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| Regional Disability Worker Scholarships |
| Program guidelines – Round 1 |
| **OFFICIAL** |

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# Background

The Victorian Government is supporting more disability workers to deliver services in regional and rural Victoria. It is doing this by providing financial support to complete a course in disability.

The Regional Disability Worker Scholarships (RDW Scholarships) support regional and rural Victorians with the financial cost of their studies. These costs include the unpaid placement in their disability course. This will allow students to:

* gain the experience they need to work in the disability sector
* complete their studies
* start fulfilling careers in regional and rural disability services.

The program delivers the Government’s commitment to increase the number of disability workers in regional and rural Victoria through the Fighting for Students with Disability and their Familiesfunding package.

The program guidelines explain how the RDW Scholarships program works including:

* the eligibility criteria
* how scholarships are allocated
* how to apply
* the payment process.

These guidelines also include terms and conditions and a privacy statement. Applicants should read this information in full before applying for a scholarship.

Appendix 1 includes definitions of key terms and eligibility criteria.

# How the program works

The Victorian Government funds the RDW Scholarships. The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) is accountable for the program and its deliverables and outcomes, and is responsible for allocating scholarships and undertaking reporting and evaluation functions using de-identified information. The Department of Government Services (DGS) manages the administration of the program, including applications, assessments and payments.

It is available for domestic students living in regional and rural Victoria or a defined border community defined in Appendices 2 and 3.

Scholarships of $3,500 are available to students studying with an approved Victorian training provider[[1]](#footnote-2) who are completing placement hours in 2024 and/or 2025 as part of the:

* Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) (CHC33021), or
* Certificate IV in Disability Support (CHC43121).

The program uses student data held by approved Victorian training providers to assess students’ eligibility. Scholarships are awarded in line with these program guidelines.

Training providers collect this data, known as the Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection, and must share this with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) through the Skills Victoria Training System (SVTS).

Using this data, the program can access:

* up-to-date student information
* course enrolments and completions.

It is important students ensure that the personal and enrolment information provided to their training provider is correct and up to date **before** they apply for anRDW Scholarship. This includes their status as an Aboriginal student or student with disability.

RDW Scholarships are limited and eligible applicants are not guaranteed a scholarship. The program prioritises applications based on demographic criteria and regional workforce needs.

## Eligibility – Round 1

To be eligible for an RDW Scholarship you must meet **all** the following criteria.

1. A domestic student. For the purposes of the scholarship, this is defined as either:
   1. an Australian citizen
   2. a New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand)
   3. an Australian permanent resident, or
   4. an Australian permanent humanitarian visa holder.
2. Enrolled at an approved TAFE or Skills First Victorian training provider. (Refer to Attachment A in these guidelines for the list of approved providers).
3. Be actively enrolled in one of the following courses **and** have commenced or successfully completed the following units the time of application and assessment. Alternatively, you must have successfully completed your course from 1 October 2024 onwards for Round 1 of the RDW Scholarships:
   1. Certificate IV in Disability Support (CHC43121)
   * commenced or have successfully completed the CHCDIS018 ‘Facilitate ongoing skills development using a person-centred approach’ and/or HLTWHS003 ‘Maintain work health and safety’units

**or**

* 1. Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) (CHC33021)
  + undertaking the disability specialisation in the Certificate III in Individual Support, having commenced or successfully completed at least 2 of the 3 Group B disability electives:
* CHCDIS011: Contribute to ongoing skills development using strengths-based approach
* CHCDIS012: Support community participation and social inclusion
* CHCDIS020: Work effectively in disability support,

**and**

* + commenced or have successfully completed at least 9 units within the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability).

1. A regional or rural Victorian resident (as outlined in Appendix 2) or resident of a defined border community (as outlined in Appendix 3).

### Ineligible applicants

* Students who are studying the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) (CHC33021) as a **traineeship** are ineligible. The program’s aim is to support students doing unpaid placement hours.
* Student who are, at the time of application and assessment, currently deferred or taking a leave of absence from their course of study are ineligible.

## Scholarship allocation model

Eligible applicants will be prioritised for RDW Scholarships based on the criteria below. DFFH may adjust the allocation model to meet changing priorities over the life of the program.

### Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students and students with disability

* Applicants who have identified to their training provider as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander will be prioritised.
* Applicants who have identified to their training provider as having a disability will also be prioritised.

### Place-based prioritisation

* Students living in regional and rural areas with higher workforce needs will be prioritised. DFFH will determine this based on state and Commonwealth workforce data (at its discretion).

### Program of study

* Students studying the Certificate IV in Disability Support (CHC43121) will be prioritised.

## Round dates

### Round 1

Round 1 is for students who are currently enrolled and who plan to complete an eligible disability course by 30 June 2025. It is also open to students who have completed an eligible disability course from 1 October 2024.

| Stage | Dates |
| --- | --- |
| Applications open | 25 November 2024 |
| Applications close | 20 December 2024 |
| Notification of application outcomes | March 2025 |
| Payment timeframe *(estimated)* | From March 2025 |

### Future rounds

Rounds 2 and 3 will open in 2025 and 2026. Details of eligibility criteria, application, notification and payment periods will be published on the RDW Scholarships website closer to these rounds opening.

If you are unsuccessful in your application, you may apply in future rounds if you meet the eligibility criteria at that time. Each new application will be assessed based on its own merit during the relevant application round.

## Application and assessment

### How to apply

You must apply online at the RDW Scholarship website, where applicants will be directed to the Victorian Government Grants Portal. Applications must be submitted by the dates published on the website. Late applications will not be accepted.

You must provide **all** the following information and documentation in support of your application:

* the name of your training provider and course
* your Unique Student Identifier (USI) number
* your Victorian or defined border community residential address, **and**
* all other information requested in the application form.

The eligible student must be the person who applies for the RDW Scholarship. They must provide information from **one** of the following proof of identity documents on the application form:

* Australian or New Zealand passport
* Medicare card
* Victorian driver’s licence or learner’s permit
* foreign passport for those issued with an Australian permanent resident or humanitarian visa.

If proof of identity cannot be confirmed, you will receive a follow-up email with instructions.

### How applications will be assessed

RDW Scholarships are limited and not all eligible applicants are guaranteed a scholarship.

Applications will be assessed using the information provided at the time of your application. The data provided by registered training providers to DJSIR via the SVTS will be used to verify your eligibility.

Students must ensure the personal and enrolment information they have provided to their training provider is accurate and up to date **before** applying for an RDW Scholarship.

Scholarship priority will be determined based on the allocation model outlined above.

As part of this process, any information you provide may be shared and verified by:

* eligible training providers
* Victorian Government departments (including DFFH, DGS and DJSIR). Please note that any information which DFFH receives will be de-identified.
* the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department
* the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email.

### How payments will be made

Successful applicants will be asked to complete a claim form to be paid their scholarship. As part of this claim form, applicants will be asked to:

* Provide their bank account details
* Confirm their continued eligibility for the scholarship.

Successful completion of the claim form will finalise the agreement between the RDW Scholarship recipient and DFFH.

After completing this form, a payment of $3,500 will then be sent to your nominated bank account within 15 business days. Any changes to bank account details may delay your payment. Students who have previously applied but were unsuccessful may apply in future rounds if they meet eligibility criteria at that time.

