Scholarships and Awards Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The Scholarships and Awards Policy establishes the principles for determining the general rules for the award and administration of student scholarships and awards funded by; the Australian Government, Australian Catholic University (ACU) and donors.

Section 2 - Policy Scope

(2) This Policy applies to scholarships and awards administered by Australian Catholic University.

(3) The Policy excludes:

a. Sponsorships as defined in the Student Fees Policy;
b. Outbound Sponsorships as defined in the Outbound Sponsorship Policy;
c. Graduate Research Scholarships as defined in the Research Training Program Scholarship Policy; and
d. staff scholarships administered by People and Capability;and
e. administrative arrangements for non-financial conditions that are associated with a scholarship, such as internships or placements.

Section 3 - Principles

ACU will establish scholarships and awards to:

(4) enhance the recruitment, retention or success of students by;

a. rewarding academic and community engagement excellence;
b. widening participation from groups which are underrepresented in Higher Education; and
c. aligning with the strategic direction set out in Vision 2033 and the Long-Term Business Plan.

(5) ACU's scholarships and awards will:

a. align with the ACU Mission, Identity and Values;
b. advance the priorities of the scholarship strategy as determined by the Scholarships and Fees Steering Committee; and
c. will be awarded based on merit and / or equity.

(6) Scholarships and awards:

a. are awarded at the discretion of the University;
b. are subject to funding being available; and
c. can be associated with or named after donors.

(7) To ensure equity and transparency in the administrative process, scholarships and awards must:

a. in the case of scholarships, be subject to application or subject to an internal selection process where applicable;
b. specify eligibility and selection criteria;
c. in the case of scholarships, be subject to the standard scholarship application period(s) endorsed by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), unless an exception is approved by the Academic Registrar;
d. in the case of scholarships, be published in a scholarship browser on the ACU website;
e. be awarded through open and accountable selection processes; and
f. not be awarded if it is considered that there is no candidate that meets the criteria for selection.

Section 4 - Definitions

(8) Terms used in this Policy and Administration of Scholarships and Awards Procedure are consistent with the Glossary of Student and Course Terms. In addition, the following words and expressions have the meanings listed below:

Term	Definition
Award	An award is a financial or other specified reward which may be awarded to a student for their academic and/or other achievement/s while studying at the University.
Equity scholarship	An equity scholarship is awarded to a student to assist them in their studies by providing financial and/or other relevant support, based on demonstrated financial need or other educational disadvantage. Additional eligibility criteria may be considered.
Merit scholarship	A merit scholarship is awarded to a student to support their studies by providing financial and/or other relevant support based on merit. Criteria for these scholarships may include academic and/or other merit.
Scholarship rules	Scholarship rules define the eligibility criteria, selection process, value and the ongoing eligibility and progression requirements of a scholarship.
Discount	A discount is a reduction of the fees payable by a student or partner but, unlike a waiver, can only be a partial reduction.
Scholarship	A scholarship is awarded to attract, retain or support a prospective or current student. A scholarship is awarded based on merit, financial need or educational disadvantage.
Eligibility	Applicants must meet specific criteria to be receive an award of a scholarship. Currently, students may apply for a scholarship without being eligible. In some cases, a student will become eligible over the duration of their study. Prior to awards being offered, eligibility is confirmed for each applicant. For example, students may need to enrol in a specific course, attend a specific campus or achieve or maintain an academic result that meets or exceeds a predetermined threshold. Some scholarships require ongoing progression review across the academic year/s and may require students to maintain a certain GPA to retain the scholarship.
Recipient	An eligible applicant that has received an award from of a scholarship. The act of receiving an award transitions students from an applicant to a recipient.
Unique recipient	The number of unique students that are awarded a scholarship in a given year.
Multi-recipient scholarship	A scholarship offering where more than one scholarship is available in a given year and can be awarded to multiple students in one year. ACU predominantly provides scholarships that are multi-recipient offerings.
Single recipient scholarship	A scholarship offering where one scholarship is available in a given year and is awarded to one student.

Section 5 - Roles and Responsibilities

(9) The Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) is responsible for:

a. coordination of the periodic review of scholarship offerings;
b. consultation with stakeholders and coordination of the recommendations of the Scholarships and Fees Steering Committee;
c. presentation of an annual report to the Academic Board.

