

MENTAL HEALTH NURSING, ALLIED HEALTH AND PSYCHOLOGY SCHOLARSHIPS: POSTGRADUATE PSYCHOLOGY

The Mental Health Nursing, Allied Health and Psychology Scholarships Program is an Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care initiative. The program provides a range of scholarships for mental health nurses, allied health professionals and psychologists to undertake studies in mental health related fields.

The Postgraduate Psychology scholarship provides funding for psychology students to undertake postgraduate studies.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS 2024

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INTRODUCTION

The Mental Health Nursing, Allied Health and Psychology Scholarship (MHS): Postgraduate Psychology (MHS: PG PSY) is funded by the Australian Government, Department of Health and Aged Care (DoHAC) and administered by Australian College of Nursing (ACN).

You are required to read and understand these terms and conditions in their entirety before you accept the scholarship. These Terms and Conditions are reviewed and re issued each year.

RECEIVING A SCHOLARSHIP

Eligibility

Funding under this scheme is available for applicants who meet the following criteria:

- are an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- be enrolled or intending to enrol in an Australian Psychology Accreditation Council accredited postgraduate psychology course in 2024
- have provisional registration as a psychologist with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
- works in the mental health sector which includes primary care, community care, psychiatric hospitals, mental health units and aged care services

All courses must be relevant to the applicants work in the mental health sector and enhance expertise in mental health and suicide prevention

Funding

Scholarship funding is awarded based on the information provided in your original scholarship application, including the course type, study load, duration of course and expected completion date. Should this information differ from the information recorded on your acceptance and enrolment form, ACN reserves the right to alter your original awarded amount.

The maximum amount of funding is from \$15,000 to \$30,000 per scholarship.

If you change your study load at any time throughout a semester or course of study, you must notify ACN within 14 days of this change. This includes withdrawing from a unit of study or enrolling in an additional unit of study. Once notified, ACN will determine if your scholarship payments need to be altered to reflect this change.

Funding under this scheme is available for study undertaken from January - December 2024 onwards.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Effect of other scholarships

You may only accept and at any one time, hold one government funded scholarship administered by ACN.

Assessment of course

ACN will use all resources available to determine the eligibility of your nominated course outlined in your original application. However, upon receipt of your enrolment evidence it may become apparent that your course does not meet the eligibility criteria of this scheme or is in fact more than one course. In this instance, ACN will contact you to discuss and your scholarship may be withdrawn. Courses must be provided by a university or registered training organisation within Australia.

PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Scholarship payments

Scholarships are considered a contribution toward the cost of accessing your awarded course. It is expected that the scholar will meet some of the costs of the course themselves.

MHS: PG PSY places are not bonded. There is no return of service obligation once your scholarship is complete. Scholarship payments will not commence until all required acceptance documentation has been received by ACN.

Required documents must be received by ACN two weeks prior to a scheduled payment date in order for a payment to be activated.

The first semester scholarship payments will be activated at the start of the academic year upon receipt of enrolment confirmation. The second semester payments will be activated upon receipt of results for the first half of the academic year and enrolment confirmation for the second half of the academic year.

Scholarship funds will not be paid if you have deferred your course.

Payment reconciliation

You will not be required to provide documentary evidence of how you utilise the scholarship funds. To ensure the continuation of the scholarship payments, you will be required to provide enrolment and results (or evidence of study) twice a year. You will be asked to provide this documentation in July and December of each year.

Repayment of funds

If you cease to fulfil the terms of the scholarship or fail to inform ACN within 14 days of any changes to your eligibility, the scholarship shall be withdrawn. Any remaining funding will be forfeited, and you will be required to repay funds received from the time you ceased to be eligible.

Ceasing to fulfil the terms of the scholarship may include:

- withdrawal from your funded course
- change of course
- ceasing to be an Australian citizen or permanent resident
- acceptance of another scholarship administered by ACN
- failing to provide satisfactory evidence of study undertaken whilst receiving scholarship payments
- no longer working in the Mental Health sector for which your scholarship has been awarded.

You will be able to retain already paid funds on the provision you supply evidence of study until discontinuation or withdrawal

ACADEMIC STATUS

Results and re-enrolment

At the end of each semester, you are required to provide ACN evidence of your results as well as confirmation of re-enrolment in your funded course, for the next semester, before payments will recommence. Failure to provide these documents will result in your scholarship being withdrawn and will require scholarship funds to be repaid.

Changes in mode of study

You may change from full time to part time study (or vice versa) during your course. However, your final awarded amount for the course will not increase.

SCHOLARSHIP STATUS

Commonwealth supported places

Scholarship payments will not be affected if you receive a commonwealth supported place.

Commencement of scholarship

You must commence your study from January – December 2024. You cannot defer the scholarship offer. If you do not commence study in 2024 your scholarship will be withdrawn.

Change of circumstances

You are required to provide ACN with written advice of any change to your name, contact details, bank details, enrolment or other relevant information within 14 days of the changes taking place. Supporting documentation may be requested. If you fail to inform ACN of such changes, you will have ceased to meet the eligibility criteria and your scholarship may be withdrawn.

Ongoing awarding of scholarship

In order to remain eligible for the scholarship, you must:

- continue to be an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident
- be continuously enrolled in an eligible course
- provide satisfactory results and re-enrolment at the completion of each semester
- remain employed in the Mental Health sector for which your scholarship has been awarded.

