

Hallmark Program Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) The Hallmark Program:

- a. attracts high achieving school leavers to La Trobe
- b. exposes students to University-level engagement about the big challenges of our time
- c. provides opportunities for multi-disciplinary research through a close association with the University's Research Focus Areas
- d. provides enrichment opportunities and develops leadership skills.

(2) The Hallmark Program provides a distinctive course of study and extra-curricular activities which students undertake concurrently with their undergraduate course. Students may also choose to pursue a Hallmark Honours year, subject to satisfying entry criteria.

(3) This Policy outlines the features of the Hallmark Program which was established as part of the University's Future Ready strategy. The Hallmark Program is a distinctive program of undergraduate study and enrichment activities which engages high-achieving students with the University's Research Focus Areas and the big issues of our time.

Section 2 - Scope

(4) Applies to:

- a. Students enrolled at the Bendigo and Melbourne (Bundoora) campuses.
- b. Enrolment in the Hallmark Program is available to school leavers enrolling in an approved undergraduate program.
- c. Courses that are approved are those that allow students to undertake one Hallmark subject per semester for three years of a Bachelor degree.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(5) The Hallmark Program will:

- a. attract high achieving school leavers to La Trobe
- b. expose students to University research that tackles the big challenges of our time
- c. provide opportunities for multi-disciplinary research through a close association with the University's Research Focus Areas
- d. provide enrichment opportunities that develop leadership skills.

(6) A Board of Studies comprising staff from the University's senior executive group and College and RFA leadership teams will provide strategic oversight of the Hallmark Program.

(7) The Hallmark Program Board of Studies will annually set the ATAR level that prospective Hallmark students will need to achieve to be considered for the program.

(8) Quotas will apply to various categories of students based on location, SES factors, Indigeneity and College.

(9) Students are required to show their commitment to the Program by attending activities outside the standard teaching period such as the first year residential program and the third year international study tour.

(10) Students will complete one Hallmark subject per semester for three years of an undergraduate program.

(11) Students must maintain a full-time enrolment in their course for the first year and a weighted average mark (WAM) of 75 or above throughout the course to remain in the program.

(12) Students who transfer to another La Trobe course can remain in the Hallmark Program if the structure of their new course provides space for them to complete all the Hallmark subjects and allows for an Honours year to be completed.

(13) The University will provide students enrolled in the Hallmark Program with a scholarship over three years (or four years if they are completing an Honours year) with benefits that are a combination of cash and 'in kind' opportunities totalling \$10,500. The research and enrichment opportunities that constitute the 'in kind' portion of the scholarship may include residential programs, international study tours, conference attendance and leadership opportunities. The scholarship amount and the 'in kind' benefits will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure students are receiving appropriate enhancement opportunities.

(14) Students receiving a Hallmark Program Scholarship may receive other scholarships, although receiving more than one scholarship may be an exclusionary condition of other scholarships.

(15) Students will receive recognition of their completion of the Hallmark Program on their Australian Higher Education Graduate Statement.

Section 4 - Procedure

Part A - Governance

(16) Strategic oversight for the Hallmark Program is provided by the Hallmark Program Board of Studies. The Board of Studies is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and reports to Academic Board through Education Committee.

Part B - Structure

(17) The Hallmark Program is designed to fit within the structure of participating undergraduate courses by taking up one elective subject per semester for the first three years. Some students may continue in the Hallmark Program whilst they complete an Honours year. In addition, the Hallmark Program includes enrichment activities such as a residential program prior to Orientation Week for incoming students, internship opportunities in the University's Research Focus Areas and elsewhere, leadership training, opportunities to represent the University at national and international student forums and an international study tour.

Part C - List of Participating Courses

(18) Participating courses are listed in [Annexe 1 for Hallmark Program - Participating Courses](#) and may change from year to year as the University's course offerings change.

Part D - Application Process

(19) Applications for first year entry into the Hallmark Program are made through VTAC.

(20) Applicants must have a minimum ATAR of 85 to be considered and must be a current VCE student (or equivalent).

(21) Applicants who have experienced educational disadvantage will have their SEAS (Special Entry Access Scheme) application considered along with their VTAC application.

