



Commonwealth Scholarships (CS):

Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships – Priority Discipline (CECS – Priority Discipline (National Priority Scholarships – NPS)),

Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships – Specialist (CAS – Specialist (National Accommodation Scholarships – NAS)),

Note: These terms and conditions are subject to final drafting and approval by University Committees

2009 Conditions of Award

These conditions must be read in conjunction with the following documents:

1. Commonwealth of Australia Higher Education Support Act 2003—Guidelines for Commonwealth Scholarships 3 December 2008 (*the Guidelines*).
2. The University's conditions for the Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships – Ordinary (CECS) and the Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships – Ordinary (CAS)
3. The University's conditions for the Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships – Indigenous Enabling (CECS-Indigenous Enabling), Commonwealth Accommodation Costs Scholarships – Indigenous Enabling (CAS-Indigenous Enabling), and Indigenous Access Scholarships (IAS) (referred to in the Guidelines as CAS-Indigenous Payment).
4. Schedule 3 of the Determination of Education Institutions and Courses under Subsections 3(1) and 5D(1) of the Student Assistance Act 1973.

The Act referred to is The Higher Education Support Act 2003 (*the Act*)

The awards are administered in accordance with the following conditions:

1. Purpose

The objectives of the Commonwealth Scholarships (CS) Programme are to facilitate choice in higher education and to increase higher education participation by students from low socio-economic backgrounds, particularly Indigenous students and students from regional and remote areas. The National Priority Scholarships and National Accommodation Scholarships aim to facilitate students undertaking study in disciplines associated with Australian Government identified labour skill shortage disciplines and specialist courses not available near their own homes.

2. Description of Scholarships

(1) CECS-Priority Discipline, with funding for up to eight *scholarship periods*, to assist students enrolled in National Priority disciplines as defined in Schedule 1 of *the Guidelines*. This scholarship category is commonly referred to as *National Priority Scholarships (NPS)*.

(2) CAS-Specialist, with funding for up to eight *scholarship periods*, to assist students who have to relocate to undertake a specialist course not available near their home. This scholarship category is commonly referred to as *National Accommodation Scholarships (NAS)*.

3. Basic Eligibility Requirements

(1) A student is not eligible for a CECS-Priority Discipline (NPS) or a CAS-Specialist (NAS) if they have already received a CECS-Ordinary, CECS-Priority Discipline (NPS), CAS-Ordinary and/or CAS Specialist (NAS) for the maximum duration as defined in 16.

2009 CECS-PRIORITY DISCIPLINE (NPS) AND CAS-SPECIALIST (NAS) CONDITIONS

(2) To be eligible for a NPS or a NAS, a student must, by the first census date (as determined in accordance with section 169-25 of *the Act*) of the *scholarship period*:

(a) be an Australian citizen; and

(b) meet the low socio-economic status requirements specified in section 4 below; and

(c) meet the full-time student requirements specified in section 5 below; and

(d) be enrolled in or undertaking:

(i) an undergraduate course of study; or

(ii) a post-graduate course of study required for initial registration for the purposes of practicing in the relevant profession as per Schedule 3 of the Student Assistance Act 1973.

(3) A National Priority Discipline is one of the priority disciplines as covered by the broad degrees related to the Fields of Education in Schedule 1 of *the Guidelines*. To qualify for a NPS a student must:

(a) be enrolled in or undertaking either:

(i) a National Priority Discipline course of study in one of the broad degrees related to the Fields of Education, or

(ii) a major (in a National Priority Discipline area) within the student's degree structure as part of the student's chosen course of study.

(b) not already have completed the requirements of a course of study regarded by the University to be equivalent to or higher than an Australian bachelor's award:

(i) unless the award is a prerequisite to their current undergraduate course of study or post-graduate course of study; or

(ii) was not in a priority area as identified in Schedule 1 of *the Guidelines*.

(4) Specialist course is a course identified by the University through a competitive bidding process and for which DEEWR has allocated NAS scholarships. To qualify for a NAS scholarship a student must:

(a) relocate a distance greater than 100kms from their home to take up the study in a specialist course and incur additional accommodation costs; or

(b) when a student has been unsuccessful in attending an institution of first choice and receives another offer and the alternative offer which will result in the student meeting 3(4)(a).

