

# Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme

Rural Pharmacy Workforce Program

## Background Information

**The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme is an initiative of the Indigenous Access Program, which aims to improve access to community pharmacy services by Indigenous Australians taking account of cultural issues in meeting Indigenous health needs.**

**The aim of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme is to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to undertake undergraduate or graduate entry studies in pharmacy at an Australian University.**

**The Scholarship Scheme is funded by the Australian Government, as represented by the Department of Health and Ageing, and is administered by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia (the Guild).**

The Rural Pharmacy Workforce Program is funded by the Australian Government and managed by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia.



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Health and Ageing**



## Explanatory Notes

These Guidelines are to assist applicants in completing the Application Form by providing explanatory information on each question. The Guidelines also outline arrangements for ongoing participants in the Scheme. Applicants should take time to read both the Application Form and the Guidelines before attempting to complete the form.

Discrepancies in information provided may result in the loss of the offer of a Scholarship. The applicant will be required to apply for a scholarship in the next application round if they wish to be considered in the following year.

If there is insufficient space on the Application Form applicants should attach additional pages as required, ensuring applicant name and the relevant question number is on each additional page.

Key terms used in the eligibility and ranking criteria are italicised throughout the Guidelines and described in the Glossary at Section H of the 'Notes on Completing the Application Form'. If applicants have any concerns or questions that are not answered in these Guidelines, or if further information is required, please contact the Pharmacy Guild on 02 6270 1888.

## Scholarship Value and Payment

Scholarships have a value of \$15,000 per annum (GST exempt) per student for the duration of undergraduate or graduate

study, with a maximum amount of \$60,000 per student over a four year period.

Payment will be made by the Guild via direct Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

## Application Process

Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of individual student application, supplied on a standard application form, which will be assessed against eligibility criteria, as detailed in these Rules.

Applications must be submitted to, and received at the Guild on the advertised closing date.

Successful applicants must formally agree to the terms and guidelines of the scholarship, and will be required to sign a Scholar Agreement on acceptance of a scholarship.

The Guild will undertake the selection process. Interviewing of applicants will be at the discretion of the Guild. Incomplete applications will not be assessed.

Any unsuccessful applicant for the Scholarship is entitled to reapply for the Scholarship the following year and will be assessed against the criteria that are in effect on the date and receipt of the re-application by the Guild.

Without limiting its rights at law or otherwise, the Guild reserves the right in its absolute discretion at any time to suspend, amend or vary the Guidelines, the scholarship application process or any part of it.

Scholarship applicants must not currently be in receipt of a Rural and Remote Pharmacy Scholarship at the time of application.

## Assessment and Selection Process

Applicants will be assessed against the eligibility criteria. Awardees of scholarships will be requested to provide supporting documentation (eg birth certificate, confirmation of enrolment, evidence of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent etc).

Discrepancies between supporting documentation and the information contained in the application form, or the failure to provide supporting documentation by the due date, may result in the offer of a scholarship being withdrawn.

If an applicant declines a scholarship, the place may be awarded to the next highest ranked applicant

Unsuccessful applicants are entitled to reapply for a scholarship in a future round and will be assessed against the criteria that is in effect on the date of re-application.

## Eligibility Criteria

In order to receive a scholarship, applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria, and be able to provide documentary evidence. The applicant must:

1. Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident
2. Be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
3. Be enrolled as a full-time student in a pharmacy Undergraduate or Graduate degree at an Australian University that leads to a registrable qualification as a pharmacist. Scholarships are available to students in any year of their

- Undergraduate or Graduate degree
4. Be a member of the student Rural Health Club or a member of the Universities affiliated Rural Health Club. Applicants who are not a member of a student rural health club must indicate their intention to join a rural health club, and provide proof of membership before receiving any scholarship payments. If the university campus at which the applicant is enrolled does not have a rural health club, the applicant must be a member of or indicated their intention to join their nearest affiliated rural health club.
  5. Be preferably from a rural or remote location. Although not a mandatory criterion, scholarships will be offered preferentially to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who currently live, or have lived, in a rural or remote community. The ranking criteria for rural experience will be assessed using the applicant's principal home address data (as per the definition set out in these rules). The maximum number of years contributing to the rural experience criterion will be set at 12 years. The assessment of rural experience for each applicant will commence at five years. Students who attended boarding school will not be disadvantaged.