Part E - Selection Process

Selection into First Year

(22) The University will offer places each year to commencing students to enrol in the Hallmark Program. If the applicant pool is sufficiently large, sub-quotas for particular categories of students will apply as follows:

- a. students enrolling in each of the Colleges at the Melbourne campus
- b. students enrolling in each of the Colleges at the Bendigo campus
- c. places across both Colleges will be offered to high ATAR low SES students from the Melbourne metropolitan area
- d. places across both Colleges will be offered to high ATAR low SES students from regional areas
- e. places across both Colleges and campuses will be offered to Indigenous students who have a high ATAR.

(23) Students will be offered places in the Hallmark Program as part of the Round 1 VTAC offer process in January. Students will need to meet the prerequisites for their preferred course in order to enrol in the Program.

(24) Offers may also be made in subsequent rounds of the VTAC offer process if places are still available in the Hallmark Program.

Selection Into Second Year

(25) Students can transfer into the second year of the Hallmark Program if places become available from students leaving the program. Applicants will need to have completed 120 credit points of one of the participating courses listed in Annexe 1 and must have achieved a weighted average mark (WAM) of 75 or higher.

(26) Selection into the second year will be a competitive process which takes into account academic achievement, written expression of interest, and an interview. Consideration will also be given to the spread of disciplines already represented in the Hallmark cohort to ensure the multidisciplinary nature of the Program. Successful applicants will be required to undertake an intensive study module prior to commencing the program.

(27) Sub-quotas based on fields of study or demographic factors may apply to transferring students to maintain a diverse cohort if there is a large number of applicants.

Part F - Enrolment

(28) Commencing students will enrol online in the same way as all other commencing students. Their course grids in the enrolment system will be populated with the Hallmark subjects and any core subjects from their participating course.

Part G - Orientation

(29) Students accepted into the first year of the Hallmark Program will be required to attend a residential program at

the Melbourne campus for 2–3 days in the week prior to the University’s Orientation Week (i.e. two weeks prior to the commencement of semester).

(30) As this is a compulsory part of the Program to start developing the cohort, students who do not attend will need to provide documentation, such as a medical certificate, to explain their absence. The Academic Coordinator will determine whether or not the absent student can progress into the Program.

Part H - Internal Transfer of Courses

(31) Students enrolled in the Hallmark Program can remain in the program when they transfer courses if their new course is one of the participating courses. If it is not, the Academic Coordinator of the Hallmark Program and the respective Course Coordinator will determine if arrangements can be made for the student to be able to complete all the Hallmark subjects.

Part I - Scholarship

(32) All students selected into the first year of the Hallmark Program will receive the Hallmark Scholarship with benefits that are a combination of cash and ‘in kind’ opportunities totalling \$10,500. Students transferring into the program at second year receive the in-kind component only, valued at \$8,500. Payment of the cash component of the Hallmark Scholarship (\$2,000 in total) will be paid to first year students in two \$1,000 instalments after each census date.

(33) Approximately 70% of the scholarship is exclusively to fund the international study tour. These costs include passport, vaccinations, airfares, travel visas, travel insurance, accommodation, meals, transport, participation in organised cultural and research activities, and minor incidental costs of travel.

(34) Some of the above-listed expenses may initially be incurred by the student and will be reimbursed once substantiated with original tax invoices or receipts.

(35) The remainder of the in-kind scholarship component will be available for research and enrichment activities that each student negotiates with the Academic Coordinator of the Hallmark Program.

(36) Students can negotiate for reimbursement of up to \$500 per year for the purchase of text books.

(37) In accordance with HESA legislation, the in-kind component of the scholarship cannot be used to pay for activities within the curriculum, i.e. compulsory internships. However, if students wish to undertake additional internships outside the curriculum, or if they wish to undertake an internship interstate or overseas and need assistance with travel costs, they can negotiate with the Academic Coordinator to have these costs covered by their scholarship.

(38) Students transferring into second year of the Program will receive the ‘in kind’ \$8,500 part of the scholarship only. Any unspent funds at the end of a student’s program will remain with the University.

(39) Students can hold a Hallmark Program Scholarship concurrently with any other La Trobe scholarship, although other scholarships may have conditions that preclude students holding multiple scholarships.

Part J - Academic Progress Monitoring

(40) At the commencement of each semester, Hallmark Program teaching staff will advise students of the requirement to maintain a weighted average mark of 75 or higher, and advise students about the academic progress monitoring process that is activated if students do not meet the required WAM.

