

Office of Aboriginal Health Scholarship Program

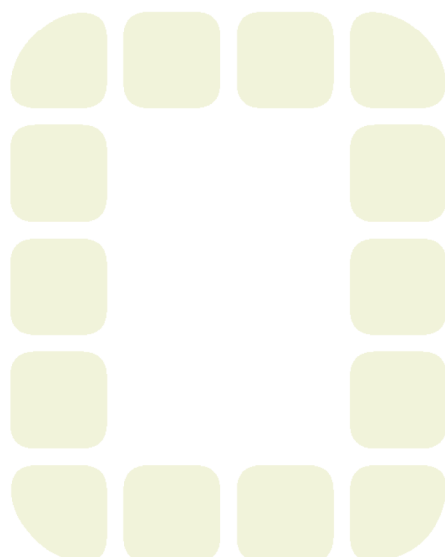
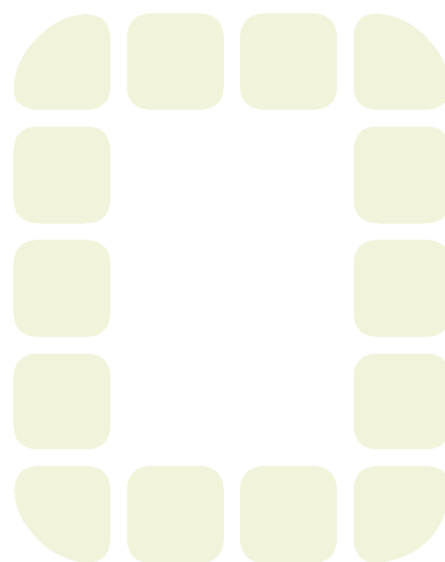
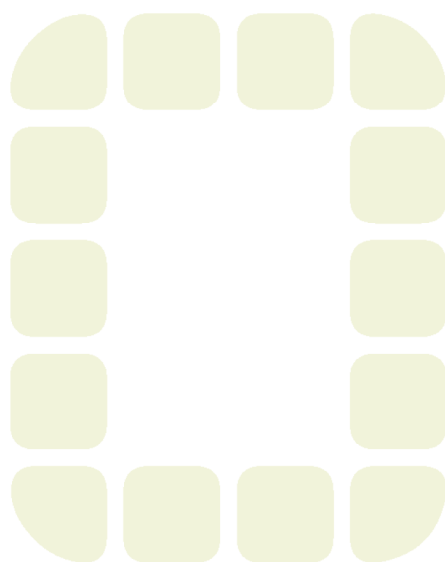
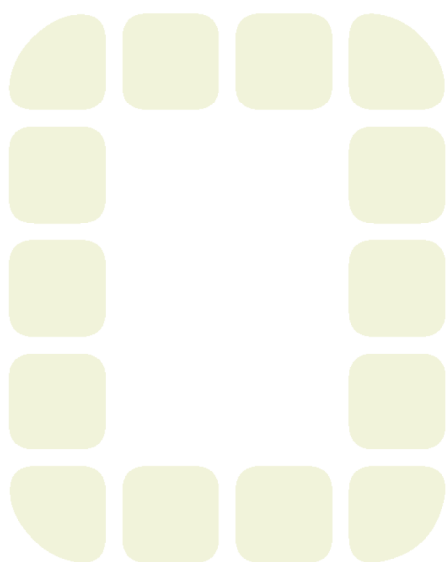


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Office of Aboriginal Health Scholarship Program

OVERVIEW

Aim

- To encourage the retention of WA Aboriginal students in health related fields

Who Can Apply?

- Aboriginal students enrolled for full-time study in the coming year who have been a Western Australian resident for at least the past 2 years.

Eligible Courses

- Accredited health services undergraduate University course (e.g. Medicine, Nursing, Physiotherapy, Social Work, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology etc).

OR

- Accredited health services course offered by TAFE or another registered training organisation.

Available Money

Full scholarship amount per annum is \$6,000. Half scholarships of \$3,000 are also available.

Requirements

Documentation required for application includes:

- Proof of course enrolment
- Proof of Aboriginality may be requested
- Comments from nominated referee
- Statement addressing involvement in Aboriginal community
- Statement explaining financial need

1. Background

The Office of Aboriginal Health (OAH) Scholarship program was established in 1998 to encourage the retention of Aboriginal students in health related fields, to progress with their studies. A range of Scholarships has been developed for Aboriginal students looking to enter, or continue, training in health related occupations. These include:

- The Rob Riley Scholarship for Medicine;
- The Jean Collard Scholarship for Nursing;
- The Joan Winch Scholarship for Allied Health;
- The Mary Albert Scholarship for Aboriginal Health Work; and
- The Ian Leslie Scholarship for Postgraduate Health studies;

In recent times, tertiary institutions have taken steps to expand the opportunities available to Aboriginal people who have entered health-related courses of study. These initiatives have included the provision of designated places for Aboriginal students in the UWA School of Medicine and Dentistry and the establishment of special support facilities at each of the four universities in Western Australia.

