

Disability Scholarship Program 2020

Scholarship Guidelines

Disability Scholarship Program

I am pleased to introduce the 2020 Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) Disability Scholarship Program. DJCS is proud to have administered this initiative since 2007.

DJCS recognises that, in some cases, students living with disability encounter barriers to achieving their academic and professional goals. We also acknowledge that the capacities of the department and of the justice sector generally are strengthened and enriched through the participation of people who bring to the table varied perspectives, lifestyles and life experiences. Embracing diversity and inclusion ensures that we are better positioned to deliver accessible and meaningful services to the community we serve in a positive way.

The DJCS Disability Scholarship Program represents an opportunity for Victorians living with disability to take further steps towards achieving their academic potential, gaining employment and participating in the Victorian justice sector. It also represents a further step towards the department achieving its vision of building a safer, fairer and stronger Victoria.

The DJCS Disability Scholarship Program will support Victorian students living with disability to achieve their aspirations and I encourage eligible students from all universities undertaking justice-related courses to apply for this program.

Rebecca Falkingham

Secretary, Department of Justice and Community Safety

Guidelines for all Applicants to the Disability Scholarship Program

General information

The Disability Scholarship Program (the Program) is an initiative from the DJCS Disability Action Plan. The Program aims to achieve a sustained increase in the number of employed qualified people living with disability in the justice portfolio and across all areas and all levels of the public service.

The Program will offer three scholarships for people living with disability in Victoria at the diploma, advanced diploma, undergraduate or postgraduate level. Scholarships will be offered in the following areas of study:

- law
- criminology
- paralegal work
- psychology
- social work
- other justice-related fields.

Scholarships will only be offered for study at approved institutions within Victoria, or to Victorian residents who are engaged in accredited distance or online learning.

Scholarships will be awarded on merit, taking into account an applicant's eligibility, past academic results, personal circumstances and ability to complete the course of study.

Scholarships will be provided to eligible students in the form of a fortnightly study allowance to support full-time study for a

maximum of two years. Where part-time study is undertaken support will be provided for a maximum period equivalent to two years full-time study.

You can request an application form by contacting the Disability Scholarship Contact Officer:

Email: disability.scholarshipsdiu@justice.vic.gov.au

The closing date for applications is 5.00pm 27 March 2020.

If you require this document in another accessible format, or if you have certain requirements to enable you to participate in the application process, please contact the Disability Scholarship Contact Officer.

Scholarships on offer for 2020

The Program will provide scholarships totalling \$60,000, distributed as follows:

- one scholarship valued at \$20,000 per annum for two years or pro-rata payment where the recipient completes the course in under two years. The value of the scholarship over two years is \$40,000.
- two scholarships valued at \$5,000 per annum for two years or pro rata payment where the recipient completes the course in under two years. The value of each of these scholarships over two years is \$10,000.

The department reserves the right to vary the number and value of scholarship awards.

The scholarship will be paid fortnightly and will start following the signing of the scholarship agreement by all parties. Where part-time study is undertaken, payments will be made on a pro-rata basis. An initial payment will include any back payment of entitlements to the commencement of the academic year in the year during which the scholarship is awarded.

Eligibility

To be eligible for a scholarship, an applicant must:

- have a disability as defined in the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (refer to the definition on page 11 of these guidelines)
- have resided in Victoria on a full-time basis for a minimum of two years immediately preceding lodgement of the application
- earn less than \$25,000 gross per annum from employment undertaken during the scholarship period (if an applicant has dependents, gross annual income from employment may include an extra \$5,000 per annum per dependent)
- declare, and provide details of, any scholarships currently awarded by the Victorian state government or non-Victorian government entities
- if a current undergraduate student, demonstrate a minimum pass grade in all subjects undertaken in the semester immediately preceding the intake semester when the application is lodged
- be seeking a scholarship for an accredited course. All registered higher education providers and their courses are listed on the national register for tertiary education providers and courses at: <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/national-register>.

Undergraduate applicants

Undergraduate students are eligible to apply for a scholarship if they:

- have successfully completed all units for:
 - one year of a three-year full-time course (or part-time equivalent); or
 - two years of a four-year full-time course (or part-time equivalent); and

- have not withdrawn from the course of study for which they are seeking the scholarship.

Postgraduate applicants

For postgraduate applicants to be eligible for a scholarship they will need to have successfully gained entry into a postgraduate course.

Persons ineligible for a scholarship

Persons are ineligible to receive a scholarship if they are currently:

- completing a sentence through non-custodial means (for example parole)
- on bail
- remanded in custody
- in lawful custody for committing an offence (in a Youth Justice Centre as defined under the *Children and Young Persons Act 1989* or imprisoned in an adult correctional facility within Australia); or
- currently in receipt of a scholarship (or scholarships) offering financial assistance for study purposes and which in total exceeds \$20,000.

Cessation of the scholarship

Scholarship payments under this program shall cease:

- should the recipient withdraw from the approved course of study; or
- if during the scholarship period, a scholarship recipient takes up employment attracting a gross annual salary of (or exceeding) \$25,000 per annum, with DJCS or any other employer.

