

Equity Scholarships Policy

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Description	This policy specifies the University's processes for managing annually the award of a range of Equity Scholarships including: the Chancellor's Equity Scholarships; and the Widening Participation Equity Scholarships.

Related documents

[Bachelor Degree \(AQF Level 7\) Policy](#)

[Bachelor Honours Degree \(AQF Level 8\) Policy](#)

[Student Complaints Policy](#)

[Student Review and Appeals Policy](#)

[Student Review and Appeals Procedures](#)

[Review of Decision Form](#)

[Student Misconduct Policy](#)

[Academic Standing, Progression and Exclusion Policy](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[\[Aim\]](#) [\[Administration\]](#) [\[Eligibility and Selection Criteria\]](#) [\[Benefits and Payment Arrangements\]](#) [\[Conditions\]](#)
[\[Review and Appeals\]](#)

1. AIM

The Equity Scholarships are designed to:

- assist financially disadvantaged students to access and succeed at University;
- provide scholarships to deserving students who may not meet the eligibility conditions for Centrelink Start-Up and Relocation Grants; and
- support the University's student equity objectives.

These scholarships include, but are not restricted to:

1.1 Chancellor's Equity Scholarships

- Chancellor's Education Costs Scholarships (CHES)
- Chancellor's Accommodation Scholarships for applicants who are required to relocate to undertake study at Griffith University (CHAS). Relocation may include moving from a Major City as defined by the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Remoteness Areas Classification

1.2 Widening Participation Equity Scholarships

- Widening Participation Education Cost Scholarships
- Widening Participation Accommodation Scholarships

2. ADMINISTRATION

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), or nominee, is responsible for the administration of the Equity Scholarships. Each year, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) will review the outcomes from previous year's scholarships and determine the:

- student groups for whom scholarships will be available;
- number of each type of scholarship to be offered (with due consideration to available funds); and
- benefits to be associated with each type of scholarship.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) will approve Equity Scholarship Conditions each year, which outline detailed eligibility, selection criteria and conditions of the Scholarship.

3. ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Funding for the Equity Scholarships is predominantly provided through the University's budget, as approved by University Council. Funding from other sources, including contributions from academic Groups, varying levels of government or external donors, may be allocated to the Equity Scholarship Fund.

Chancellor's Equity Scholarship funding is available for continuing students awarded scholarships in previous years and who continue to meet the eligibility conditions; and commencing student scholarships.

Widening Participation Equity Scholarships are funded by the Commonwealth Government.

Applications for Equity scholarships are assessed against the following eligibility and selection criteria and an order of merit list for each type of scholarship is prepared by the Scholarships and Prizes Office. Assessment is made on the basis of the educational impact of the applicant's circumstances, not the severity of the circumstances of disadvantage.

If there are insufficient scholarships for all applicants on the same score, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) or their nominee shall determine the allocation. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) approves the award of scholarships.

3.1 Chancellor's Equity Scholarship

In accordance with existing commitments made by the University a minimum of two Chancellor's Equity Scholarships are reserved for applicants who belong to the Kombumerri People and are ineligible for Indigenous Access, Indigenous Commonwealth Education Costs or Indigenous Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships. In the event that there are no eligible Kombumerri applicants, the Scholarships are to be reallocated to other applicants.

3.1.1 Eligibility

To be eligible for a Chancellor's Equity Scholarship an applicant will be either an:

- Australian Citizen;
- Australian Permanent Resident; or hold an
- Australian Permanent Humanitarian Visa.

All prospective and current domestic undergraduate students planning to study at any Griffith University campus are eligible to apply for a Chancellor's Equity Scholarship.

Applications are made on the designated application form and are accompanied by relevant documentation that substantiates eligibility and merit

To be eligible for the Chancellor's Equity Scholarship, the applicant must:

- be a domestic undergraduate student (this includes school leavers and non-school leavers, commencing and continuing students);
- demonstrate financial disadvantage;

- be enrolled as a full-time student, as at Census date, for the trimester to which the full benefit applies, unless exceptional circumstances apply;
- not have completed the requirements for an Australian Bachelor award unless such an award is a pre-requisite to their undergraduate program of enrolment and there is no alternate pathway into that program. In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) consideration may be given to students who have already completed a degree which is not a pre-requisite to their current program;
- the University considers students undertaking a Bachelor Honours Degree program to be eligible for the scholarship.

To be eligible for a Chancellor's Accommodation Scholarship an applicant is required to move to attend University.

In assessing an applicant's eligibility for the Chancellor's Accommodation Scholarship, the University is guided by the Australian Standard Geographical Classification Remoteness Areas (ASGC Remoteness Areas) in determining the regional and remote status eligibility for a Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship.

