



Australian Government
Department of Education

Commonwealth
Teaching Scholarships

Applicant Handbook

Round One – 2023/24



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The document must be attributed as the Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships Application Handbook.

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Overview

In December 2022, Education Ministers agreed the [National Teacher Workforce Action Plan](#) (Action Plan) which outlines initiatives to address teacher workforce issues across five priority areas.

The Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships Program (the Scholarships program), previously referred to as bursaries, is an initiative under Priority Area 1 of the Action Plan to increase the number of people choosing teaching as a career.

The Australian Government has committed \$160 million to establish the Scholarships to attract school leavers and career changers to teaching and help address teacher workforce shortages.

The Scholarships program will support up to 5,000 eligible new undergraduate and postgraduate students to undertake and complete an [accredited initial teacher education \(ITE\) program](#) in exchange for teaching in government schools or government-run early learning settings for a time equivalent to their ITE program. Recipients will have 10 years from their expected graduation date to complete these teaching requirements.

Scholarships of up to \$40,000 per student are available for new undergraduate ITE students and up to \$20,000 for new postgraduate ITE students.

Up to 1,000 scholarships per year will be offered over five years, commencing in 2024, with the final round in 2028.

In accepting an offer to receive a scholarship, recipients must agree to sign a legally binding Scholarship Agreement with the Australian Government Department of Education (the Department).

This handbook provides an overview of the Scholarships. It covers:

- who can apply, including target cohorts
- the application process and how to apply
- the selection process
- accepting an offer
- the commitment to teach obligation
- where you can teach to meet your obligation
- your responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Department.

Information in this handbook is published as a guide only. Please refer to the Scholarships website at www.education.gov.au/teaching-scholarships for current information including:

- Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships Guidelines
- Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships Agreement template.

Round One applications close at 11.59pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT), Sunday 14 January 2024.



Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships Program



Through the Commonwealth Teaching Scholarships Program (the Scholarships program) you will make a difference to the lives of students and to schools across Australia.

Scholarships of up to \$40,000 per student are available for new full-time undergraduate ITE students and up to \$20,000 for new full-time postgraduate ITE students. In return for a scholarship, you will be required to teach in government schools or government-run early learning settings for a period of time equivalent to the length of your ITE program. This is the commitment to teach obligation.

You can apply for a scholarship in Round One if you will be commencing your first year of study in the first semester/study period of 2024. You cannot apply for a scholarship if you are in your second or subsequent year of study.



	Full-time undergraduate (e.g. Bachelor of Education)	Full-time postgraduate (e.g. Master of Teaching)
Scholarship funding	Up to \$40,000 (\$10,000 per year for four years) Available for a maximum of four years	Up to \$20,000 (\$10,000 per year for two years) Available for a maximum of two years
Commitment to teach obligation	Up to four years full-time equivalent teaching in government schools or government-run early learning settings	Up to two years full-time equivalent teaching in government schools or government-run early learning settings
Time to complete commitment to teach obligation	10 years	10 years

Additional payment for remote professional experience placements

A top up payment of \$2,000 may be available to scholarship recipients who undertake a final-year professional experience placement in a government school or government-run early learning setting in a remote area.

Deferring your studies

If you need to defer an ITE enrolment after you have commenced studying, you will need to submit a Deferral form (which will be available on the Scholarships website). Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. There is no guarantee that requests will be granted.

Scholarship payments

You will receive annual payments of \$10,000 once you have provided the required evidence of enrolment and continued enrolment in an ITE program. You must have a bank account with an Australian financial institution in order to receive scholarship payments. Scholarship payments will be deposited into the bank account you supply, with payments for each year of the scholarship, paid in the first semester/study period of each year.

You are strongly encouraged to seek appropriate, independent and qualified financial, taxation and legal advice before entering into a Scholarship Agreement so that you are fully aware of the implications of accepting a scholarship and your obligations.



Who can apply

To be eligible to receive a scholarship, you must:

- be living in Australia
- be an Australian citizen, a permanent resident, a holder of a permanent humanitarian visa, or a New Zealand citizen living in Australia
- intend to enrol, or are enrolling, for full-time study in Australia in an [accredited ITE program](#) commencing in the first semester/study period of 2024
- not have commenced an accredited ITE program prior to 2024
- provide evidence of your ATAR or equivalent academic result (e.g. Grade Point Average or Weighted Average Mark for postgraduate applicants)
- be willing to commit to teaching for four years full time or equivalent (undergraduate) or two years full time or equivalent (postgraduate) in government schools or government-run early learning settings (see commitment to teach obligation on page 14). You have 10 years, after your expected graduation date¹, to meet this obligation.

