

# Domestic Coursework Scholarships Policy

## Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) This Policy outlines the principles and procedures under which La Trobe University offers and manages domestic coursework scholarships to future or current students.

## Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Policy applies to:

- a. Scholarships for current or future domestic coursework students funded wholly by the University
- b. Scholarships for current or future domestic coursework students funded by government, industry, philanthropic or other external organisations, wholly, or in part with the University
- c. All campuses
- d. All academic programs offered by La Trobe University
- e. All staff

(3) This Policy does not apply to:

- a. Graduate Research Scholarships (this is covered by [Graduate Research and RTP Scholarships Policy](#))
- b. External scholarships (those where the University has no administrative oversight)
- c. Fee waivers applied to domestic or international students
- d. Prizes

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) The University is committed to maximising scholarship opportunities for its students and to demonstrating optimum outcomes for scholarship donors. To this end the University establishes scholarships with broad, inclusive and durable eligibility and selection criteria, aligned to the University's course structure that can be awarded through a coordinated process.

(5) Domestic coursework scholarships recognise outstanding achievement (this may include academic ability, sporting ability, leadership and community involvement) or assist students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Scholarships are allocated on a competitive basis according to published and clear selection criteria.

(6) Scholarships shall be awarded to support both commencing and existing students with an aim to attract and retain students to the University.

(7) Domestic coursework scholarships whether they are funded by the University or Government or through philanthropy, support the values, mission and strategic direction of the University.

(8) The number and types of scholarships may be modified to meet the strategic direction of the University and such decisions will be based on evidence. That is, the ratio of equity to merit scholarships, types of equity and access scholarships or the spread across subject areas may change dependent upon analysis to ensure the strategic value of scholarships to the University.

(9) Scholarships will be sustainable to manage and monitor and shall be consistently, effectively and efficiently managed across the University.

(10) Scholarship conditions must be consistent with Australian taxation requirements for income tax exemption for the recipient:

- a. The scholarship is for educational purposes only;
- b. There is no requirement for the recipient to become, or remain, an employee of the scholarship provider at the time of receipt of the scholarship or in the future;
- c. The scholarship is open to a range of recipients;
- d. The recipient is enrolled full-time in the relevant course of study, except as provided for under taxation legislation; and;
- e. The scholarship is paid by the University.

(11) The University will not provide advice to scholarship recipients about any financial or taxation implications for individual students but may inform them that scholarships may affect income tax liability or Centrelink payments.

## **Section 4 - Procedures**

### **Part A - Types of Scholarships**

#### **Internal Scholarships**

(12) Internal scholarships (as distinct from external scholarships) shall be defined by all of the following parameters:

- a. Funding is from the University, or if from an external donor, funds are held within the La Trobe Foundation (responsible for philanthropic income and governed by the Foundation Committee) and managed by La Trobe Advancement.
- b. La Trobe University sets the eligibility criteria and terms and conditions of the scholarship, in the case of philanthropically funded scholarships in partnership with the donor, aligning to the mission, values and strategic direction of La Trobe, in the case of Government funded Indigenous scholarships, eligibility criteria and terms and conditions are set by the Federal Government.
- c. La Trobe University provides the application form and is responsible for the selection and management of the scholarship.
- d. The scholarship is available to all current and future La Trobe University students that meet the eligibility criteria.
- e. The scholarship meets the Australian Tax Office criteria for a tax exempt scholarship.

#### **External Scholarships**

(13) An external scholarship shall be defined by all of the following parameters:

- a. Funding is provided by an external organisation and there are no funds held within the La Trobe Foundation Committee.
- b. The organisation offering the scholarship sets the eligibility criteria, terms and conditions, selection and

management parameters independently of La Trobe University.

- c. La Trobe University may communicate an external scholarship at its discretion to current students, but takes no responsibility for the selection or management of these scholarships and makes this clear to its students.
- d. La Trobe University will only communicate external scholarships on the scholarships website and by other means if the scholarship:
  - i. Is provided by a reputable and recognised organisation or institution where the scholarship is clearly for the purposes of goodwill rather than marketing or recruitment
  - ii. Aligns with the values of La Trobe University
  - iii. Represents significant value and more than a one-off payment
  - iv. Is deemed to have longevity in its existence
  - v. If subject specific, then for a subject or discipline that aligns with the offerings of the University
  - vi. Is not a prize, awarded as a result of submitting a piece of work

## Part B - Funding of Scholarships

(14) The University will fund a range of scholarships from central university resources. The composition of those scholarships shall be determined by analysis of student profiles, competitor offerings and the strategic direction of the University and are subject to available funds.