# Terms and conditions

1. RDW Scholarship recipients must agree to the terms and conditions of the RDW Scholarship as stated in the application form, claim form and these guidelines.
2. Applicants must confirm they meet the eligibility criteria at the time of application. They must continue to meet the eligibility criteria when claiming payment.
3. Your application constitutes an offer to the Victorian Government. If your application is successful, the Government will issue an email confirming its acceptance of your offer. You will then make an agreement with the Government of Victoria that includes:
   1. the email of acceptance
   2. these guidelines
   3. your completed application.
4. Applicants will have to confirm their intention to complete their training course.
5. If an applicant enters into the RDW Scholarship agreement and does not comply with its terms and conditions, including withdrawing from their training course, **the applicant may be required to pay back any amounts already paid to them**.
6. By submitting your completed application, you consent to DGS, DFFH and/or DJSIR sharing information provided by you within the Victorian Government. This extends to external parties for the purposes of validating enrolment and other eligibility requirements including:
   1. your TAFE or Skills First Victorian training provider
   2. the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department
   3. the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.
7. Applications and claims for RDW Scholarship payments may be subject to audit by the Victorian Government or its representatives for up to 3 years following the completing the RDW Scholarships, to determine whether the application and information provided during the term of the RDW Scholarships was accurate, complete and consistent with these program guidelines.
8. If allocated funding for RDW Scholarships is exhausted before the announced program end date, DFFH reserves the right to end the program. The Victorian Government, including DFFH, is under no obligation to remake any payment made where the applicant provides incorrect bank account details.
9. The applicant may be asked to provide more information to help assess their application. DGS and DFFH can refuse an application if the eligibility criteria are not met, or where the applicant does not or cannot provide sufficient information in the timeframe to assess whether eligibility criteria are met.
10. DFFH may, at any time, remove your application from the assessment process or terminate a scholarship agreement if, in the department’s opinion, you may bring the department, the Minister for Disability or the Victorian Government into disrepute.
11. **You are responsible** for informing the RDW Scholarships program via email of any changes to your circumstances including:
    1. changes to personal details such as address, mobile number, email and bank account details
    2. significant changes to your enrolment, such as withdrawal or deferral from your placement or course.
12. If an applicant or recipient considers that their application or claim has been incorrectly assessed or paid, they may lodge a complaint. The complaint must be received within 60 days from the date DFFH or DGS notifies the applicant or recipient of the outcome of their application. If a complaint is not received within 60 days, it will not be considered. Contact DGS at [RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au](mailto:RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au).

## Fraudulent claims

By submitting your application form, you are declaring that the information provided in the application and supporting documentation is true, accurate and not misleading about a material fact.

If any information in the application or payment claims are found to be false, misleading or fraudulent, you will have to repay the full amount of the RDW Scholarship.

The Victorian Government reserves the right to take further action, including referring the RDW Scholarship recipient to the relevant law enforcement agency. Providing inaccurate, untrue or misleading information may be an offence. Serious penalties may apply.

## Program surveys and evaluation

By accepting an RDW Scholarship, you are agreeing that your application information can be used for program monitoring and evaluation. You also consent to being asked to take part in other evaluation activities for up to 3 years after applying. Activities might include surveys, interviews or focus groups. All information used for monitoring and evaluation will be deidentified and handled according to the privacy statement below.

# Privacy statement

1. In applying for a RDW Scholarship, you will be providing personal, sensitive and health information. DGS will collect and use this information. Your information is collected for the purposes of:
   * + assessing eligibility
     + administering claims and payments
     + other functions necessary to deliver the program, including monitoring and evaluation.
2. DFFH will only have access to deidentified data on applicants. This includes postcodes, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identification and whether applicants have a disability. This de-identified information will be used for allocation, reporting and evaluation purposes,
3. By applying for an RDW Scholarship, you consent to us sharing your information as outlined in the ‘Terms and conditions’ section above and in the application form. DGS or DFFH staff may contact you to clarify your information and for program review, reporting, monitoring, audit and evaluation purposes.
4. DGS will complete a range of eligibility assessments. These may include data matching to clarify the accuracy and quality of information supplied by you. The data matching may occur on:
   * + enrolment information
     + personal, sensitive and health information provided in your application
     + your supporting evidence and any claim or payment forms.
5. As part of application verification and to enable payment of an RDW Scholarship, DGS will share your personal, sensitive and health information with other Victorian agencies such as DJSIR. As part of the verification process, DGS will source applicable SVTS data from DJSIR to confirm your program eligibility.
6. Personal, sensitive and health information (including demographic information) that is collected as part of the application process will be used to assess your eligibility. Deidentified demographic information may also be used for evaluation and reporting purposes on behalf of the Victorian Government. No identifying information is used in reporting. All reports will be presented with aggregated data.
7. Other than as set out in these guidelines, your personal, sensitive and health information will not be shared with any other external parties without your consent. This is unless otherwise authorised or required by law. If your information is shared with external parties apart from those listed above, DGS and/or DFFH will use best endeavours to inform you of the nature and purpose of sharing that information before doing so.
8. If there is an intention to include personal, sensitive or health information about a third party in the application, you must ensure the third party is aware of and consents to the contents of this privacy statement.
9. Any personal, sensitive or health information that you provide about yourself, or a third party, will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred and stored in keeping with the:
   * + *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic)
     + *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic)
     + *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic)
     + other applicable laws.
10. If you do not provide all the information asked of you, your application may be ineligible.
11. You have the right to request access to your personal, sensitive or health information that is collected at any time. If you identify information that is incorrect, you may request its correction.
12. For enquiries about access to, or correction of, your personal information, you can email [RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au](mailto:RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au). If you have concerns about your privacy and/or how your personal, sensitive or health information has been used, please email DGS at [privacy@dgs.vic.gov.au](mailto:privacy@dgs.vic.gov.au).