4. Low Socio Economic Status Requirements

(1) A student is eligible for a NPS or NAS only if the University is satisfied that the student is able to demonstrate low socio-economic status either—

(a) through being in receipt of a means-tested Commonwealth income support payment (such as Austudy, ABSTUDY, Youth Allowance etc); or

(b) on the basis of a comprehensive assessment conducted by the University.

(2) Applications from students who do not receive a means-tested Commonwealth income support payment but have submitted a comprehensive statement of financial hardship are reviewed by a working party comprising—

the Chair of the Undergraduate Scholarships Sub-Committee, or nominee;

the Manager, Graduate Research and Scholarships, or nominee; and

the Undergraduate Scholarships Officer (as a member and Executive Officer).

5. Full-time Student Requirements

(1) A student undertaking (or intending to undertake) less than a full-time student load is not eligible for a NPS or NAS unless there are exceptional circumstances which prevent the student from studying full-time.

(2) Applications stating that a student cannot study full-time due to exceptional circumstances are reviewed by the working party described in 4(2) above.

(3) Educational disadvantage factors such as disability, chronic medical conditions, significant carer responsibilities, Indigenous community responsibilities and course constraints outside a student's control will be considered by the working party described in 4(2) in determining whether there are exceptional circumstances which prevent full-time study.

(4) A scholarship recipient whose study load falls below a full-time student load will have their eligibility status reviewed by the working party described in 4(2) and will be ineligible to retain their NPS or NAS unless the University determines that there are exceptional circumstances which prevent the student from continuing to study on a full-time basis.

6. Ongoing Eligibility Requirements

(1) The Scholarships Office is responsible for monitoring a recipient's ongoing eligibility in accordance with clause 2.25.1 of the *Guidelines*.

7. Body Responsible for Selection

(1) The Undergraduate Scholarships Sub-Committee is responsible for selecting NPS and NAS awardees.

(2) The Undergraduate Scholarships Sub-Committee comprises:

(a) the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) (Chair);

(b) the Director of Student Services;

(c) the Manager Graduate Research and Scholarships Office;

(d) the Co-ordinator, UniSkills/UniDiscovery (Equity representative);

(e) the Dean of the School of Indigenous Studies, or nominee;

(f) one or more nominees of the Scholarships Committee; and

(g) the Undergraduate Scholarships Officer (as a member and Executive Officer).

8. Application, Selection and Offer Processes and Policies

(1) UWA is responsible for the CS application, selection and offer processes and will make information about the processes, policies and conditions of scholarships readily and publicly available in accordance with the *Guidelines*.

9. Application Processes

(1) The University will:

(a) provide detailed information on its website including providing an opportunity to apply on-line;

(b) promote the scholarship programme to new students via the Prospective Students Office marketing endeavours; and

(c) inform relevant areas on campus when applications are open.

10. Selection Policies

(1) The Undergraduate Scholarships Sub-Committee is responsible for the selection of scholarship awardees in accordance with the following selection policy:

(a) Indigenous Students

(i) Special consideration will be given to Indigenous students applying directly for a NPS or NAS and who have not been awarded an Indigenous Access Scholarship to ensure a fair proportion of NPS and NAS scholarships are awarded to Indigenous students in line with the "fair proportion" provisions of clause 2.15.5 (3) of the Guidelines. If there are Indigenous students who cannot be awarded a CS from within the "fair proportion" allocation for Indigenous students, their application will then be ranked on merit within the non-Indigenous applicant pool.

(ii) A person will be considered to be an Indigenous person for the purpose of a CS where the person;

(i) is of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; and

(ii) identifies as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and

(iii) is accepted as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in the community in which he/she lives or has lived.

(iii) The following documentation is acceptable in confirming a student's status as an Indigenous person:

- an affirmation signed by the student, declaring that he/she identifies as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and
- a letter signed by the Chairperson of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander incorporated organisation in a community in which the student lives or has previously lived; or
- a letter from the UWA School of Indigenous Studies confirming the student's Indigenous status.

Queries regarding verification of Indigenous applicants will be referred to the Head of the School of Indigenous Studies (or nominee) for consideration. The unique circumstances of Indigenous students will also be taken into account when assessing whether an Indigenous applicant is able to meet the requirement to study full-time as detailed in 5.