(15) The value of University funded scholarships will be reviewed every 3 years by the Course Portfolio and Scholarships Committee, taking into account relevant factors such as standard amounts provided by Commonwealth scholarships, financial considerations of the University and competitor offerings.

(16) Scholarships funded by donors must be established and managed within the parameters of this Policy and, in addition to other relevant policies ([Gift Acceptance Policy](#)). All donor scholarship funds are to go through the Foundation Committee, managed by La Trobe Advancement. Scholarships funded by donors must be a true philanthropic gift (as defined by the Australian Taxation Office) and must not compromise the University's Deductible Gift Recipient (GRD) status.

## Part C - Governance of Scholarships

(17) The Course Portfolio and Scholarships Committee shall have responsibility for governance of coursework scholarships.

(18) The Foundation Committee shall have responsibility for the philanthropic income of the University.

## Part D - Administration of Scholarships

(19) Scholarships will be administered or have oversight from Student Administration along with relevant parties identified at the scholarships establishment stage.

(20) All philanthropically funded scholarships shall be managed in partnership with the La Trobe Advancement.

(21) Equity and access scholarships will, where possible, align with the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) process to minimise the administrative workload for the University.

(22) Information about a scholarship will be published on the [Scholarships Website](#) including all eligibility and select criteria, application opening and closing dates, how to apply and recipient obligations.

(23) The opening and closing dates of scholarships should be aligned with the University calendar and VTAC to ensure maximum recruitment and retention of students.

(24) Commonwealth funded scholarships will be administered in accordance with relevant legislation.

## **Part E - Establishment of Domestic Coursework Scholarships**

(25) Any person, group or organisation within or external to the University may propose the establishment of a scholarship.

(26) New scholarships shall be established using the [New Coursework Award Approval Form](#). Student Administration shall be the owners of the [New Coursework Award Approval Form](#).

(27) In the interests of equity for all students and for accountability in relation to the selection process, the University ensures that all selection criteria are objectively demonstrable and accessible. The eligibility and selection criteria and process will be specified in the [New Coursework Award Approval Form](#).

(28) New scholarships should have broad eligibility criteria so as to maximise the number of applicants. Discipline specific scholarships should be reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment to the University's course offering.

(29) All scholarships will be endorsed by the Scholarships Sub-Committee and upon endorsement, the donor (where applicable) shall sign a legal agreement with the University, using a standard set of terms and conditions.

(30) For philanthropically funded scholarships, La Trobe Advancement is responsible for ensuring that the legal agreement is signed by the University and the donor.

(31) Legal Services does not need to be consulted in the establishment of a new scholarship unless the donor wishes to alter the standard terms and conditions.

(32) Online courses, short courses, diplomas or those courses that are offered by partner providers are not eligible for scholarships unless expressly stated in the eligibility criteria.

## **Part F - Selection and Awarding of Scholarships**

(33) Applicants must meet the prescribed eligibility requirements and supply all required documentation before being considered for selection for each scholarship. Those applicants that meet the eligibility criteria and provided the supporting documentation are then assessed and ranked. The staff responsible for the administration of the scholarship may make the initial assessment, University staff and the donor may be involved in recommending the preferred applicants, however the final decision rests with the University.

(34) Interview panels for selection should only be used for industry related scholarships or with sufficient justification. Interviews are not for the purpose of substantiating disadvantage.

(35) Once a scholarship closes, the applicant cannot provide additional evidence or statements and no further correspondence will be considered.

(36) Scholarships shall not be awarded on an ad-hoc basis outside of standard procedures. Direct correspondence to the University to request a scholarship or influence the awarding of scholarships will not be accepted or actioned.

(37) Students who are employed full-time by the University on a continuing basis or a fixed-term contract for 12 months or greater will be ineligible to apply for coursework scholarships.

(38) Each scholarship will have a set of terms and conditions that will be provided to all successful applicants and must be agreed to by the applicant upon accepting the scholarship.

