

Pathway to Victoria Scholarship Program

Guidelines for Universities and TAFEs

October 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides information about the *Pathway to Victoria Scholarship Program* providing grants to universities and TAFEs registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS).

2. ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The *Pathway to Victoria Scholarships Program* has been designed to drive demand for study in Victoria, with the availability of scholarships a key factor in international student decision-making. The scholarships will help re-build key study pathways which have been disrupted by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic.

A targeted approach in both mature and emerging markets presents opportunities to protect and grow Victoria's market share.

The program will provide the opportunity to all CRICOS registered universities and TAFEs to apply for grants which they can then use to provide scholarships to international students with packaged offers.

Examples of eligible packaged offers include:

1. English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Program [packaged with Vocational Education and Training (VET) or Higher Education (HE) Programs]
2. VET Program [packaged with VET Program at higher AQF level or HE Program]
3. University Foundation Program, including higher education diploma [packaged with HE Program]

International students studying ELICOS only, are not eligible for the scholarships.

The scholarships are to be used for the initial pathway program, i.e. the ELICOS, VET Program or University Foundation Program, provided that the student then pathways on to their principal course at the university or TAFE in receipt of the grant. Scholarships are up to \$2,500 per student.

Grant recipients can partner with another CRICOS provider (including TAFE, private provider or university) to deliver the scholarship course component, provided the scholarship recipient then pathways to the principal course at the TAFE or university in receipt of the grant. The partnership arrangement will be managed by the grant recipient.

International students can commence their scholarship program online or with a transnational partner of the grant recipient while still in their home country.

If a scholarship student does not go on to undertake the principal course with the grant recipient, they are no longer deemed eligible for the scholarship. The grant recipient will need to refund the money to the Victorian Government. A process to mitigate this risk must be managed by the grant recipient.

The objective of the program is to provide an incentive for international students to study at a Victorian TAFE or university, commence the scholarship program online and then pathway to study the principal course in Victoria with the grant recipient, once borders re-open.

However, given the uncertainty around borders, it may be that the scholarship student undertakes their principal course online while still in their home country.

3. FUNDING

The Victorian Government will enter into a grant agreement with each approved institution for \$437,500 (ex GST). This equates to 175 scholarships at \$2500 (ex GST) each.

The grant money is to be used for the scholarships only and cannot be used for administration or marketing purposes.

Under the funding agreements, grants to universities and TAFEs will be distributed before 30 June 2021 and must be expended by 31 December 2022 or refunded to the Victorian Government.

4. STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Each grant recipient will be responsible for ensuring *Pathway to Victoria Scholarship* students meet the following eligibility criteria:

They must be an international student who:

1. accepts a packaged offer for the pathway program with the grant recipient or partner pathway institution, and the principal course with the grant recipient
2. is enrolled with the grant recipient (or partner institution) for the pathway program
3. will undertake the principal course with the grant recipient.

5. APPLICATION PROCESS

Institutions will be invited to submit a brief proposal that outlines the following:

- Name of institution
- Name and contact details of the person responsible for the administration of the grant
- The approach to be taken to target scholarship students
- Risk mitigation strategy to ensure that the scholarship recipient pathways to their principal course
- Name of partner institution (if applicable)
- Background information on partner institution, including how long you have been partners and what they will be delivering

An application proforma will be provided for this information.

The Victorian Government will enter into Grant Agreements with each institution for \$437,500 (ex GST).

Under the Grant Agreements, grants to universities and TAFEs will be distributed before 30 June 2021. Grants must be expended by the institutions by 31 December 2022 or refunded to the Victorian Government.

6. REPORTING

Grant recipients will be required to provide a quarterly (every three months) report on the uptake of the program.

An excel report template will be provided with the Legal Agreement.

7. VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In notifying students of their *Pathway to Victoria Scholarship* you must acknowledge the contribution of the Victorian Government and Study Melbourne.

SUGGESTED WORDING:

The *Pathway to Victoria Scholarship Program* has been made possible by funding from the Victorian Government through Study Melbourne.

FAQS

Can the scholarships be offered to international students that are studying ELICOS programs only?

No. Scholarships can only be offered to students who are on a packaged visa and are progressing to their principal course.

What happens if a student on a scholarship does not go on to commence their principal course?

The grant recipient must re-coup the \$2500 from the student or absorb the cost of the delivery. The money will be re-funded to the Victorian Government or used to fund another scholarship. This risk will need to be mitigated by the grant recipient

What happens if the cost of the course is less than \$2500?

The student should be offered a scholarship for the advertised cost of the course and the excess amount will need to be returned to the Victorian Government. Alternatively, the excess funds could be bundled up and offered as another scholarship.

Can students be offered more than one scholarship?

No. A student can only be provided one scholarship for either their ELICOS or their foundation course. They must then progress to their principal course.

What happens if a scholarship student does not progress to their principal course because of academic failure?

Scholarship students should be carefully selected to ensure this does not occur. The grant recipient must re-coup the \$2500 from the student or absorb the cost of the delivery. This risk should be managed by the institutions risk management strategy for the program.

What happens if the student referred to above subsequently enrolls with another provider?

The grant recipient must still re-coup the \$2500 from the student or absorb the cost of the delivery as the scholarship student did not progress to the principal course with the grant recipient.

Does the principal course need to commence in 2022?

No. Realistically the timeframe may be 2023. The only time restriction is that the 175 scholarships are awarded by 31 December 2022 (or the money returned to the Victorian Government)

Given the changes to the Student Eligibility in the Program Guidelines, will changes need to be made to the grant agreement?

No, there are no changes necessary to the grant agreement as it states that the eligibility requirements must 'comply with the Pathway to Victoria Scholarship Guidelines (which may be revised by the Department from time to time to meet any evolving Program requirements)'.
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