Scholarship applicants must not be in receipt of a Rural and Remote Pharmacy Scholarship at the time of application. Scholarship applicants will not be disqualified from receiving other awards that support rural and remote pharmacy practice (ie financial assistance for rural placement/internship) but must declare receipt of any other award.

## Selection of Successful Applicants

Scholarships are available to students in any year of an undergraduate or graduate entry pharmacy degree that leads to a registrable qualification in pharmacy.

Students whose applications receive a higher ranking will be offered scholarships first.

Where two or more eligible applicants receive an equal ranking, interviews may be held to determine the most suitable candidate.

## Appeals Process

Applicants who were not awarded a scholarship, and believe their particular situation has not been addressed adequately, may lodge an appeal. In order to have their appeal considered, applicants should submit an appeal statement to the Guild within 21 days of the date of the letter advising them that their application was unsuccessful and of their right to appeal.

### Grounds for Appeal

Grounds for appeal must be based on the eligibility criteria and the statement should set out clearly the grounds on which the appeal is based. An independent panel will assess each appeal, consider any extenuating circumstances and specific situations and reassess the appellants' rankings against other applicants. The results will determine which appellants, if any, are successful in obtaining a scholarship.

## Declined Scholarships

If a Scholarship is declined by a successful applicant, the scholarship may be awarded to the next highest ranked applicant.

## Scholarship Payments and Tax

Scholarships are exempt from income tax under the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. The Guild will issue an annual statement to scholarship holders at the end of each academic year, detailing the amount they have received under the Scheme. Group Certificates/ PAYG Payment Summaries will not be issued.

## Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY, AUSTUDY and other benefits

Students applying for, or in receipt of, Australian Government benefits through Centrelink, such as Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY or AUSTUDY, should seek advice from Centrelink on how the receipt of a scholarship will impact on their Centrelink benefits.

## Scholarship Agreement

Scholarship recipients will be provided with a copy of the terms and guidelines of the Scheme at the commencement of their scholarship, and will be required to sign a Scholar Agreement.

Applicants under the age of 18 years will be required to provide a parent/guardians signature.

## Ongoing eligibility

Once awarded a Scholarship, participants will maintain their scholarship payment eligibility provided that they continue to meet the eligibility criteria.

Scholarship holders will be required to provide verification documents in addition to their annual Scholar Agreement to certify ongoing eligibility. These documents include:

1. Academic results from the previous year
2. Confirmation of enrolment for the current academic year
3. Confirmation of membership in the relevant Rural Health Club
4. Personal details form
5. Mentor report and scholar report on participation in the Rural and Remote Pharmacy Mentor Program
6. Scholar report against their Learning Plan and on the rural activities they have undertaken during the academic year. This report may also seek other reporting information from the scholar
7. Learning Plan

The Guild will send participants their Scholar Agreement and accompanying forms each year. Scholarship payments for the year will not commence until all the required verification documents are received and ongoing eligibility is confirmed.

Scholarship holders may be required to participate in annual surveys or longitudinal studies.

## Deferral of studies

Scholarship holders who defer their studies and who are granted a deferral by the University may defer their scholarship for one year only. The Guild must be informed of any deferrals and provided with evidence of approval of deferral from the university.

## Failure and ongoing eligibility

Scholarship holders who fail to meet the academic requirements of the course and are permitted by the University to continue their study will have their scholarship suspended until such time that they provide evidence that they have met the academic requirements.

Scholarship holders who fail to meet the academic requirements of the course and are excluded from further study will have their scholarships cancelled.

Scholarships will be paid to full-time students only, and scholarship recipients are required to advise in writing to the Guild of any change in enrolment status.

If the scholarship holder ceases to fulfill the terms of the scholarship they may be required to repay funds from the time they ceased to be eligible.

## Withdrawal

Scholarship holders who withdraw from their course will forfeit their scholarship. There will be no requirement to return any scholarship funds paid prior to the date of withdrawal.

## Repayment of funds

If the scholarship holder ceases to fulfil the terms of the Scholarship and fails to inform the Guild, they will be required to repay funds received from the time they ceased to be eligible.

It is in the scholarship holder's best interest to notify the Guild if they cease to fulfil the terms of the Scholarship. In the event that a scholarship is withdrawn due to an ongoing substantial increase in personal income, the scholar will be required to forgo the remainder of their scholarship without further penalty.