(10) The Scholarships and Fees Steering Committee is responsible for:

a. scholarship oversight and strategy in accordance with the approved Terms of Reference;
b. monitoring scholarship thresholds and responsibilities under this policy and as summarised in Schedule 1;
c. direction and oversight of the work undertaken by the Scholarships Operational Group; and
d. presentation of an annual report to the Vice-Chancellors Management Committee.

(11) Advancement are responsible for:

a. proactively sourcing philanthropic donor funds for scholarships of $5,000 and above for the strategic priorities of ACU and facilitating donor contributions of $2,500 and above;
b. liaising with donors to negotiate scholarships in line with standard eligibility and selection criteria provided by the Scholarships Office, for approval by the Academic Registrar;
c. the stewardship of relationships with donors with donations of $2,500 and above;
d. the delivery of events associated with scholarships and award donors of $2,500 in value and above; and
e. reporting quarterly on income received and Advancement's fundraising activities to secure scholarship funds to the Scholarships and Fees Steering Committee and Academic Board.

(12) The Scholarships Operational Group is responsible for:

a. collation and evaluation of the sector data and the subsequent implementation of the market insights and recommendations;
b. review and provision of recommendations in support of ACU's ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, with a view to ensuring the scholarship offerings and their respective eligibility criteria continue to be fit-for-purpose and aligned with the scholarships framework and Vision 2033; and
c. ensuring alignment of the university's scholarships and fees processes, with broader planning activities, such as the Enrolment Plan and annual operational plans.

(13) Marketing and External Relations and Global are responsible for:

a. the promotion and publicity of scholarships to prospective and current students;
b. developing an annual workplan aligned with budget allocation endorsed by the Scholarships and Fees Steering Committee; and
c. quarterly reporting on relationship management and events within their remit to the Scholarships and Fees Steering Committee and Academic Board.

(14) The Scholarships Office is responsible for:

a. the development and maintenance of a scholarship rules guideline and template which is inclusive of standard eligibility and selection criteria;

b. the oversight and administration of Commonwealth Scholarships and ACU scholarships established through donations, bequests, or by the University, including ongoing assessment of eligibility; and
c. the annual distribution of ACU funds, endorsed via the Scholarships and Fees Steering Committee.

(15) Faculties and Directorates are responsible for the governance and administration and reporting of awards of less than $2,500 per student, per year.

Section 6 - Establishment and Maintenance of Scholarships and Awards

(16) Scholarships and awards may be funded by:

a. ACU;
b. philanthropic donor funds;
c. the Commonwealth Government or an Australian State or Territory; or
d. other external organisations.

(17) The acceptance of donations for scholarships and awards must be approved according to the Delegations of Authority Policy and Register.

(18) A scholarship or award will be established in accordance with the principles in clauses 4 and 5 and must also:

a. meet the legal requirements and comply with Australian taxation requirements for income tax exemption for the donor and the recipient;
b. in the case of a scholarship, provide a reasonable contribution, which is no less than $2,500 per student, per year;
c. have fair and transparent eligibility criteria and selection process; and
d. provide the widest range of possible applicants for individual scholarships and awards.

(19) Where a donation does not meet the conditions for establishment of a scholarship in clause 18b, prospective donors will be referred to:

a. donation to an existing or new fund for pooled donations, including the Creating Opportunity Fund; or
b. the establishment of an award.

(20) Categories of scholarships will:

a. be determined by alignment with the strategic priorities of ACU as set out in Vision 2033; and
b. ensure accessibility and useability of information for prospective and current students.

(21) Scholarship offerings will be:

a. prioritised consistent with clause 3 of the Administration of Scholarships and Awards Procedure; and
b. reviewed periodically consistent with clause 4 of the Administration of Scholarships and Awards Procedure.

Section 7 - Approval of scholarship and award rules

(22) For ACU scholarships administered by the Scholarships Office:

a. all scholarship rules for new scholarships require the approval of the Academic Registrar or nominee;
b. any amendment to the eligibility criteria, selection process or the ongoing eligibility requirements on which a scholarship is awarded as stated within the scholarship rules requires approval by the Academic Registrar or nominee;
c. any amendments to those sections within the scholarship rules not specified in clause (22)b. , including the membership of selection committees, donor name, value of scholarship, or the number of scholarships available for any scholarship may be made by the Scholarships Office in liaison with relevant stakeholders.