# Other information

We strongly recommend you get professional advice when you are considering applying for an RDW Scholarship. Find out about any impact that an RDW Scholarship may have on your tax liability or any other benefits paid under an Australian Government scheme. These include:

* Austudy
* ABSTUDY
* aged, disability or carer allowances
* pensions.

Students who receive academic scholarships not funded by the Victorian Government may be able to apply for an RDW Scholarship. If you are receiving another scholarship, we recommend you review the terms of your existing scholarship and the impact of receiving the RDW Scholarship, if you were to be successful, before applying.

DFFH reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms at any time as it deems appropriate. (This is subject to appropriate notice being given either by publication on the RDW Scholarships website or by email to applicants and recipients.)

# Contact

Please review the frequently asked questions and program guideline appendices. Queries can be emailed to the RDW Scholarships team at [RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au](mailto:RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au).

# Attachments

## Attachment A - Approved Training Providers for Round 1

Note this list is subject to change in Round 2 and/or 3 of the program.

Academia Australia

Advance Community College

AdvancED Education & Training

Aged Care Training Services

ALACC Health College Australia

All Health Training

AMES Australia

AMZ Training Organisation

Angel Institute of Education

Australian College of Professional Studies

Australian Institute of Flexible Learning

Australian Institute of Vocational Development Pty Ltd

Australian Vietnamese Women's Association Inc

Balance Training Services Pty Ltd

Bellarine Training and Community Hub Inc.

Bendigo Kangan Institute

BGT Jobs and Training Ballarat

Box Hill Institute

BRACE Education Training and Employment Limited

Brite Institute

Chisholm Institute

CIRE Services Incorporated

Community College Gippsland Ltd

Diamond Valley Learning Centre Inc

Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services

Employ-Ease Pty Ltd

Eva Burrows College Vocational Training

Federation University Australia

FYI Education and Training Pty Ltd

GenU training

Global Business College Of Australia

Gordon Institute of TAFE

GOTAFE

Goworkskills.com

Guidestar Training & Professional Services

Hammond Institute Pty Ltd

Holmesglen Institute

Inclusion Melbourne Inc

Institute of Health and Nursing Australia

Institute of Tertiary and Higher Education Australia

Institute of Training and Further Education

Integracom VIC

International College of Victoria

Job Training Institute Pty Ltd

Julie Reid Management Pty Ltd

Kal Training

Keysborough Learning Centre

Laurels Education and Training

Laverton Community Education Centre

MADEC Community College

MANTRA ACADEMY PTY LTD

Max Solutions Pty Ltd

Mayfield Education Inc

McCarthy Learning

Melbourne City Institute of Education

Melbourne College of Further Education

Melbourne Polytechnic

Migrant Resource Centre North West Region Inc.

Milcom Institute

Multicultural Community Services Geelong Inc

Murray Adult Community Education-Swan Hill Inc

Nepean Industry Edge Training

North Ringwood Community House Inc

Partners in Training Australia Pty Ltd

Phillips Institute

Pines Learning

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

Selmar Institute of Education

Skills Training Australia

South West TAFE

South West Training Services Pty Ltd

Southern Cross Education Institute

Stirling Institute of Australia

Sunraysia Institute of TAFE

Swinburne University of Technology

TAFE Gippsland

The Centre For Continuing Education Inc

The Management Edge Pty Ltd (TME Trade Training)