## Rural and Remote Pharmacy Mentor Program

Scholarship holders will be required to participate in the Rural and Remote Pharmacy Mentor Program. Scholarship holders must nominate a rural pharmacist of their choice to work with as a mentor. Continuing eligibility will be dependent on a report from the mentor indicating satisfactory participation in rural activities. Inadequate participation may lead to suspension or forfeiture of a scholarship.

Mentors must be a pharmacist who is working or has worked within an Australian rural location. The mentor will be eligible to receive an honorarium of \$220 (GST inclusive) in December of each year of participation. The amount will be paid directly to the mentor within 30 days of receipt of a completed mentor report and a tax invoice.

Scholarship holders are required to develop a Learning Plan with their mentor, have ongoing contact on at least a quarterly basis, and undertake appropriate rural activities. Further details on the Rural and Remote Pharmacy Mentor Program will be provided to Scholarship holders and mentors.

## Important Information

These Guidelines are intended to provide consistency and certainty in respect of the administration of the Scheme but it should also be noted that they are not legally binding on the Guild or on the Australian Government. The Guild may depart from these Guidelines in individual situations where circumstances warrant.

These Guidelines may be revised from time to time. The guidelines are administrative and reflect the intention of the Guild and the Australian Government as to how the Scheme is to be administered. The decision to grant a scholarship is entirely discretionary, and these guidelines do not confer any entitlement to a person to receive a scholarship. Neither the Guild nor the Australian Government will accept liability for any loss or damage incurred by a person in expectation of the grant of a scholarship.

Without limiting its rights at law or otherwise, the Guild reserves the right in its absolute discretion at any time to suspend, amend or vary the Guidelines.

The Scholarship Scheme is funded by the Australian Government, as represented by the Department of Health and Ageing, and is managed by The Pharmacy Guild of Australia under an agreement between both parties. Under this agreement the Guild may provide DoHA with information about the assessment and allocation of Scholarships and on any legal issues that may arise in relation to a particular Scholarship.

## Notes on Completing the Application Form

### Section A

#### Personal and contact details

Make sure the contact details you provide are current. In particular, it is important that the postal address is correct. If there is a need to speak to you this will be

during standard business hours (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday Australian Eastern Daylight Saving Time). If it is difficult to contact you during these times, please provide details of how you may be contacted. PLEASE NOTE: It is the responsibility of all applicants and ongoing scholars to ensure that their contact details are correct, and that it is possible for the Guild to contact them as required. In particular, a reliable mailing address must be maintained at all times to ensure that formal documents are received. If the Guild is continually unable to contact individuals through the contact details supplied, it is possible that such individuals may be required to forgo their scholarship.

### Section B Eligibility criteria

This section requires you to provide information with regard to your eligibility for the scholarship.

#### QUESTION 1

You are required to supply certified copies of documents to prove that you are an Australian citizen or have official Australian Government approval to live in Australia permanently. Applicants who do not meet this criterion are not eligible to apply for a Scholarship.

#### QUESTION 2

Scholarships are only available to applicants of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. You are required to supply certified copies of evidence of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Evidence can be obtained from either a local Aboriginal Community Organisation or a local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Office.

#### QUESTION 3

Although not a mandatory criterion, scholarships will be offered preferentially to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who currently live, or have lived, in a rural or remote community. The

ranking criteria for rural experience will be assessed using the applicants principal home address data (as per the definition set out in these rules). The maximum number of years contributing to the rural experience criterion will be set at 12 years. The assessment of rural experience for each applicant will commence at five years. Students who attended boarding school will not be disadvantaged.

Refer to the Glossary, at Section H, for an explanation of a defined Australian rural area.

#### QUESTION 4

The Scholarships are available to full-time students enrolled in or applying for entry to an undergraduate or graduate pharmacy degree at an Australian University that leads to a registrable qualification in pharmacy. Applications will be assessed pending confirmation of enrolment.

#### QUESTION 5

The Scholarships are available to students who are members of the student Rural Health Club at the University where they are undertaking pharmacy. Applicants who are not currently a member, or are not intending to become a member of a student Rural Health Club, are not eligible for the Scholarship. Applicants who are not currently a member may apply for a scholarship but must become a member of the relevant Rural Health Club by 31 March each year and continue their membership for the duration of the scholarship.