(b) Ranking

Applicants who meet the eligibility criteria for a NPS or NAS and who are or intend to enrol in a course of study will be ranked on the basis of past educational disadvantage and academic merit. Academic merit is defined by universal measures such as Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER), weighted average mark, grade point average etc. but not including school references, school awards etc.

(c) Past Educational Disadvantage

When assessing applications, the Undergraduate Scholarships Sub-Committee will take into account educational disadvantage, under the following categories:

- Recent school leavers (under 20 years of age) from low SES schools.
- Students from a regional or remote background (for both a NPS and a NAS).
- Holders of an Australian Permanent Humanitarian Visa.
- Students with a disability or chronic medical conditions. (Documentation from a medical practitioner or other suitably qualified health provider must be submitted with their application.)
- Students with carer responsibilities. (An applicant with carer responsibilities who cannot study full-time must provide suitable documentation in support of their application.)
- Indigenous Australians (please refer to the comments detailed in 13(a) above).
- Students in any other category that the Undergraduate Scholarships Sub-Committee adds to this list from time to time.

The Undergraduate Scholarships Sub-Committee will determine how the above educational disadvantage factors will be scored or rated.

11. Offer Process

2009 CECS-PRIORITY DISCIPLINE (NPS) AND CAS-SPECIALIST (NAS) CONDITIONS

- (1) The Scholarships Office makes offers of scholarships to applicants and advises them of the conditions associated with the scholarship.
- (2) Students are required to sign and return an acceptance form confirming that the student will, when requested, provide any information relevant to assessing their ongoing eligibility for a CS.

12. Administering Body

- (1) The Scholarships Office is responsible for the management and administration of the CS programme.

13. Letters and Certificates to Students

- (1) In line with the provisions of Clause 2.15.15 (2) of *the Guidelines* the Scholarships Office is responsible for providing the necessary information to DEEWR to facilitate the issuing of a commemorative certificates and letters to new CS recipients.

14. Method of Payment

- (1) The scholarship is paid in the following manner:

(a) NPS—one payment equal to 50 per cent of the annual value of a NPS is made in each six month period as soon as practicable after the student's first census date, as determined in accordance with section 169-25 of the Act for study being undertaken in the scholarship period (i.e. six month period).

(b) NAS—one payment equal to 50 per cent of the annual value of a NAS is made in each six month period as soon as practicable after the student's first census date, as determined in accordance with section 169-25 of the Act for study being undertaken in the scholarship period (i.e. six month period).

15. Duration

- (1) The maximum duration of a NPS and NAS is eight scholarship periods (i.e. eight periods of six calendar months).

16. Suspension of a CS

(1) Students awarded a NPS and NAS scholarship who defer their studies or withdraw from their course prior to their first census date will forfeit their CS but may reapply for a scholarship in a subsequent period should they commence studies at a later date.

(2) In accordance with clause 2.25.5 (2) of the *Guidelines* for students progressing from a CECS-Indigenous Enabling or CAS – Indigenous Enabling scholarship to a CECS or CAS (including a NPS or NAS), the maximum period of scholarship suspension between courses is one year.

17. Termination of a CS

- (1) The University must terminate a CS in accordance with DEEWR Guidelines—

(a) if a student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria specified in section 3 above, where applicable, any criteria specified by the University under paragraph 2.15.5(4) of *the Guidelines* other than during a period of suspension; or

(b) once the maximum duration of the CS has been reached; or

(c) if the University determines that the student—

(i) has failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress; or

(ii) has committed serious misconduct, including but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information in terms of section 2.25.20 of *the Guidelines*.

2009 CECS-PRIORITY DISCIPLINE (NPS) AND CAS-SPECIALIST (NAS) CONDITIONS

(2) The University is not permitted to terminate a student's CS for any other reason.

(3) The Scholarships Office will inform a student if his or her CS is terminated.

18. Provision of False or Misleading Information

(1) If the University knows or has reason to believe that a student in receipt of a CS has provided false or misleading information to the University in relation to the CS, the University must immediately—

(a) re-assess the student's entitlement to the CS; and

(b) notify DEEWR of the suspected offence and provide a copy of the student's application and where possible, the original copies of any other relevant information requested by DEEWR.