Eligibility for payments from DJCS as part of this program shall cease from the date of employment commencement or withdrawal from the approved course of study.

Assessment of applications

If an application meets all eligibility criteria, it will be assessed on merit, together with the applicant's personal circumstances, academic history and achievements, and any previous assistance received for study purposes, excluding financial assistance provided through Centrelink.

Scholarship requirements

Scholarship recipients must provide proof in writing to the department's Disability Scholarship Contact Officer of:

- enrolment at the commencement of each academic year
- continued enrolment at the educational institution and in the course of study throughout each semester. Such documentation is required to be endorsed by the educational institution
- copies of results at the end of each semester
- their Tax File Number; and
- any change to their workload or contact details, address and telephone number (within 14 days of the change).

A scholarship will not be approved until the applicant is formally accepted into the course of study, as detailed in their scholarship application. Evidence of acceptance will be required in the form of written advice from the educational institution.

A scholarship recipient is required to complete the proposed course of study within the duration of the scholarship. Scholarship recipients will be required to demonstrate a satisfactory standard throughout the duration of the scholarship for both the academic and work placement, if undertaken. Failure in any subject in any semester may result in the scholarship being cancelled.

Other documents you will be required to provide with your application

Past academic results

An essential element in assessing an applicant's ability to complete their course of study for the duration of the scholarship is their past academic performance.

Applicants will be assessed on their documented results from previously undertaken study, for example at the secondary or other academic level.

Academic reference

Each applicant is required to provide, as part of their application, an academic reference from a nominated referee who can provide an appraisal of their academic performance and ability. A template for the referee's report is included with the Program application forms.

Study load

The applicant is required to provide the department with written confirmation of the part-time or full-time workload status of their course of study from the educational institution at which they will be studying during the scholarship period.

Receipt of other scholarships

It is the responsibility of the applicant to immediately advise the Disability Scholarship Contact Officer if they accept an offer of other financial assistance through a study scholarship after lodgement of their application.

Centrelink payments

It is the responsibility of each scholarship holder in receipt of Centrelink payments to advise Centrelink that they have been successful in securing a scholarship.

HECS or HELP Fees

Any Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) or Higher Education Loan Payment (HELP) fees associated with an applicant's study will be met by the applicant.

Taxation

It is the responsibility of successful applicants to apply to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) for an individual private ruling for an exemption from income tax to the scholarship received through the Program. Information on how to apply to the ATO for an exemption will be provided to successful applicants by the Disability Scholarship Contact Officer at the commencement of the scholarship.

Lodgement of application forms

Please forward your completed application form, and all accompanying documentation, by one of the following methods:

- **by post:**

Contact Officer
Stakeholder Engagement and Inclusion
Department of Justice and Community Safety
GPO Box 4349
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

- **by email:**

disability.scholarshipsdiu@justice.vic.gov.au

The closing date for applications is 5.00pm 27 March 2020.

If required, applications will be received in alternative formats. Additional documentation may be requested after the closing date for applications.

Glossary

Accredited Course	A course accredited through the educational institution or the Victorian Qualifications Authority and which complies with the Australian Qualifications Framework.
Approved Institution	An education institution as recognised under the <i>Tertiary Education (Amendment) Act 1998</i> and/or the <i>Vocational Education and Training Act 1990</i> .
Justice Portfolio	The Justice Portfolio consists of business units and statutory entities aligned under key functions. These include police and prosecution functions; administration of the court system; provision of the prison and community corrections services; provision of youth justice services; administration of various tribunals and agencies established to protect citizens' rights; emergency management; provision of emergency services; policy on gaming issues and the provision of legal advice to government. Statutory entities within the Justice Portfolio include such bodies as the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission; Court Services Victoria; Office of the Public Advocate; Victoria Legal Aid; Country Fire Authority; Road Safety Camera Commissioner; and Victoria Police.
Provider	Agencies which provide a service to the community in accordance with agreed terms.
VPS	Victorian Public Sector (VPS). The VPS comprises Departments and Administrative Offices of the Victorian Government as described in the <i>Public Sector Management and Employment Act 1998</i> .

Definition of Disability

The definition used in this document is that prescribed in the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*:

“Disability in relation to a person, means:

- total or partial loss of the person’s bodily or mental functions; or
- total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body; or
- disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
- a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person’s thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour;

and includes a disability that:

- presently exists; or
- previously existed but no longer exists; or
- may exist in the future; or
- is imputed to a person.”

The disability may be permanent or temporary. It may exist from birth or be acquired in life. A person may have one disability or a number of disabilities. A person’s disability may be apparent, such as loss of a limb, or hidden, such as epilepsy or depressive illness.

Information collection – Your privacy

For information about how we collect and manage personal information, please see the Department of Justice and Community Safety Information Privacy Policy, which is accessible at www.justice.vic.gov.au or upon request to the Manager, Privacy and Feedback by calling (03) 8684 0178.

DJCS Inclusion collects personal and health information in this Program application form. This is for the purpose of enabling assessment of your Scholarship application.

If you do not provide the information sought as part of the application process, the DJCS Inclusion may not be able to process your application.

Personal and health information provided by you in applying for this scholarship will not be used for any other purpose beyond the assessment of your application for this Program.