Refer <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/otd/Publishing.nsf/Content/RA-intro>

3.1.2 Ineligibility

A student is not eligible for a Chancellor's Equity Scholarship unless the applicant is able to prove financial disadvantage by either:

- being in receipt of a means-tested Commonwealth income support payment; or
- a comprehensive assessment by the University.

Applicants in receipt of one of the following scholarships are ineligible for the Chancellor's Equity Scholarships:

- Centrelink Start-Up Scholarship or Relocation Grant; or
- Indigenous Commonwealth Education Scholarship; or
- Indigenous Accommodation Scholarship.

In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), a student may receive more than one equity scholarship.

3.1.3 Application

Applications for a Chancellor's Equity Scholarship are made through Griffith University's Equity Scholarship online application form. To be considered, applicants should also complete the Educational Access Scheme (EAS) section on the QTAC / UAC Application.

Griffith University's Equity Scholarships support applicants who have experienced educational and/or financial disadvantage.

3.1.4 Selection

The selection of applicants is made on the basis of an assessment in accordance with the following five (5) categories:

- Category 1 Financial Hardship
- Category 2 Home Environment and Responsibilities
- Category 3 English Language Difficulty
- Category 4 Personal Illness and Disability
- Category 5 Educational Disruption

3.2 Widening Participation Equity Scholarship

3.2.1 Eligibility

To be eligible for the Widening Participation Equity Scholarship an applicant will be either:

- an Australian Citizen; or

- an Australian Permanent Resident; or
- hold an Australian Permanent Humanitarian Visa; or
- a New Zealand Citizen who meets the settlement rule - refer [Appendix 1](#).

All prospective and current domestic undergraduate students planning to study at any Griffith University campus are eligible to apply for a Widening Participation Scholarship.

Applications are to be made on the designated application form and accompanied by relevant documentation that substantiates eligibility and merit.

To be eligible for a Widening Participation Equity Scholarship an applicant must:

- be a domestic undergraduate student. This includes school leavers and non-school leavers, commencing and continuing students; and
- demonstrate financial disadvantage; and
- be enrolled full-time at the Census date for the trimester to which the full benefit applies, unless exceptional circumstances apply; and
- not have completed the requirements for an Australian bachelor award unless such an award is a pre-requisite to their undergraduate program of enrolment and there is no alternate pathway into that program. In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), consideration may be given to students who have already completed a degree which is not a pre-requisite to their current program; and
- be undertaking a Bachelor Honours Degree program to be eligible for the scholarship.

To be eligible for an Accommodation Scholarship an applicant is required to meet the above criteria and to relocate to be able to attend University.

The University uses the Australian Standard Geographical Classification Remoteness Areas (ASGC Remoteness Areas) in determining the regional and remote status eligibility for a Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship.

Refer: <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/otd/Publishing.nsf/Content/RA-intro>

3.2.2 Ineligibility

An applicant is not eligible for a Widening Participation Equity Scholarship unless they are able to prove financial disadvantage by either:

- being in receipt of a means-tested Commonwealth income support payment; or
- a comprehensive assessment by the University.

3.2.3 Application

Applications for a Widening Equity Participation Scholarship are made through Griffith University's Equity Scholarship online application form. To be considered applicants should also complete the Educational Access Scheme (EAS) section on the QTAC / UAC Application.

Griffith University's Equity Scholarship Scheme and the Widening Participation Scholarships support applicants who have experienced educational and/or financial disadvantage.

3.2.4 Selection

The selection of applicants is made on the basis of an assessment in accordance with the following five (5) categories:

- Category 1 Financial Hardship
- Category 2 Home Environment and Responsibilities
- Category 3 English Language Difficulty
- Category 4 Personal Illness and Disability
- Category 5 Educational Disruption

4. BENEFITS AND PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

It is a scholarship recipient's responsibility to inform the Scholarships Office immediately of any overpayment or underpayment. The Scholarships Office will inform a recipient on the process of returning any overpayment.

Overpayments need to be returned immediately. In extenuating circumstances a payment plan may be approved by the Scholarships Office.

In the case of an underpayment the Scholarships Office will pay the recipient in the pay period following the notification.

4.1 Chancellor's Equity Scholarship

The Chancellor's Equity scholarships are indexed annually.

The Chancellor's Equity Scholarship comprises a maximum of eight payments. Students who have received the total scholarship payments, may re-apply in a following trimester. An application from a scholarship recipient who is re-applying is assessed as a new applicant.

One payment totalling 50% of the annual value of the Commonwealth Scholarship is made following Census Date to recipients in each six month period (1st of January to 31st of June and 1st of July to 31st of December). Trimester 3 is excluded. In exceptional circumstances commencing students may receive a nominal amount prior to Census date of their first trimester. Students should apply to the Scholarships Office in writing for consideration of exceptional circumstances.

A recipient provides their financial institution details for deposit of the scholarship benefit. Scholarship benefits paid into a nominated account are deemed to be paid directly to the recipient.