2. Aim and Purpose

- 2.1 The scholarship aims to address the under-representation of Aboriginal people in health professions and other health and human service related occupations. The scholarship is also designed to assist in increasing the number of Aboriginal health workers with qualifications and is an important adjunct to the Department's Aboriginal Employment Strategy.
- 2.2 There are significant barriers to Aboriginal people entering formal studies due to a range of factors, including:
 - The older age profile of Aboriginal students and the need to provide financial support for dependent children and extended families; and
 - Significant travel and relocation costs associated with formal accredited study.
- 2.3 Aboriginal people continue to have very poor health and well-being outcomes when compared to the rest of the population. Increasing the number of Aboriginal people with formal post secondary qualifications in a range of health and human services related occupations will lead to improved employment outcomes for individual Aboriginal people and will also contribute to the positive health and well-being of the Aboriginal community as a whole.
- 2.4 An increase in the number of formally qualified Aboriginal people in various health services occupations may help to increase the use of services by Aboriginal people. This, in turn, may help address the significant over-representation of Aboriginal people across a range of negative health and well-being indicators. Increasing the numbers of

qualified Aboriginal people will also help to introduce an Aboriginal perspective to a range of occupations. This may lead to an increased awareness and sensitivity towards Aboriginal needs in a range of areas.

3. Scholarship Details

- 3.1 The scholarship is open only to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students.
- 3.2 The full scholarship will be six thousand dollars (\$6,000) per annum, payable in two equal amounts at the beginning of each university semester and conditional upon satisfactory academic progress on the part of the student. Half Scholarships amounting to three thousand dollars (\$3,000) are also available to be awarded.
- 3.3 The scholarships will be awarded by a panel of representatives selected by OAH. The panel will evaluate each application on a case by case basis, taking into consideration factors such as income, location of student and institution, career aspirations, course and personal factors when making a final decision.
- 3.4 Application for renewal of the scholarship is to be completed each year.

4. Eligible Students

- 4.1 Students must be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and must be residents of Western Australia or show that they were residents of Western Australia (WA) for at least 2 continuous years prior to commencement of the course to which the scholarship will apply. The student must reside and study in WA for the duration of the scholarship.
- 4.2 Students cannot be awarded the scholarship more than once.

5. Eligible Courses

- 5.1 All Aboriginal students currently studying full time in WA in a formal accredited health services undergraduate course at University or an accredited health service related course offered by TAFE or other registered training organisations are eligible to apply.
- 5.2 All Aboriginal students who have applied for and have been accepted into a full time formal accredited health related course at University or an accredited health related course offered by TAFE or other registered training organisations are eligible to apply.
- 5.3 A course is classified as **full-time** if it is:
 - 5.3.1 a higher education course classified as full-time by the institution and with a HECS weighting; or
 - 5.3.2 a non-HECS course of one academic year's duration or longer and involves at least 12 contact hours a week.
- 5.4 A “**registered training organisation**” is an organisation that is registered by the relevant State or Territory training recognition authority in accordance with the Australian Recognition Framework to provide one or more vocational education and training programs.

- 5.5 Students studying for medicine, nursing qualifications (registered and enrolled) or other allied health qualifications (such as social work, pharmacy, dental therapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology etc.) are encouraged to apply and may be given priority at assessment.
- 5.6 Aboriginal Health Workers undertaking accredited Aboriginal Health Worker qualifications are also eligible and encouraged to apply.
- 5.7 Aboriginal students who are undertaking or intending to undertake eligible studies at University, TAFE and other registered training organisations in other States due to the unavailability of particular course types in Western Australia are also eligible to apply.
- 5.8 The Ian Leslie Scholarship is available for post-graduate award courses (including Honours degrees).
- 5.9 The scholarships are not available for pre-tertiary preparatory courses.
- 5.10 The scholarships are not available for courses that are wholly conducted by correspondence or distance education.

6. Proof of Enrolment

- 6.1 Applicants are required to provide proof of their enrolment at the approved institution with their application for the scholarship.