Importantly, you should identify in your online application if you belong to one or more of the following target cohorts:

- high achieving students with an ATAR of 80 or above or equivalent academic result
- First Nations peoples
- mid-career professionals
- people from regional, rural and remote areas
- people for whom English is an additional language or dialect
- people with disability
- people from low socio-economic backgrounds.

What is an accredited initial teacher education (ITE) program?

ITE programs accredited under the *Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (Accreditation Standards and Procedures) are eligible courses of study. A list of accredited ITE programs can be found at www.aitsl.edu.au/deliver-ite-programs/apl.

¹ Four years from commencement of ITE study for undergraduate students and two years from commencement of ITE study for postgraduate students.



If I do not identify as belonging to one of the target cohorts will my application still be considered?

All applications will be considered, however scholarships will be awarded based on academic achievement and whether an applicant has identified as belonging to one or more of the target cohorts until all funding is exhausted. Assessors reserve the right to consider the representation of target cohorts when assessing applications.

Can I accept a Commonwealth Teaching Scholarship if I have applied for, or are receiving, another scholarship or financial incentive?

If you are successful in receiving a Commonwealth Teaching Scholarship, you can apply for or accept other scholarships or financial incentives, such as those offered by state and territory governments or universities, to support your studies. However, you should carefully consider the requirements and obligations for all scholarships or incentives to ensure there are no restrictions preventing you from applying for, or accepting, additional scholarships or incentives. You should ensure you are able to meet all of the requirements expected of you in all scholarships or incentives.

Depending on your situation, some or all of the scholarship payment may be considered income for social security law purposes and may impact the rate at which you receive a social security payment. You are responsible for confirming that receiving a scholarship does not affect support or financial assistance from other sources.

Can I apply if I am commencing an employment-based ITE pathway program?

Yes, you can apply if you are commencing an employment-based pathway into teaching. Your commitment to teach obligation, however, will commence from your expected date of graduation. This means the employment you undertake as part of your employment-based pathway program will not count towards your commitment to teach obligation.

Can I apply for a Commonwealth Teaching Scholarship if I have already commenced or am part-way through my ITE course?

No. The program aims to encourage more people to become teachers and Round One is only open to people who are enrolling in an accredited ITE program commencing in the first semester/study period of 2024.

Can I apply if I am intending on, or enrolling to study, initial teacher education part-time?

No, only applicants intending to study an accredited ITE program full-time are eligible to apply. For more information, please see the Scholarship Guidelines.



I have previously enrolled in an ITE program but withdrew and did not complete it. Am I eligible for a scholarship?

If you are currently part-way through an ITE program and have been continuously enrolled (including any deferral periods) prior to 2024, you are not eligible to apply for a scholarship.

If you have previously enrolled in an ITE program but withdrew your enrolment and failed to complete the course, your application may be considered. You will need to provide evidence from the higher education provider of your previous withdrawal of enrolment to support your claim of eligibility.

I have been granted, or will be seeking, recognition of prior learning which may shorten the length of my ITE program. What impact will that have on my scholarship?

Scholarships may provide financial assistance of up to \$40,000 (equivalent to \$10,000 per year of study), subject to provision of evidence of continued full-time enrolment in an accredited ITE program. Recipients will be required to commit to teach for a time equivalent to the length of their ITE program completion. If you complete your undergraduate degree in three years, for example, you will receive \$30,000 and you will be required to teach for three years (full-time equivalent) to fulfil your commitment to teach obligation.

Applications identifying recognition of prior learning will be considered on a case by case basis. You will need to provide evidence of the approved recognition of prior learning, and your expected completion or graduation date if you receive a Conditional Offer.

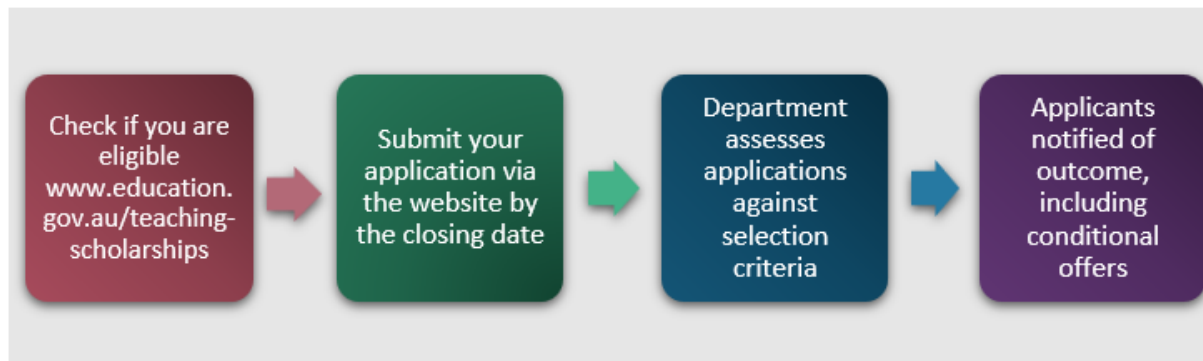
I have accelerated my ITE program and am going to complete it earlier than anticipated. What impact will that have on my scholarship?