### Section C Course Details

This section requires applicants to provide details or their enrolment.

#### QUESTION 6

You are required to supply a certified copy of documentary evidence that you are enrolled in a full time undergraduate or graduate pharmacy course at an Australian university that leads to a registrable qualification in pharmacy.

## **Section D**

### **Address and Occupation Details**

This section requires information on where you have lived and where you attended primary school. The information is part of the selection process and will be used to determine rural longevity and experience.

#### **QUESTION 10**

The principal home address is the address where you usually live. See the Glossary in Section H for more details.

Your complete principle home address history since the age of five is required. Please provide the address details and approximate dates. If there is insufficient space on the Application Form please attach a separate sheet.

#### **QUESTION 11**

If you attended primary school in a rural location please provide documentary evidence such as copies of school reports for one academic year or an official letter from the primary school confirming attendance.

### **Section E**

#### **Privacy Note**

This section certifies that personal information provided on the Application Form will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act 1988.

### **Section F**

#### **Document Checklist**

This section of the application form provides a checklist to ensure you are

aware of all the documents you will need to provide.

### **Section G**

#### **Declaration**

All applicants must sign the declaration. In doing so, you agree to supply certified copies of a range of official documents, participate in the Rural Pharmacy Mentor Scheme, and become a member of a student Rural Health Club.

Applicants who apply on a hard copy application must sign the form in the space provided

Applicants who apply on-line must insert appropriate name/s and date/s on the form in the space provided. This will be accepted as an electronic signature.

## Section H

### Glossary

<b>Australian Government</b>	Australian Government as represented by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing
<b>Budget</b>	Distribution of funds available for the purposes of this initiative over the term of the Agreement
<b>Certified copy</b>	A copy of an original document that has been signed as a certified true copy by a person authorised to do so.
<b>DoHA</b>	Australian Department of Health and Ageing
<b>Eastern Summer Time</b>	Eastern Daylight Savings Time
<b>Guild</b>	The Pharmacy Guild of Australia
<b>PhARIA</b>	Pharmacy ARIA, which is an index which measures the degree of accessibility and remoteness of a community pharmacy location, for the purposes of administering the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacy Scholarship Scheme. PhARIA combines a geographical remoteness component as represented by the ARIA Index, with a professional isolation component represented by the road distance to the five nearest pharmacies. The index ranges from 1 to 6, with 1 denoting a metropolitan area and 6 denoting a very remote area. PhARIA's for a particular location can be found by visiting the following web-site: <a href="http://www.gisca.adelaide.edu.au/projects/pharia_0607/PhARIA_info.html">http://www.gisca.adelaide.edu.au/projects/pharia_0607/PhARIA_info.html</a>
<b>Parent(s)</b>	Unless otherwise noted references to parent(s) also apply to guardian(s)
<b>Principal home address</b>	<p>Is the address where an applicant usually lives, or has lived in previous years. The <i>principal home address</i> must be in Australia or an external Australian territory (eg Norfolk Island, Cocos Islands etc).</p> <p>For <b>boarding school and university students</b> the principal home address is the place where the applicant would have usually lived but for living away from home to attend school or university.</p> <p>If your <b>parents are separated or divorced</b>, the address of the parent with whom you would have normally lived for the most time in months in each calendar year.</p> <p>If you are assessed as being independent, the address of your usual place of residence.</p> <p>Where applicants have more than one principal home address during a year, the location where the applicant resides for most of the time will be taken as the principal home address.</p>
<b>Rural</b>	Communities defined as being within PhARIA 2-6 of the Pharmacy ARIA. The index ranges from 1 to 6, with 1 denoting a metropolitan area and 6 denoting a very remote area. PhARIA's for a particular location can be found by visiting the following web-site: <a href="http://www.gisca.adelaide.edu.au/projects/pharia_0607/PhARIA_info.html">http://www.gisca.adelaide.edu.au/projects/pharia_0607/PhARIA_info.html</a>
<b>Rural Origin</b>	An applicant is considered to be of rural origin if their principal home address has been in a defined Australian rural area for a minimum of five consecutive years, or eight cumulative years since 5 years of age.
<b>Rural Health Club</b>	A club which encourages and supports students with a background and/or interest in rural health.
<b>Year</b>	Calendar year, unless otherwise stated.