(23) The eligibility criteria for awards must be approved by the relevant Faculty Board or member of the Senior Executive.

Section 8 - Selection process

(24) Recipients will be selected by the University against the published eligibility criteria.

(25) External parties may only be involved in the selection of recipients where:

a. in the case where a scholarship agreement has an the overall amount of more than $10,000 per year; or
b. the scholarship includes placement or entry to a workplace program.

(26) Where the published criteria require academic assessment and/or are specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, advice will be sought consistent with clause 19 of the Administration of Scholarships and Awards Procedure.

(27) Merit scholarships will be awarded based on:

a. academic merit, assessed on performance in current or prior studies; and/or
b. leadership; and/or
c. performance in community engagement activities; and/or
d. demonstration of professional competence in professional experience.

(28) Equity scholarships will be awarded based on factors that impact access to education which may include:

a. financial hardship;
b. regional and remote place of residence;
c. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student status; and/or
d. membership of any other designated equity group.

Section 9 - Restrictions

(29) A student may hold more than one ACU scholarship, in addition to any Commonwealth Scholarship, concurrently, unless otherwise specified in the scholarship rules.

(30) Students who are continuing or fixed-term staff and are eligible for study support in accordance with ACU's Study

Support for Staff Policy are not eligible for any scholarship covered by this Policy.

(31) Students may not defer any scholarship unless the rules explicitly allow this under certain circumstances.

Section 10 - Ongoing Eligibility Requirements of a Scholarship

(32) Where a scholarship is awarded 'for the length of the course', the duration will be calculated on the basis of the standard course requirements, as specified in the course rules, and/or up to a maximum duration negotiated with the donor as specified in the conditions of the scholarship. In the case of a double degree, unless the scholarship is awarded for the duration of both components, the scholarship will be for the standard duration of a single undergraduate pass degree only.

(33) Where a scholarship is awarded for a continuing period of more than one semester, the recipient must be enrolled in the course at the census date of subsequent study periods, to maintain the scholarship.

(34) The conditions for the continuation of a scholarship will include a requirement that students must gain:

a. a minimum grade of Pass in all units in which they were enrolled in the previous study period; or
b. in the case of equity scholarships, a minimum grade of Pass in at least two-thirds of credit points in which they were enrolled in the previous study period unless otherwise specified in the scholarship rules.

(35) Exceptional personal circumstances, supported by documentary evidence, may be taken into consideration if the student has not satisfied the requirements as set out in clause (3) of this policy.

(36) Where the conditions of a scholarship specify that the recipient be enrolled at a particular campus or in a specific course, the scholarship will be cancelled if the recipient no longer studies at that campus or in that course.

(37) If the recipient of a scholarship fails to comply with any condition of that scholarship, the scholarship may be:

a. cancelled; or
b. where permitted under the scholarship rules, suspended until such time that the conditions are met and the student returns to good standing.

(38) The conditions for any individual scholarship may specify that, in the event that the recipient withdraws from or fails to make satisfactory progress in their course of study, or fails to satisfy other requirements for continuation of the scholarship, the balance of the monies otherwise payable to the recipient will either:

a. revert to the fund; or
b. be awarded to the next eligible applicant; in that case:
    i. the amount of the scholarship available will be the original value less any amount already paid to the first recipient; and
    ii. the duration of the scholarship will be the normal duration less any period during which it was held by the first recipient.

(39) The recipient of a scholarship awarded for a continuing period of more than one semester may apply for a suspension of the scholarship if they interrupt their course of study and providing the suspension is permitted under the scholarship rules,. If the recipient does not resume their course within one academic year, the scholarship will be cancelled. Only one period of suspension/deferment is allowable per scholarship.

Section 11 - Financial Matters

(40) Endowed Funds (philanthropic) will be managed and administered in line with the Endowment Management and Spending Policy.

(41) Monies payable to the recipient of a scholarship will be paid within 30 working days of the relevant census dates.