Scholarships may provide financial assistance of up to \$40,000 (equivalent to \$10,000 per year of study), subject to provision of evidence of continued full-time enrolment in an accredited ITE program. Recipients will be required to commit to teaching for a time equivalent to the length of their ITE program completion. If you had intended to complete your undergraduate degree in four years, for example, but will complete it earlier, this is a notifiable event and you must inform the Department, and provide evidence of, the change in your expected graduation date. This may impact the details of your Scholarship Agreement and the financial assistance available. If you complete your postgraduate degree in 1.5 years, for example, you will receive \$15,000 and will be required to teach for 1.5 years (full-time equivalent) to fulfil your commitment to teach obligation.

Notifiable events (see Scholarship Guidelines) are a legal requirement and must be actioned in the required timeframes set out in the Scholarship Agreement.



The application process



Application checklist

- ? Do you meet the eligibility requirements?
- ? Have you read and understood the Applicant Handbook, the Scholarship Guidelines and sample Scholarship Agreement?
- ? Is all information complete and accurate? Providing false or misleading information will exclude your application and is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*.
- ? Are you willing to teach in government schools or government-run early learning settings for the required time post-graduation (see commitment to teach obligation)? It is up to you to find employment in government schools or government-run early learning settings and provide evidence of eligible work towards meeting your obligation.
- ? Have you read and understood the requirements to provide proof annually to the Department to confirm you are continuing to meet your scholarship obligations. Remember you have 10 years from expected graduation in which to meet your commitment to teach obligations.
- ? Do you have the required documentation to support your application?

Note: For evidence of Australian citizenship, permanent residency, holding a permanent humanitarian visa or being a New Zealand citizen living in Australia, certified copies of documentation are required.
- ? Are your contact details, including email, correct?
- ? Have you kept a copy of your application and supporting documents?
- ? Have you subscribed to stay up to date with new program information on the [Scholarships website](#)?

If you find an error in your application after submitting, you should contact the Department immediately, at TeachingScholarships@education.gov.au. Please note the Department does not have to accept any additional information, or requests, to correct an application after the closing



date. If the Department finds an error or that information is missing, it may ask you to clarify information or provide additional documentation.

You are not able to change your application after the closing date and time, 11.59pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT), Sunday 14 January 2024.

You should keep the copy of your application (which is automatically emailed to you when you submit your completed online application form) and keep any supporting documents.

The Department will acknowledge your application has been received, once you have successfully submitted the application and all supporting documents.

You must submit your application through the application form on the [Scholarships website](#). If you require further guidance or are unable to submit your application online, you should contact the Department at TeachingScholarships@education.gov.au.

Can I submit an application if I am waiting to be accepted into an accredited ITE program?

You can submit an application in Round One if you are intending to enrol in, or are waiting to be accepted into, an accredited ITE program commencing in the first semester/study period of 2024. If you receive a conditional scholarship offer from the Department, you will need to provide evidence of your enrolment in full-time undergraduate or postgraduate ITE studies. This evidence will be required before you sign your Scholarship Agreement.

Can I submit an application if I have not received my ATAR yet?

If you are completing Year 12 in 2023 you can submit an application in Round One once you have received your ATAR. Applications for Round One are open from November 2023 to 14 January 2024. Applications will not be assessed until after the closing date. This means that you will need to submit your application after you have received your ATAR – you will not be able to submit your application without providing evidence of your ATAR.

How to apply

To apply, you must:



- Complete the online application form on the [Scholarships website](#)
- Provide all information requested
- Meet all eligibility criteria
- Include all necessary supporting evidence.

If you submit more than one application, only the last application received by the Department will be assessed.



When to apply

Scholarship application and round details, including opening and closing dates, current Scholarship Guidelines and other information are available from the [Scholarships website](#).

You must submit an application between the published opening and closing dates on the [Scholarships website](#). Round One applications will open in November 2023 and will close at 11.59pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT), Sunday 14 January 2024.

The Department is unable to accept late applications.