7. Income

- 7.1 An income test will apply as part of the eligibility requirements for the scholarship.

8. Selection Criteria

- 8.1 All applications will be assessed by the selection panel established by OAH.
- 8.2 A successful applicant may be required to demonstrate his or her Aboriginal identity if that applicant is unknown to the Aboriginal selection panel.
- 8.3 In making its decisions, the selection panel will take into account:
 - Previous academic performance;
 - Previous employment history;
 - The likely contribution the applicant will make to the Aboriginal community upon completion of his or her studies;
 - The potential for personal growth and development for the applicant; and
 - Comments from nominated referees.
- 8.4 Applicants are required to write (100-200 words) on their involvement with the Western Australian Aboriginal Community and **also** a statement (100-200 words) of their financial need explaining why they would like to receive the Scholarship.

9. Selection Panel

- 9.1 A selection panel will be formed by the OAH, to assess applications and award the scholarships.
- 9.2 The selection panel may elect to make a shortlist of applicants and conduct interviews.
- 9.3 The selection panel will make their recommendations to the Director OAH, who will then announce the results.

10. Aboriginal Identity Requirements

- 10.1 The Chairperson of the selection panel will consult with the OAH if the Aboriginal identity of a successful applicant is unknown to the selection panel.
- 10.2 If staff at OAH have grounds to doubt an applicant's identity, the Chairperson of the selection panel will be advised and OAH will request that the applicant provide evidence of their identity. In such cases, the applicant will be required to supply documentation to OAH in support of their application.
- 10.3 Where an applicant is requested to provide information to confirm identity, it must be supplied to OAH within three (3) weeks of the request. If the information is not supplied within that timeframe, the application will lapse and will not be considered for that year. In the event of a lapsed application, the panel will reconvene and consider other applicants in that year.
- 10.4 The evidence of identity is based on the three-part criteria used by Commonwealth and State Government Agencies to determine Aboriginal identity, as defined by various Federal Court decisions.
- 10.5 An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person:
 - Must be of Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; and
 - Must identify as an Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and
 - Must be accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives or has lived.
- 10.6 As a minimum requirement to satisfy the definition, an applicant who has been requested to provide additional information to support his or her claim of Aboriginal identity must be able to clearly demonstrate that he or she is of Aboriginal descent.
- 10.7 The type of information to be supplied to confirm Aboriginal identity is as follows:
 - 10.7.1 Aboriginal Ancestry
 - A person must be able to provide authentic documentary evidence that shows a direct line of ancestry through an

identifiable family name to traditional Aboriginal society. This will usually be in the form of a verifiable family tree, or archival or historical documentation that links a person to a traditional family or person. Photographic evidence or family folklore alone will not normally be sufficient to prove Aboriginal ancestry. OAH may consult with the Archives Office of Western Australia in relation to any historical information that is provided.

- Where a person is claiming their Aboriginal ancestry from outside Western Australia, proof of descent must be made available from that other area of Australia concerned.

10.7.2 Communal Recognition

- In addition to showing Aboriginal ancestry, a person must be able to demonstrate communal recognition or acceptance by members of the Aboriginal community. This means that a person must be known to be Aboriginal by other Aboriginal people in the community.
- In practical terms a person will generally be required to obtain three signed statements from recognised members of the Aboriginal community confirming that they know the applicant to be Aboriginal. The signatories to the statements must not be from the immediate family group of the applicant and must be from family groups who are accepted members of the Aboriginal community.
- It would not usually be sufficient for confirmation of communal recognition to come from an Aboriginal organisation alone, without separate support from members of the Aboriginal community. However, evidence of communal recognition may be considered from one or more Aboriginal organisations alone, if the basis of the evidence can be properly demonstrated.

10.7.3 Self Identification

- In addition to showing Aboriginal ancestry and communal recognition, a person must be able to demonstrate self-identification as an Aboriginal person.

10.8 After considering the information supplied, OAH will make a recommendation to the Chairperson of the selection panel to either:

- Accept the person's application on the grounds that evidence has been provided to establish his or her identity; or

- Reject the person's application on the grounds that evidence has not been provided to establish his or her identity.

10.9 OAH will inform the applicant directly of the recommendation being made and the reasons for such.

11. Payment of Scholarship

11.1 The scholarship will be paid to the successful applicants in equal installments based on academic years.

11.2 Scholarship holders who withdraw from their course less than 6 months after commencement in any year of the course may be required to attend an interview with the selection panel and may be required to repay the scholarship installment paid for that year.

11.3 Proof of enrolment must be supplied to the OAH at the beginning of each year in order for scholarship installments to be paid.