(39) Students will be assessed each semester, following census and after release of results (if applicable) for their continued eligibility of their scholarship.

(40) Scholarships may not be awarded if it is considered that there is no suitable candidate.

## **Part G - Deferment, Transfer, Extension or Termination of a Scholarship**

(41) Student Administration will monitor the recipient or have oversight of monitoring conditions. In the event of non-compliance with the terms and conditions, the scholarship may be suspended or terminated (where the scholarship involves more than 1 payment). The scholarship may then be awarded to the next eligible student. Where there is no eligible student, the money will be returned to the University or the donor.

(42) Scholarships are for students to undertake full-time study. Students wishing to convert to part-time study may retain their scholarship only under exceptional circumstances. Where approval is given, the scholarship will be paid at 50%. Scholarships for part-time students may be taxable, the University does not remove a tax component when paying the scholarship and it is the obligation of the recipient to declare all taxable income.

(43) A scholarship cannot be deferred. A scholarship recipient may take a leave of absence (provided they have been studying for one year full time) and scholarship payments will be suspended during this time.

(44) Scholarships that are attached to a particular course are not transferable. Scholarships not attached to a particular course may be transferred, however the payment duration specified in the scholarship will not change. When scholarships are for duration of course, the payment duration remains at the duration for the original course under which the scholarship was awarded.

(45) Scholarship extensions will not be granted for merit scholarships. Recipients of access and equity scholarships may apply for an extension in exceptional circumstances and must provide compelling evidence as to the reason for the extension. Extension requests will be considered by the Scholarships sub-committee.

## **Part H - Scholarship Management and Marketing**

(46) After the scholarship has been endorsed by the Scholarships sub-committee and the legal agreement signed by the donor, Student Administration is responsible for creating the scholarship documentation; the webpage, application form and terms and conditions or will provide advice on the creation of these to ensure consistency across the University.

(47) Student Administration will work with the La Trobe Advancement (for philanthropic scholarships) and/ or Marketing Digital & Insights to promote scholarships both internally and externally.

## **Part I - Document Management and Reporting**

(48) All documents pertaining to scholarships (application form; terms and conditions; new award approval form; legal agreement; submitted applications) shall be managed in accordance with the University's [Records Management Policy](#) and Records Management Procedures and the [Privacy Policy](#).

(49) Student Administration is responsible for the document management of the new coursework approval form (once endorsed by the Scholarship sub-committee), the application form, the terms and conditions and the student applications with regards to the scholarships that it manages, or will provide advice to other areas of the University to ensure consistency. La Trobe Advancement is responsible for the signed legal agreement (for donor funded scholarships)

(50) Student Administration shall produce an annual report of all domestic coursework scholarships for the Course Portfolio and Scholarships Committee and the Foundation Committee.

## Part J - Student Management

(51) Student Administration is responsible for the relationship between the University and potential and successful scholarship applicants. This includes:

- a. contacting applicants
- b. reminding students of their obligations;
- c. assessing ongoing eligibility requirements; and
- d. answering student enquiries via the scholarships email address or ASK La Trobe.

(52) Applicants may request a review of the scholarship decision within 10 business days of receiving notice of the outcome of the decision. Applicants who still have any concerns regarding the application of these procedures should refer to the [Student Complaints Management Policy](#).

(53) In the case of La Trobe Vice Chancellors Excellence/ Access Scholarship the decisions are final and no further correspondence regarding the outcome will be accepted.

(54) Student Administration (in consultation with Finance and Procurement) is responsible for payment of the scholarship.

## Part K - Overview

(55) Student Administration shall be responsible for policy and guidelines relating to domestic coursework scholarships.

(56) Detailed processes are documented and available in ProMapp and Student Administration is the owner of those processes.

## Section 5 - Definitions

(57) For the purpose of this Policy:

- a. Scholarship: refers to any award offered on a competitive basis, which may require an application, to prospective or current students that supports them in their studies. Scholarships awarded according to conditions based on merit and /or equity or access criteria. It includes alternatively named awards such as bursaries, grants, reductions and fee waivers.
- b. Prize: refers to a one-off award in recognition of past outstanding achievement that does not require an application.

## Status and Details

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