(42) Where the closing date for applications has been extended beyond the census date, monies payable to the recipient of a scholarship will normally be paid within either 30 working days of the census date of the relevant study period or 20 working days from the date of offer, whichever is later.

(43) Normally the value of a scholarship will be paid in equal instalments, with a minimum of one payment after the census date of each semester for the duration of the award.

(44) Unless otherwise stated, the amount of each scholarship payment is calculated based on full-time enrolment, that is, 0.375 EFTSL per semester. If the student undertakes a lesser load, payments will be made on a pro rata basis subject to the conditions of the scholarship. Enrolment status is normally not relevant in the case for the payment of an award.

(45) Scholarship payments may affect student's eligibility for financial support by the Australian Government. Recipients must be advised that it is their responsibility to ascertain any such impacts.

Section 12 - Appeals

(46) Any student wishing to appeal a scholarship decision may do so in accordance with the Student Appeals Policy.

Section 13 - Record Keeping

(47) An Annual Report will be provided to the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) (Provost) for noting by the Academic Board in accordance with clause 27 of the Administration of Scholarships and Awards Procedure.

(48) Recipients of all scholarships, or awards with a value of $1,000 or more must be recorded on the Student Management System.

Section 14 - Saving Clause

(49) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Policy, the Academic Registrar may, in any case deemed appropriate, vary, dispense with or suspend any requirement of or prescription in this Policy or in the conditions for individual scholarships or awards. Any such action will be reported to the Academic Board annually.

Section 15 - Schedule 1. Scholarships and award/prizes thresholds and responsibilities

The following table sets out the annual dollar amounts of scholarship, award or prizes and the responsibilities that are associated with them.

Thresholds	Responsibilities

Thresholds	Responsibilities								
Amount annually	**Business Owner**	**Promotion**	**Manage Applications**	**Manage selection and offers**	**External selection involvement**	**Manage payments**	**Reconciliation**	**Reporting**	**Manage extra activities**
Donor funded - overall amount over $10,000	Advancement	Marketing and External Relations	Student Administration	Student Administration	Yes	Student Administration	Advancement	Advancement	Advancement
University funded - overall amount over $10,000	Office of the Provost	Marketing and External Relations	Student Administration	Student Administration	N/A	Student Administration	Office of the Provost	Office of the Provost	Office of the Provost
Donor funded under $2,500 per student	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	No	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit
Donor funded over $2,500 per student	Advancement	Marketing and External Relations	Student Administration	Student Administration	No	Student Administration	Advancement	Advancement	Advancement
University funded under $2,500 per student	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Faculty funded under $2,500 per student	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	No	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty
Faculty funded over $2,500 per student	Faculty	Marketing and External Relations	Student Administration	Student Administration	No	Student Administration	Faculty	Faculty	Faculty
Government funded under $2,500 per student	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	No	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit
Government funded over $2,500 per student	Faculty or Business Unit	Marketing and External Relations	Student Administration	Student Administration	No	Student Administration	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit	Faculty or Business Unit
Industry funded under $2,500 per student	Business Unit	Business Unit	Business Unit	Business Unit	No	Business Unit	Business Unit	Business Unit	Business Unit
Industry funded over $2,500 per student	Business Unit	Marketing and External Relations	Student Administration	Student Administration	No	Student Administration	Business Unit	Business Unit	Business Unit
International fee waivers	Global Engagement	Global Engagement	Global Engagement	Global Engagement	N/A	Global Engagement	Global Engagement	Global Engagement	Global Engagement
Accommodation	Student Accommodation	Student Accommodation	Student Administration / Student Accommodation	Student Administration / Student Accommodation	No	Student Accommodation	Student Accommodation	Student Accommodation	Student Accommodation
Research	Graduate Research School	Graduate Research School	Graduate Research School	Graduate Research School	No	Graduate Research School	Graduate Research School	Graduate Research School	Graduate Research School
Externally funded	N/A	Student Administration	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Section 16 - Associated Information

(50) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	27th November 2025
Review Date	27th November 2027
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	12th November 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Helen Murnane Academic Registrar
Responsible Manager	Warren Mead Associate Director, Student Admin (Enrolment, Progression, Completion)
Enquiries Contact	Catherine McKiver Senior Policy Officer Student Administration