 2008</i> )
<b>CECS</b>	Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship ( <i>includes Ordinary-CECS and CECS-Indigenous Enabling</i> )
<b>CECS-Indigenous Enabling</b>	Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship-Indigenous Enabling ( <i>new in 2008</i> )
<b>Census date</b>	The last date you can withdraw from subjects without incurring costs. For the first Scholarship period, the census date is 31 March, for the second Scholarship period, the census date is 31 August



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<b>Commencing student</b>	A student undertaking an enabling or undergraduate course at entry level for the first time at the University of Ballarat. For the purpose of a CS students undertaking <i>UB's</i> FAST program progressing to an undergraduate degree; will be considered as a commencing student when both starting the FAST program and their undergraduate degree
<b>Course start date</b>	For students commencing study, the actual day the course starts, i.e. the first day of classes
<b>CS</b>	Commonwealth Scholarship
<b>IAS</b>	Indigenous Access Scholarship ( <i>new in 2008</i> )
<b>Indigenous</b>	A person will be considered to be an Indigenous person for the purpose of a CS where the person is a member of the Aboriginal race of Australia or a descendant of the Indigenous inhabitants of the Torres Strait Islands ( <i>see section 3.1.15 for more detail</i> )
<b>Ordinary-CAS</b>	Ordinary-Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship ( <i>previously called CAS</i> )
<b>Ordinary-CECS</b>	Ordinary-Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarship ( <i>previously called CECS</i> )
<b>Recipient</b>	An eligible student who has accepted and is in receipt of a CS
<b>Scholarship period</b>	A six-month period from either 1 January to 30 June, or 1 July to 31 December
<b>Suspension</b>	In respect of a scholarship, means a period of time during which a scholarship holder is not receiving scholarship payments
<b>UB</b>	University of Ballarat