Deferral from course

If your course provider grants you a deferral of your studies, you may apply to defer your scholarship. To be eligible to request deferral of your scholarship you must have commenced your course and have received scholarship payments.

The maximum deferral period is two semesters, that do not need to be taken consecutively. (Deferral is not available for part semesters, weeks or months).

You will not receive a payment during the period of deferral from study. You must contact ACN to obtain a deferral form that is to be completed and returned to the scholarships office before commencement of the deferral period. You are not required to justify the need to defer or give detailed reasons.

Completing the scholarship

Once you have completed your course you are required to provide evidence of completion of the funded course (either final results or a completion certificate).

Determining study load

ACN determines scholarship payments based on a scholar's study load during each semester. This is based on what the course provider classifies as full time or part time enrolment. ACN does not consider the following as weighting in your study load:

- travel time to and from course provider or relevant activities
- employment/ work hours
- subjects for which you have been given RPL.

Recognised prior learning (RPL)

ACN is only able to provide funding to scholarship recipients for subjects they actively study each semester. If you receive RPL, subjects included in RPL do not count towards your study load.

Changes in semester enrolment

If you change your study load at any time throughout a semester or course of study, you must notify ACN within 14 days of this change. Once notified, ACN will determine if your scholarship payments need to be altered to reflect this change. This includes for example:

- withdrawing from a unit/s of study
- enrolling in an additional unit/s of study
- withdrawing from units before your course provider census date
- being awarded RPL.

Withdrawal from course

If you withdraw from your course, you must relinquish your scholarship. You must provide ACN with evidence from your course provider confirming the withdrawal. This must be provided to ACN within 14 days of withdrawing. If you fail to provide this to ACN within 14 days, you may be required to repay funds received. You are eligible to apply for a new scholarship place in a future year.

Withdrawal of scholarship

Your scholarship may be withdrawn at any stage if you:

- provide incorrect information or withhold relevant information
- fail to comply with these terms and conditions
- you fail in the reasonable opinion of ACN to achieve satisfactory academic progress
- fail to provide results and re-enrolment in a timely manner each semester.

Appeals

You may not appeal the selection of scholarship recipients or the amount of funding awarded. The decision is considered final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

COURSE/ACTIVITIES

Change of course

Funding under this scholarship is awarded for the specific course as outlined in your email of offer. Requests to change the course or educational institution for which you are awarded funding must be submitted to ACN in writing along with supporting documentation within 14 days. ACN will notify you of the outcome of your request. A change in course may result in a change in value (increase or decrease) from your original scholarship offer. Requests to change course are not automatically approved.

A scholarship place must be surrendered if you discontinue a course of study or enroll in a different course without prior approval.

CENTRELINK AND TAXATION

Centrelink

For the purposes of Centrelink assessment, ACN can provide a letter of scholarship details and payments to scholars. All requests for such documentation must be received in writing from the scholar only.

Taxation

ACN is unable to offer tax or financial advice. For assistance with determining the taxation status of scholarships in your personal circumstances, you are strongly encouraged to seek advice from the *Australian Tax Office* (www.ato.gov.au), a registered Tax Agent, or *Centrelink* (www.centrelink.gov.au) if appropriate.

For further information please see the 'Is your scholarship taxable?' tool on the Australian Tax Office website:

<https://www.ato.gov.au/calculators-and-tools/is-my-scholarship-taxable/>.

It is a requirement that all scholarship recipients complete the Statement by a Supplier form. PAYG payment summaries will not be issued at the end of the financial year.

Youth Allowance, AUSTUDY and other benefits

The scholarship may be considered income by Centrelink and other agencies for the purpose of assessing eligibility for Youth Allowance and other Government benefits. It is your responsibility to seek advice from Centrelink on how MHS will affect these payments.

STUDY ABROAD

If you undertake an elective overseas placement as part of your course of study, you will continue to receive scholarship funds as if you were studying in Australia. You will not receive any additional MHS funds.

Continued receipt of scholarship funds is subject to you demonstrating that the overseas placement is:

- a component of your Australian university course
- approved by the university
- no longer than 12 months.

You must continue to be enrolled in the course of study whilst overseas.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

ACN will release de-identified information including your state/territory, course and institution to the Department of Health and Aged Care. ACN may also use de-identified information for the purposes of promoting and publicising MHS. Personal Information may be disclosed to the Commonwealth or a subsequent Administrator for the purposes of administering the MHS.

You agree to participate in any surveys that may be conducted by ACN or a third party acting on behalf of the Department of Health and Aged Care to collect information relevant to your scholarship.

PRIVACY STATEMENT

The Australian Privacy Principles contained in the *Privacy Act 1998* (CTH) and the *Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012*, except when qualified by any relevant Codes of Practice, will underpin all matters related to personal information collected and held by ACN. The ACN privacy policy can be found on the ACN website.

The Privacy Commissioner who has power to award compensation against the Administrator, in appropriate circumstances, may investigate complaints about acts or practices of the Administrator

RESERVATIONS

ACN reserves the right to suspend, amend or vary the guidelines, terms and conditions, the scholarship or any part thereof. The Australian Government reserves itself, in its absolute discretion, the right to terminate or cancel any scholarship under the program.

Unless otherwise specifically agreed in writing, nothing in these conditions shall bind the Australian Government or ACN to any conditions, commitments or obligations of any type.