Supporting documentation

The following documents must be included with your application (or provided as supplementary evidence once obtained):

- Certified copies of evidence of Australian citizenship, permanent residency, holding a permanent humanitarian visa or being a New Zealand citizen living in Australia
- Evidence of your ATAR or equivalent academic record (e.g. Special Tertiary Admissions Test (STAT), Grade Point Average (GPA), Weighted Average Mark (WAM))
- Evidence of your application for an [accredited ITE program](#), or
- Evidence of enrolment in an [accredited ITE program](#).

You must declare that all information you provide in your application is complete and correct, including if you identify as belonging to any of the target cohorts.

Note: The Department may request additional information or documents if required to assess your application.

Selection process

Your application will be checked by the Department to make sure it meets eligibility conditions. If your application is eligible, it will then be assessed by the Department.

If the number of eligible applications exceeds the amount of funds available, then eligible applications will be ranked based on the applicant's level of academic achievement and whether the applicant is in one or more of the target cohorts.

Note: Not all applicants are guaranteed a scholarship.

Notification of application outcomes

You will be advised by the Department via email of the outcome of your application following the assessment process. The assessment process may take some time, so please be patient. If you are successful, the Department will advise you of any specific conditions attached to your scholarship.



How long will it take before I find out if my application is successful?

The assessment period for Round One will commence once applications close on 14 January 2024. Conditional Scholarship Offers (pending submission of further evidence or documentation) are expected to be made during February and March 2024. It is important to note not all applications may be successful.

Accepting your offer

If you are successful, you will receive a letter of Conditional Scholarship Offer from the Department. This will confirm you have met the requirement to receive a Commonwealth Teaching Scholarship and set out the Scholarship Agreement and next steps.

To accept your offer you will be required to provide proof of full-time enrolment commencing in an accredited undergraduate or postgraduate ITE program in the first semester/study period of 2024.

You must also agree to enter into a legally binding Scholarship Agreement with the Department.

Scholarship Agreement

If you accept a scholarship you must agree to sign a legally binding Scholarship Agreement with the Department. A sample Scholarship Agreement is on the [Scholarships website](#).

The Scholarship Agreement will include:



- The maximum scholarship amount to be paid and the payment schedule.
- The timeframe over which it is to be paid, reflecting program type (i.e. undergraduate or postgraduate).
- The requirements of the commitment to teach obligation.
- Your obligations and reporting requirements.
- Arrangements for repayment of your scholarship if you don't meet your obligations.

If you fail to meet your obligations under the Scholarship Agreement, the Department may terminate your scholarship and may require repayment of all, or a proportion of, the scholarship amount.

Reporting and compliance

You will be required to:

- provide to the Department proof of full-time enrolment in an accredited ITE program
- report annually to the Department on your continued enrolment in an accredited ITE program
- report annually to the Department to confirm you are meeting scholarship obligations



- notify the Department of any changes to your circumstances that affect your obligations or ability to fulfill your obligations under the Scholarship Agreement
- notify the Department of any changes to your personal details, including contact details and bank account details.

Notifiable events

If you are successful in gaining a scholarship, you must tell the Department of significant events and changes to your personal circumstances within 28 days of the event or change occurring by submitting a Notifiable events form (which will be available on the [Scholarships website](#)). This includes:

- name change
- any change in your primary or secondary contact details, including phone number, email address or postal address
- any change to bank account details
- any change which impacts upon completion time of your ITE study
- completion of ITE study (i.e. graduation) or any change to expected graduation from ITE study
- teacher registration ID (including provisional)
- commencement of employment in a teaching role and employer details
- cessation of employment.

Commitment to teach obligation

If you are successful in gaining a scholarship you are required to teach for a time equivalent to the length of your ITE program in government schools or government-run early learning settings. This is the commitment to teach obligation and is four years (full-time equivalent) if you are completing an undergraduate ITE program and two years (full-time equivalent) if you are completing a postgraduate ITE program.

You will have 10 years from the time of your expected ITE program graduation date to fulfill the commitment to teach obligation. It is up to you to find employment in government schools or government-run early learning settings and provide evidence of eligible work towards meeting your obligation.

What work can I do to meet my obligation?

Teaching roles that require an ITE qualification are considered as eligible work to fulfill the commitment to teach obligation. You can work in full-time, part-time or casual (or a combination of) teaching roles.

Note: If you teach on a part-time or casual basis, the full-time equivalent requirement must still be fulfilled. For example, approximately 6.5 years teaching at a part-time rate (approx. 3 days a week



for each year) may be equivalent to the four years full-time teaching required if you completed an undergraduate ITE program.

How do I calculate my commitment to teach (CTT)?

