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| Inclusion scholarships for social work placements |
| Round 4 - Frequently asked questions  Updated: 14 March 2025 |

# What are the Inclusion scholarships for social work placements (Placement scholarships)?

The Victorian Government is supporting future social workers by making it easier to complete mandatory practical placements. Placement scholarships will help reduce the financial burden of placements for students who need this support most, supporting them to finish their degrees and start their careers.

# What is the scholarship value?

Placement scholarships are $7,500.

The scholarships will be paid to successful applicants in two instalments. The first payment of $4,000 will be made following your university census date and after confirmation from your university that you have secured a placement. Where you are commencing your placement prior to the university census date and within the scholarship round timeframe, you may receive your payment earlier, pending your university’s confirmation that the placement has commenced.

The second payment of $3,500 will be made at a mid-placement milestone.

Successful applicants can use scholarship payments to help meet day to day living expenses while undertaking placements.

# When are scholarships being offered?

Scholarships will be available for unpaid placements being undertaken between 31 March and 31 December 2025. Round 4 is the final round of the Inclusion scholarships for social work placements program.

# Am I eligible?

To be eligible for a Placement scholarship, you must be:

* a domestic student. This means that you are either an Australian citizen, a New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand), an Australian permanent resident, or an Australian permanent visa holder.
* undertaking a mandatory unpaid practical placement in Victoria or a defined broader community (see Appendix 2) between 31 March 2025 and 31 December 2025, as part of a Bachelor or Master of Social Work with one of the following Victorian public universities:
  + Deakin University
  + Federation University
  + La Trobe University
  + Monash University
  + RMIT University
  + University of Melbourne
  + Victoria University
* be enrolled in a public Victorian university, live in Victoria or a defined border community, and undertaking the placement in Victoria or a defined border community (see Appendix 2), and
* meet one or more of the socio-economic and demographic criteria listed below.

The socio-economic criteria are:

* people from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, you may receive Austudy, ABSTUDY, or other government payment or allowance
* people with experience using social or community services as the main service user or primary carer of a family member who is the main service user of social or community services.

The demographic criteria are:

* Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
* refugees and people from ~~or~~ multicultural backgrounds
* people who identify as LGBTIQA+
* people with disability
* people with caring responsibilities, including single parents, and people caring for a person with disability, chronic health conditions, mental illness, or a person who is frail or aged (as defined by the [*Commonwealth Carer Recognition Act*](https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/publications-articles/carer-recognition-act-2010-guidelines))
* people who live in regional or rural Victoria or defined border communities.

Appendix 1 of the program guidelines contains further information about the socio-economic and demographic criteria. Appendix 2 details the defined border communities.

# What does ‘experience of using social or community services’ mean?

This can include students or their families who have lived in social or public housing or have accessed or been involved with homelessness services, family violence or sexual assault services, child and family support including child protection or out-of-home care, foster care, kinship care, residential care or youth justice or services delivered by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations. This can also include students who are the primary carer of a family member who has used social or community services.

Examples of accessing social and community services may include the following: carer support programs; case management; counselling; crisis care response; family preservation and reunification; parenting services; respite and support care.

See Appendix 1 of the program guidelines for further information.

# Will I receive a scholarship if I meet the eligibility criteria?

Placement scholarships are limited, and eligible applicants are not guaranteed a scholarship. An assessment process will prioritise applications according to the above criteria.

# How will my application be assessed?

Applications will be assessed by a panel using the information and evidence you provide.

Priority will be given to applicants that meet at least one of the socio-economic and one of the demographic criteria outlined in the eligibility sections of the website and program guidelines.

Scholarships are available for unpaid placements being undertaken in Victoria or a defined border community from 31 March 2025 to 31 December 2025.

# I currently receive a scholarship under another program. Am I still eligible?

If you are currently receiving a scholarship listed below, you are **ineligible** for a Placement scholarship:

* Students who are studying the Master of Social Work (Child and Family Practice) as part of the Switch to Social Work program
* Social work students receiving scholarships through the Victorian Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Scholarships Program
* Students receiving an academic scholarship through another organisation, including a university, that is valued at over $7,500 per year
* Students who have secured a paid placement.