Recipients of a Chancellor's Equity Scholarship must sign an Institution Acceptance Form confirming that they are:

- completing their first undergraduate degree; and
- not in receipt of the Centrelink Start-Up or Relocation Grant; and
- not in receipt of a Commonwealth Scholarship; and
- not in receipt of an Indigenous Access Scholarship; and
- accepting the conditions of the Chancellor's Equity Scholarship including the type and value of the scholarship awarded.

If a recipient knowingly provides misleading information or accepts benefit funds that are not due to them, their scholarship will be re-assessed and the infringement reported to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic). Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Commonwealth) and the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) reserves the right to investigate a possible offence.

4.2 Widening Participation Equity Scholarship

Widening Participation benefits comprise a maximum of two payments.

One payment totalling 50% of the annual value of the Widening Participation Scholarship will be made to recipients in each six month period (1st of January to 31st of June and 1st of July to 31st of December). Trimester 3 is excluded.

Recipients are to provide their financial institution details for deposit of the scholarship benefit. Scholarship benefits paid into a nominated account are deemed to be paid directly to the recipient.

Recipients who have received the maximum amount payable are encouraged to re-apply once their scholarship ceases. Recipients will be directed to Centrelink to determine if they are eligible for Start-Up Scholarship or Relocation Grant.

Under the Higher Education Act 2003, a recipient of a Widening Participation Scholarship must sign an Institution Acceptance Form confirming the following:

- the type and value of the awarded Widening Participation Scholarship; and

- the recipient is completing their first undergraduate degree.

If a recipient knowingly provides misleading information or accepts benefit funds that are not due to them, their scholarship will be re-assessed and the infringement reported to the relevant commonwealth government department under paragraph 2.25.15 (Provision of False or Misleading Information) of the Higher Education Act 2003. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Commonwealth) and the relevant commonwealth government department reserves the right to investigate a possible offence.

It is a recipient's responsibility to inform the Scholarships Office immediately of any overpayment or underpayment. The Scholarships Office will advise the process of returning any overpayment.

Overpayments will be returned immediately. In extenuating circumstances a payment plan may be approved by the Scholarships Office.

Underpayments will be rectified by the Scholarships Office in the pay period following the notification.

5. CONDITIONS

5.1 Chancellor's Equity Scholarship

The following conditions apply:

- Awarding of a Chancellor's Equity Scholarship is dependent on acceptance of an admission offer at Griffith University.
- A scholarship recipient must accept the scholarship by the date indicated on the letter of offer, or the scholarship offer may be withdrawn and directed to another applicant.
- To receive and retain the Chancellor's Equity Scholarship benefit, the scholarship recipient must normally be enrolled as a full-time student for the trimester to which the benefit applies. In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), a scholarship benefit may be provided to a part-time student. The University takes account of factors such as membership of equity target groups, requirement to undertake employment to maintain financial solvency, the impact of disability and/or significant carer responsibilities in determining whether scholarship benefits will be maintained for part-time study. Scholarship recipients who are studying part-time and are on approved scholarship benefits due to exceptional circumstances shall undertake a minimum of 20 credit points per trimester. Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) may approve variations.
- In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), a student may receive more than one equity scholarship.
- To retain a Chancellor's Equity Scholarship, the recipient must remain in good academic standing. A student excluded from study under any University policy loses their scholarship.
- A Chancellor's Equity Scholarship recipient must continue to meet the requirements of the scholarship each year.
- The maximum duration of a Chancellor's Equity Scholarship is eight payments.
- Where the duration of the Chancellor's Equity Scholarship benefit has not exceeded the maximum period, the scholarship recipient may use the balance of the scholarship for a Bachelor Honours Degree program.
- A Chancellor's Equity Scholarship recipient may take leave of absence in accordance with University Policy. Scholarship benefits are suspended for the period of leave of absence or deferment.
- A Chancellor's Equity Scholarship recipient who is not enrolled and is not on an approved leave of absence loses their scholarship.
- A Chancellor's Equity Scholarship recipient may change their degree program.
- Chancellor's Equity Scholarship recipients who are on approved cross-institutional study continue to remain eligible for scholarship benefits. Scholarship recipients are required to provide documentation to prove cross-institutional study and academic load.

- Chancellor's Equity Scholarship recipients undertaking approved cross-institutional study through Open Universities Australia and who remain active as a Griffith student continue to remain eligible for scholarship benefits. Scholarship recipients are required to provide documentation to prove Open Universities Australia study and academic load. If a Scholarship recipient voluntarily discontinues or has their enrolment terminated by the University and subsequently undertakes Griffith courses through Open Universities Australia, the scholarship is terminated. If students are unsure of their eligibility they should contact the Scholarships Office for further clarification.