The Skills Development and Training Company Pty Ltd

VASS College of Vocational Education

Vative Healthcare

VFA Learning

VICSEG New Futures

Victoria University

Warner Institute

WCIG

WISE Training Services or Interskills

Wodonga Institute of TAFE

Yarraville Community Centre Inc

Yarrawonga Mulwala Community & Learning Centre

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Key terms and definitions

| Term | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| Active enrolment | When a student is enrolled in a unit or units in the current study period and is engaged in the learning, assessment or administrative activity associated with the enrolment, as required by their approved training provider.  Students who are currently deferred or taking a leave of absence are not considered to be in active enrolment. |
| Approved (Victorian) training provider | A Victorian TAFE or other Skills First funded Victorian training provider, subsidised by the Victorian Government to deliver in demand courses and skill for eligible students. Information about Skills First funded providers can be found at <https://www.vic.gov.au/vet-funding-contracts> Refer to Attachment A in these guidelines for the list of approved providers for Round 1. |
| Border community resident | A person whose primary address is in a border community (as defined in Appendix 3).  The primary address must be where the person usually lives, rather than any temporary address where they live for training, work or other purposes before returning to their home. It cannot be a post office box. |
| Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability) | The current CHC33021 – Certificate III in Individual Support qualification as outlined on the [training.gov.au website](file:///C:/Users/vid5xq7/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/OW5QBN0N/training.gov.au%20website) https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/CHC33021. |
| Certificate IV in Disability Support | The current CHC43121 – Certificate IV in Disability Support qualification as outlined on the [training.vic.gov.au website](https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/CHC43121) https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/CHC43121. |
| Regional or rural Victorian resident | This is a person whose primary address is in a Victorian regional or rural local government area as defined in Appendix 3. The primary address must be where the person usually lives, rather than any temporary address where they live for training, work or other purposes before returning to their home. It cannot be a post office box. |
| The Skills Victoria Training System (SVTS) | The SVTS receives and validates information training providers provide to DJSIR. The information collected through the SVTS is called the Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection. |
| Unique Student Identifier (USI) | The USI uniquely identifies an individual who accesses vocational education and training anywhere in Australia over their lifetime. It is issued by the USI Agency. The USI must be reported for all nationally recognised training. For more information, visit the [USI website](https://www.usi.gov.au/) https://www.usi.gov.au/. |
| Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection | Information collected on training activity in Victoria. This includes, but is not limited to, information on:   * registered training organisations (RTOs) * training activity * students’ demographics * prior education details.   It also includes enrolment and qualification completion details associated with Vocational Education and Training (VET) delivery for domestic and international students, both in Victoria and offshore. |

## Appendix 2: Regional or rural Victoria

Regional or rural local government areas in Victoria are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Alpine * Ararat * Ballarat * Bass Coast * Baw Baw * Benalla * Buloke * Campaspe * Central Goldfields * Colac Otway * Corangamite * East Gippsland * Gannawarra * Glenelg * Golden Plains * Greater Bendigo * Greater Geelong * Greater Shepparton * Hepburn * Hindmarsh * Horsham * Indigo * Latrobe * Loddon | * Macedon Ranges * Mansfield * Mildura * Mitchell * Moira * Moorabool * Mount Alexander * Moyne * Murrindindi * Northern Grampians * Pyrenees * Queenscliff * South Gippsland * Southern Grampians * Strathbogie * Surf Coast * Swan Hill * Towong * Wangaratta * Warrnambool * Wellington * West Wimmera * Wodonga * Yarriambiack. |

## Appendix 3: Border communities

Defined border communities are local government areas in New South Wales and South Australia that border Victoria.

**New South Wales**

* Balranald Shire
* Bega Valley Shire
* Berrigan Shire
* City of Albury
* City of Broken Hill
* City of Wagga Wagga
* Edward River Council
* Federation Council
* Greater Hume Shire
* Hay Shire
* Lockhart Shire
* Murray River Council
* Murrumbidgee Council
* Snowy Monaro Regional Council
* Snowy Valleys Council
* Wentworth Shire

**South Australia**

* Berri Barmera Council
* City of Mount Gambier
* District Council of Grant
* District Council of Loxton Waikerie
* District Council of Robe
* Kingston District Council
* Naracoorte Lucindale Council
* Renmark Paringa Council
* Southern Mallee District Council
* Tatiara District Council
* Wattle Range Council

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1. Note the list of Approved Training Providers for Round 1 (Attachment A of the Guidelines) is subject to change in Round 2 and/or 3 of the program. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)