# I have been successful for a scholarship under this program, can I apply again in round 4?

Yes, you can apply again if you have already been successful for a scholarship under this program and continue to meet the eligibility criteria and are applying for a different field placement. Each application is assessed individually in the context of the application round. Placement scholarships are limited, and eligible applicants are not guaranteed a scholarship.

# I have been unsuccessful for a scholarship under this program, can I apply again in round 4?

Yes, if you are eligible, you can apply again in round 4 even if you have received an unsuccessful outcome under this program in previous rounds. Any further applications will be assessed on its own merit within the context of the application round, assessed according to the eligibility criteria and based on the information provided in the application form. Follow up or supplementary information cannot be considered. Placement scholarships are limited, and not all eligible applicants are guaranteed a scholarship. Round 4 is the final round of the Inclusion scholarships for social work placements program.

# I am studying at a Victorian university via distance education while living interstate. Can I still apply for a scholarship?

To be eligible for a Placement scholarship you must be enrolled in a public Victorian university, live in and undertake your placement in Victoria or a defined border community for the duration of your placement. Students who live interstate are not eligible for a Placement scholarship. Further information is available in the program guidelines. Appendix 2 in the program guidelines lists the defined border communities.

# I am studying at an interstate university via distance education while living in Victoria. Can I still apply for a scholarship?

To be eligible for a Placement scholarship you must be enrolled in a public Victorian university, live in and be undertaking your placement in Victoria or a defined border community. Students who are enrolled in an interstate university are not eligible for a Placement scholarship.

# I am studying at a Victorian university and wish to undertake my placement interstate or internationally. Can I still apply for a scholarship?

To be eligible for a Placement scholarship you must be enrolled in a public Victorian university, live in and be undertaking your placement in Victoria or a defined border community for the duration of your placement.

# I have already started my placement and will finish in 2025. Am I eligible to apply?

To be eligible for a scholarship in Round 4 (opening on 31 March 2025), students must be commencing their placement between 31 March 2025 and 31 December 2025. Students who have commenced a placement prior to 31 March 2025 are not eligible.

# What are the application dates?

Round 4 applications will open on Monday 31 March 2025 and close at 4pm on Monday 28 April 2025.

# When will I know the outcome of my application?

You will be notified of the outcome of your application by July 2025.

If successful, when will I receive my payments?

The first payment of $4,000 will be made following your university census date and only after confirmation from your university that you have secured a placement. The census date will depend on your university. Please refer to your university’s website to verify the relevant semester census date or see details in the table below.

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| Rounds and placement eligible dates | Round 4: 31 March – 31 December 2025 |
| Deakin University | 15 August 2025 |
| Federation University | 15 August 2025 |
| La Trobe University | 31 August 2025 |
| Monash University | 26 August 2025 |
| RMIT University | 31 August 2025 |
| University of Melbourne | 1 September 2025 |
| Victoria University | 22 August 2025 |

Where you are commencing your placement prior to the university census date and during the timeframe of the scholarship round, you may receive your first payment earlier, pending confirmation from your university that the placement has commenced.

The second payment of $3,500 will be made at a mid-placement milestone.

# How do I apply?

You can apply online from 31 March 2025 on the website: [Inclusion scholarships for social work placements](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/inclusion-scholarships-social-work-placements)

# Can I apply for a round 4 Placement scholarship if I am undertaking a placement starting in 2026?

No. Your placements must have commenced between 31 March 2025 and 31 December 2025 if you are applying for a scholarship in round 4.

# Can I apply for a Placement scholarship if I am part way through my placement unit?

No. You must secure a scholarship prior to commencing your placement unit during the eligible timeframe for the round you wish to apply for.

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| **Round** | **Eligible dates** |
| Round 4 | 31 March– 31 December 2025 |

# What information do I need to apply?

You will need one of the following proof of identity documents:

* Medicare card
* Australian passport or New Zealand passport
* Victorian driver~~s~~ licence or learner permit
* Foreign passport (for those issued with an Australian permanent resident or humanitarian visa)

You will also need to provide evidence that supports your application including:

* name of your educational institution and program of study
* student ID number from your educational institution
* Unique Student Identifier number
* your current Victorian or eligible border community residential address (i.e., where you are living while you study)
* any government payments or benefits you receive.