(41) At the end of each semester the Academic Coordinator will review the WAMs of all Hallmark students and contact any students not meeting the WAM requirement to make an appointment for academic counselling. The purpose of

the academic counselling is to identify any causes for the low academic performance and create an action plan to maximise the student's potential for success.

(42) The academic counselling will take place prior to the commencement of the next semester or in the first weeks of semester.

(43) Depending on the student's results, the Academic Coordinator may include the relevant course coordinator in the academic counselling process.

(44) Students will receive information about their academic counselling session in writing at least seven days prior to the session, explaining the aim of the meeting, that their WAM does not meet the required level, confirming the meeting time and who the student will be meeting with, and outlining the process.

(45) At the meeting with the Hallmark Program Academic Coordinator, a review of the student's academic performance will be conducted and will include, but will not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- a. advising the student that they have not met the academic requirements for the Hallmark Program;
- b. discussing with the student the possible reasons for the unsatisfactory performance and ways to improve his or her performance;
- c. providing the student with information about sources of academic help and other forms of support;
- d. identifying issues and setting an agreed action plan to address them; and
- e. advising the student that they are at risk of not being able to complete an Honours year or being removed from the program if they continue to make unsatisfactory progress.

(46) The student will receive the written action plan within seven days of the meeting with the Academic Coordinator and a copy will be placed on the student's file.

(47) The Academic Coordinator will organise a follow-up meeting by week seven of the semester with any student who has received an action plan. The purpose of the follow up will be to review the student's progress and refine the action plan if necessary.

(48) The decision to remove a student from the Hallmark Program due to unsatisfactory performance and evidence that the student has not taken steps to improve their performance will be made by the Hallmark Program Board of Studies, based on advice and recommendations from the Academic Coordinator.

Part K - Internship Activities

(49) Opportunities for work integrated learning and exposure to multidisciplinary research will be provided through internships for which Hallmark students will be assessed as part of second and third year Hallmark subjects.

(50) In the second year of the Hallmark Program, where possible, internships will be sourced for students in the University's Research Focus Areas.

(51) With support from the Academic Coordinator, students in the third year of the program will be responsible for arranging their own internships, where possible, with external agencies and organisations. All placements must be approved by the Academic Coordinator prior to commencement.

(52) Each internship will run for a minimum of 35 hours.

(53) Where students undertake their internship at La Trobe University, the conditions of the internship must be consistent with those prescribed in the Work Experience Placement, Cadetship or Internship Procedure.

Part L - International Study Tour

(54) Students in the third year of the Hallmark Program will be required to participate in an international study tour. The tour will have a different theme each year, and forms part of a credit-bearing subject with associated assessment.

(55) The aim of the tour is for students to:

- a. experience research in a different culture
- b. increase cross-cultural understandings
- c. reflect on how their studies fit into the larger global picture.

(56) Responsibility for organising the study tour rests with the Academic Coordinator, after approval by the Hallmark Board of Studies.

(57) Most of the costs of the tour are covered by the Hallmark scholarship (see Part H above). Students must participate in the international study tour in order to complete the Hallmark Program, unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent them, for which they must provide documented evidence. In such circumstances, students will need to apply for special consideration for the assessment task associated with the study tour (HMK3BRG).

Part M - Research Focus Area Collaboration

(58) The Research Focus Areas (RFAs) are integral to the success of the Hallmark Program. Their involvement may include guest speakers in Hallmark subjects, enrichment opportunities for Hallmark students in the form of invitations to RFA conferences or other events, supervision of Honours students and internships for Hallmark students.

(59) Hallmark students are encouraged to undertake an Honours year project in one of the Research Focus Areas.

Part N - Honours Year

(60) Hallmark Scholars who choose to undertake Honours are still considered to be in the Hallmark Program, although not enrolled in any Hallmark subjects, and are provided with enrichment activities to support their Honours year.

(61) Hallmark Scholars must satisfy the normal entry requirements for Honours as determined by the relevant Department.

Part O - Recognition of Hallmark Program

(62) Students who complete the Hallmark Program will have this recognised on their AHEGS (Australian Higher Education Graduate Statement).

Section 5 - Definitions

(63) Nil.

Section 6 - Stakeholders

Responsibility for implementation – Academic Director, Learning Focus Area Hub.

Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – Academic Director, Learning Focus Area Hub.

Status and Details

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