A general calculation for the CTT obligation, working in a full-time equivalent capacity, may equate to:

- Undergraduate ITE recipient- approximately 776-800 days to complete the 4 year full-time equivalent CTT obligation and;
- Postgraduate ITE recipient- approximately 388-400 days to complete the 2 year full-time equivalent CTT obligation.

For further information on calculating your commitment to teach you can refer to the Commitment to Teach Policy available on the [Scholarships website](#).

Where can I teach to meet my obligation?

You will be able to fulfill your commitment to teach obligation if you intend to teach in government schools or government-run early learning settings. You may teach in more than one of these eligible settings, in any Australian location, to meet your obligation.

Note: The Australian Government Department of Education does not employ teachers. Scholarship recipients are responsible for seeking employment and applying directly to employers.

I am completing an employment-based pathway into teaching, does this count towards my commitment to teach obligation.

The 10-year period for completing your commitment to teach obligation commences from your expected date of graduation from your ITE program. This means that teaching undertaken while completing your employment-based pathway does not count towards meeting your obligation.

Does teaching prior to graduation under an alternative authorisation to teach arrangement count towards my commitment to teach obligation?

The 10-year period for completing your commitment to teach obligation commences from your expected date of graduation from your ITE program. This means that teaching undertaken prior to graduation under an alternative authorisation to teach or permission to teach does not count towards meeting your obligation.



Extensions to commitment to teach requirement

If you need to apply for an extension of the commitment to teach requirement beyond 10 years, you will need to submit an Extension form (which will be available on the Scholarships website). Applications for extensions will be considered by the Department on a case-by-case basis and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. There is no guarantee that requests will be granted.

Exemptions

Exemptions from completing the scholarship obligations will be considered by the Department on a case-by-case basis. Acceptable reasons for seeking an exemption include medical and compassionate reasons. If seeking an exemption, you will need to submit an Exemption form (which will be available on the [Scholarships website](#)). There is no guarantee that requests will be granted.

Not meeting your scholarship commitments

If you decide to permanently withdraw from your ITE program or do not meet your commitment to teach obligation, and do not have an approved exemption from the Department, you may be required to pay back all, or part, of the scholarship funding received.

Your responsibilities as a scholarship recipient

As a scholarship recipient, during your ITE program, you are responsible for:

- meeting the entry requirements of your ITE provider
- signing and adhering to the requirements of the Scholarship Agreement and the Scholarship Guidelines
- meeting all the requirements (academic and non-academic) of your ITE provider to successfully complete your program
- meeting the standard of the Literacy and Numeracy Test for Initial Teacher Education (LANTITE) prior to graduation
- passing the final year Teaching Performance Assessment prior to graduation
- completing and submitting a Plan to Teach in your final year of study
- notifying the Department of any significant events and changes to your personal circumstances within 28 days of the event occurring.

As a scholarship recipient, upon graduation from your ITE program, you are responsible for:

- adhering to the requirements of the Scholarship Agreement and the Scholarship Guidelines
- meeting the provisional teacher registration requirements of your relevant state or territory



- completing the Working with Vulnerable People/Working with Children and police checks required in your state or territory
- finding eligible employment in government schools or government-run early learning settings after graduating from your ITE program
- submitting evidence of your employment as a teacher in a government school or government-run early learning setting in order to monitor progress towards the commitment to teach obligation. Acceptable evidence includes an employment contract, payslips, or other evidence of holding a teaching position (full-time, part-time or casual/relief)
- participating in a program evaluation if asked to do so by the Department
- notifying the Department of any significant events and changes to your personal circumstances within 28 days of the event occurring.

Our responsibilities

The Department is responsible for:

- promoting the Scholarships program
- administering the application rounds and selecting scholarship recipients, ensuring the process is fair and according to the published guidelines
- treating any personal information according to the [Privacy Act 1988](#) and the [Australian Privacy Principles](#)
- monitoring scholarship recipient's adherence to the terms of the Scholarship Agreement
- administering scholarship payments
- maintaining the Scholarship Guidelines
- monitoring and evaluating the overall program performance.

Where to go for information and advice

The Scholarships website at www.education.gov.au/teaching-scholarships has the most up-to-date information and resources about the Scholarships program.

You can register your interest to stay informed about the Scholarships, through the [Scholarships website](#). Registering your interest is not the same as applying. To apply you must complete an online application form at the [Scholarships website](#).

For information about teaching as a career and to hear from teachers about why they choose to teach, visit the Be That Teacher website at <https://www.bethatteacher.gov.au>.

Still have questions?

You can contact the Department at TeachingScholarships@education.gov.au