# How do I know if I meet the eligibility criteria - experience of using social or community services

The terms social and community services can be used to describe a broad range of community-based services targeted at addressing disadvantage or vulnerability experienced by people or communities.

For these scholarships, social and community services refers to contact with statutory Child Protection and youth justice services or accessing the following types of services:

* Child and family services
* Disability services, including those funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme, WorkSafe or the Transport Accident Commission
* Family violence services
* Sexual assault services
* Social housing (including public and community housing) and homelessness services
* Services for Aboriginal people and communities delivered by Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations

Examples of accessing social and community services may include the following:

* carer support programs
* case management
* counselling
* crisis care response
* family preservation and reunification
* out of home care, which includes foster care, kinship care, residential care
* parenting services
* respite and support care

If you are unsure about whether you are eligible, please [contact the Placement scholarships team](mailto:email%20the%20Placement%20scholarships%20team).

# I have applied for a government pension, allowance or benefit and will likely get an outcome before the assessment period is final, how do I answer this question?

If you’ve applied for a government pension, allowance, or benefit but are awaiting a decision, answer ‘no’ to the question about currently receiving one. However, you must let the Placement Scholarships team know that you are awaiting an outcome, as this information may assist your application.

# If I am awarded a scholarship but my placement does not proceed, can I still receive the scholarship payments?

If you withdraw from your program of study following the university census date or take a leave of absence in accordance with your university’s policy, you may not be able to claim both scholarship payments and may be required to return payments.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing cannot hold, postpone, or defer a scholarship. If a recipient is unable to start their nominated placement, they will need to withdraw their application and may have to return any payment(s) they have received.

# What happens if I defer or withdraw from my studies?

You may be required to repay some or all of your scholarship payment in the event of a withdrawal. Decisions regarding repayments are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing cannot hold, postpone, or defer a scholarship. If a recipient is unable to start their nominated placement, they will need to withdraw their application and may have to return any payments they have received.

# How will my information be used?

Your information will be used to assess your scholarship application.

In applying for a Placement scholarship you will be providing personal, sensitive, and health information which will be collected and used by the Department of Government Services (DGS) and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) as the program administrators. Your personal, sensitive and health information is collected for the purpose of assessing eligibility, administering claims and payments and other functions necessary for the effective delivery of the program, including monitoring and evaluation.

By applying for a Placement scholarship, you consent to the sharing of information as outlined in the Terms and Conditions section outlined in the program guidelines and in the application form. DGS or DFFH, as program administrators may contact you to clarify your submitted information, and for program review, reporting, monitoring, audit and evaluation purposes.

All information will be treated in accordance with the privacy statement set out in the program [guidelines](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/inclusion-scholarships-social-work-placements#:~:text=About%20the%20program,-Inclusion%20scholarships%20for&text=Eligible%20students%20can%20apply%20for,held%20throughout%202024%20and%202025.)

# Will you share information about me with my university?

The specific socio-economic and demographic information that you provide will not be shared with your university. Your university will be asked to verify that you are enrolled in and have commenced your placement, and that you have met mid-placement milestones.

Universities will not be asked to provide information about your university results or progress, or to provide any advice on your suitability for a scholarship.

# Who do I contact for further information?

For further information, please visit [Inclusion scholarships for social work placements](http://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/inclusion-scholarships-social-work-placements) <www.dffh.vic.gov.au/inclusion-scholarships-social-work-placements>. If you have any further questions, you can email [placement.scholarships@grants.vic.gov.au](mailto:placement.scholarships@grants.vic.gov.au).

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| To receive this document in another format, phone 03 9067 0393 using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email or [email the Department of Government Services](mailto:placement.scholarships@grants.vic.gov.au) <placement.scholarships@grants.vic.gov.au>.  Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.  © State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, March 2025.  In this document, ‘Aboriginal’ refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. ‘Indigenous’ or ‘Koori/Koorie’ is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.  Available at [Inclusion scholarships for social work placements](http://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/inclusion-scholarships-social-work-placements) <https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/inclusion-scholarships-social-work-placements> |