5.2 Widening Participation Equity Scholarship

The following conditions apply:

- Awarding of a Widening Participation Equity Scholarship is dependent on acceptance of an admission offer at Griffith University; and
- A scholarship recipient must accept the scholarship by the date indicated on the letter of offer, or the scholarship offer may be withdrawn and directed to another applicant.

To receive and retain the Widening Participation Equity Scholarship benefit, the scholarship recipient must normally be enrolled as a full-time student for the trimester to which the benefit applies.

In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), a scholarship benefit may be provided to a part-time student.

The University takes into account factors such as membership of equity target groups, requirement to undertake employment to maintain financial solvency, the impact of disability and/or significant carer responsibilities in determining whether scholarship benefits will be maintained for part-study.

Scholarship recipients who are studying part-time and are on approved scholarship benefits due to exceptional circumstances shall undertake a minimum of 20 credit points per trimester. The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) may approve variations.

In exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), a student may receive more than one equity scholarship.

To retain a Widening Participation Equity Scholarship, the recipient must remain in good academic standing. A student excluded from study under any University policy loses their scholarship.

A Widening Participation Equity Scholarship recipient must continue to meet the requirements of the scholarship each year.

The maximum duration of a Widening Participation Equity Scholarship is two payments.

Where the duration of the Widening Participation Equity Scholarship benefit has not exceeded the maximum period, the scholarship recipient may use the balance of the scholarship for a Bachelor Honours Degree program.

A Widening Participation Equity Scholarship recipient may not take leave of absence as funding is provided by the Commonwealth Government and cannot be guaranteed or rolled over to the next year.

A Widening Participation Equity Scholarship recipient may change their degree program.

Widening Participation Equity Scholarship recipients who are on approved cross-institutional study continue to remain eligible for scholarship benefits. Widening Participation Scholarship recipients are required to provide documentation to prove cross-institutional study and academic load.

Widening Participation Equity Scholarship recipients who undertake approved cross institutional study through Open Universities Australia and remain active as a Griffith student continue to remain eligible for scholarship benefits. Widening Participation Equity Scholarship recipients are required to provide documentation to prove Open Universities Australia study and academic load. If a Scholarship recipient voluntarily discontinues or has their enrolment terminated by the University and subsequently undertakes Griffith courses through Open Universities Australia, the scholarship is terminated. If students are still unsure of their eligibility, they should contact the Scholarships Office.

At the end of the Widening Participation Equity Scholarship entitlement the student may re-apply for a Widening Participation Equity Scholarship and is treated as a new applicant.

6. REVIEW AND APPEALS

The decision by the University made in respect of an application for a scholarship is final and is not reviewable under the University's Student Review and Appeals Policy.

A scholarship recipient whose scholarship is terminated for not complying with one or more conditions set out in section 5 and whose scholarship benefits are not continued may request a review of the decision.

A request for a review of a decision to terminate the scholarship should specify the grounds in writing using the *Review of Decision* form, attaching copies of all documents relevant to the decision and lodging their request for a review of the decision with the Scholarships Office within 10 working days of notification of the decision for forwarding to the Academic Registrar. The Academic Registrar reviews the decision and provides the applicant with the reason for the decision. If an error has been made, it will be corrected at the first available opportunity. As specified in the Student Review and Appeals Policy, the Academic Registrar's decision is final.

APPENDIX 1 – WIDENING PARTICIPATION EQUITY SCHOLARSHIP

New Zealand citizenship and permanent settlement in Australia

A student who is a New Zealand citizen can be eligible for a Widening Participation Scholarship if they are permanently settled in Australia and have lived either:

- continuously in Australia for six months or more;
- Lived in Australia for the past 12 months, with no more than two months absence in that period;
- or
- Lived in Australia for the past 12 months, with more than two months absence, but can demonstrate continuity of residence in Australia in that period.

Definition of Permanently Settled

The definition of permanently settled for the above provision is as follows:

Having a bona fide intention to remain permanently settled in Australia. To determine whether a person is permanently settled, the Widening Participation Equity Scholarship scheme takes all of the following into account:

- the nature of the accommodation a student uses in Australia;
- the nature and extent of a student's family relationships in Australia;
- the nature and extent of a student's employment, business or financial ties with Australia;
- the nature and extent of a student's assets in Australia;
- the frequency and duration of their travel outside Australia;
- any other relevant matter.

Definition of Family

The definition of family, in the context of the above provisions about permanently settled, is as follows:

A family unit comprising a parent or parents and their dependent natural or adopted children. A person within the family is taken to mean a person who is related by blood or who stands in a bona fide domestic or household relationship.

An applicant with a partner or dependent children living in New Zealand should not normally be considered permanently settled in Australia, unless:

- they can show that the family will be moving to Australia within six months;
- or
- they are permanently estranged from their former partner or children.