12. Academic Results

12.1 Successful scholarship holders will be required to supply an official transcript of their academic results at the end of each semester. Scholarship installments will not be paid until academic results are provided and satisfactory progress is noted.

12.2 Scholarship holders must immediately advise the OAH of any changes to their course enrolment. Failure to advise of course changes may result in forfeiture of the scholarship.

12.3 Scholarship holders who withdraw from their course will immediately forfeit their scholarship.

13. Deferral of Studies

13.1 Students who defer studies may be subject to forfeiture of their scholarship.

14. Termination of a Scholarship

14.1 OAH reserves the right to terminate a scholarship at any time, but only after consultation with the selection panel.

14.2 Students who fail any subjects may be required to attend an interview with the scholarship selection panel before a decision is made on whether that student's scholarship will continue.

15. Work Placements

15.1 The Office of Aboriginal Health may from time to time provide work placements during semester breaks.

16. Taxation

- 16.1 Scholarship holders are to make their own enquiries with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) regarding the status of the scholarship for income tax purposes.

17. ABSTUDY

- 17.1 The Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) has advised that the Office of Aboriginal Health Scholarship will be treated as income for the purposes of the ABSTUDY income test.
- 17.2 Students should make their own enquiries with Centrelink on 13 23 17 for further information on ABSTUDY income testing.

18. Contact Details

- 18.1 Applications and information are available from:

Office of Aboriginal Health Scholarship

Department of Health WA

PO Box 8172

Stirling Street

Perth Business Centre WA 6849

Telephone: 9222 2303

Fax: 9222 4378

Information and Application forms can also be downloaded from the DOH website at:

<http://www.aboriginal.health.wa.gov.au/scholarships/index.cfm>

OAH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION

2009

APPLICANT'S DETAILS

Name

Date of Birth
(dd/mm/yy)

Home address

Mailing address if
different

Phone

Fax

Email

ACADEMIC DETAILS

Name of Institution

Name of contact at
institution

Phone (named
contact)

Fax (named contact)

Course title

Type of study

Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/>	Post graduate <input type="checkbox"/>
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F/T <input type="checkbox"/> (Attached proof of full time enrolment)	P/T <input type="checkbox"/>
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If part time, please justify you application, given that the scholarships are intended primarily for full time students

Year of study
(E.g. 1st year, 2nd year, etc)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Have you applied for (or intend to apply for) any other financial assistance for your studies in 2009?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, please give detail

Do you expect to receive income from these sources?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, please give detail including an indicated amount

If applicable, do you expect your spouse to receive any income in 2009?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Do you expect to earn any income from employment, interest, business share dividends or maintenance payments in 2009?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please Indicate estimated total taxable income for 2009.

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Please indicate your sources of income for 2009 below and the expected amount per fortnight and/or year, if appropriate.

	Received per Fortnight (\$)	Received per Year (\$)
ABSTUDY		
Pension/benefit (specify)		
Scholarship (specify)		
Employment		
Partner's income		
Other (specify e.g. bursary etc)		
Total		

Will you be living with your parents/guardians in 2009?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give the following information relating to your parents/guardians:

Total taxable income received in the 2007/2008 financial year?

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Is expected income for 2008/2009 less than 2007/2008?

Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Number and ages of other dependent children

Number:	Ages:
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In 100-200 words, outline your involvement with the Western Australian Aboriginal community to date and how this scholarship will enable you to develop your future plans.

PLEASE ATTACH STATEMENT.

In 100-200 words, write a statement of financial need (explaining why you need the scholarship).

PLEASE ATTACH STATEMENT.

DECLARATION

- I declare that the information supplied on this form is complete, true and correct. I accept that the Office of Aboriginal Health may cross-reference this application with my Abstudy application for the purposes of verification. In signing I authorise DEETYA to confirm details from that application if requested.
- I declare that should my circumstances change i.e. financial, enrolment, health, family etc I will inform the Office of Aboriginal Health immediately.
- I declare that all questions are answered truthfully and completely and if questions are found to be incomplete or misleading then my application will not be considered.
- I further declare that I am of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent and am accepted as such by the community in which I live or am associated.

Signature

Date

DECLARATION above may be verified by contacting the following Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Organisation or person:

Name

Phone

Fax

Email

CHECKLIST

Before submitting your application have you

- Answered every question on the application form?
- Attached proof of full time enrolment?
- Attached statement re: involvement with Aboriginal community & future plans?
- Attached statement of financial need?
- Signed and dated the declaration?

Delivering a Healthy WA



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**