

New Zealand Scholarships in the Pacific (Pacific-based study) Policy Handbook

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1 Congratulations and welcome

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā kārangatanga maha, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Esteemed greetings to the many leaders, voices and peoples.

Kia ora! Kia orana! Ko na Mauri! Fakalofa lahi atu! Talofa lava! Halo! Malo e lelei!

Taloha Ni! Talofa! Welcome!

Congratulations on your success in obtaining a New Zealand Scholarship in the Pacific. Receiving a New Zealand Scholarship is recognition of your previous achievements as well as your potential to assist in the development of your country.

Your scholarship is funded through the New Zealand Aid Programme and is administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). Further information about the New Zealand Aid Programme can be found at <www.mfat.govt.nz>.

The purpose of your scholarship is to provide you with academic study to learn new skills and acquire knowledge to assist in the social and economic development of your country when you return home. The New Zealand Aid Programme provides scholarships as part of our mission to support sustainable development, to reduce poverty and contribute to a more secure, equitable and prosperous world. Scholarships are offered in specific subject areas that are most relevant to the development needs of your country. This is so you can contribute to making a real and positive difference to your country when you return home at the end of your scholarship.

The Māori concept of manaakitanga – hosting, respecting and caring for people – is key to the New Zealand Scholarships programme. Through manaakitanga, New Zealand will honour you and our partnership with your country. New Zealand is proud to manaaki (care for/support) you while you achieve your academic goals, and provide you with a positive, life-changing experience. We will also be proud to manaaki you when you return to your home country as a member of our New Zealand alumni whānau, or family. We would like to stay in touch with you into the future.

The New Zealand Scholarships in the Pacific (Pacific-based study) Policy Handbook is designed to assist you while you prepare to come to your study country, while you are studying on scholarship, and as you prepare to return to your home country at the end of your scholarship. If you want to discuss any of the information in this handbook, or if you require more information, please contact the New Zealand Post in your home country.

MFAT wishes you every success with your studies and for your time in your study country. We hope that you have a safe, successful and enjoyable stay.

2 Decision-making responsibilities and obligations

Throughout the handbook you will see symbols in the margins next to key information for:

- you (the scholar) 
- MFAT. 

The information tells you what the policy is, who is responsible, and what action is required.

It is important that you read the handbook and that you note:

- what your responsibilities are as a scholar
- what you are able to do
- what you are **not** able to do.

This includes your responsibilities around satisfactory academic progress, compliance with visa/permit conditions, and appropriate behaviour in your study country.

The handbook also provides guidance to you about the responsibilities of MFAT. In addition to these, MFAT does retain the right to be able to make decisions outside of the guidelines in this handbook.



Your responsibility as the scholar is to:

- have read and understood the conditions of your scholarship as described in the Letter of Scholarship Offer, including the Scholarship Declaration
- have read and understood the requirements and obligations of the scholarship as described in this handbook
- make sure that you follow and adhere to reasonable requests by either the institution where you are studying or by MFAT, and do so in a timely manner
- provide necessary information and supporting documents to support any changes requested to your scholarship
- understand that if:
 - you do not follow the conditions described in the Letter of Scholarship Offer and/or the requirements and instructions described in this handbook
 - you do not follow and comply with reasonable requests by the institution or MFAT

then you may be considered to be in breach of your scholarship and your scholarship may be terminated.

The institution provides:

- orientation for new scholars

- educational and pastoral support for scholars
- scholar results and completion notifications.



MFAT is responsible for:

- making decisions where this handbook indicates that it is MFAT's responsibility – decisions relating to various aspects of the scholarship, including scholarship continuation, extensions, deferrals, travel, and the payment of tuition fees, allowances and entitlements
- regular pastoral and welfare monitoring of scholars.

The handbook outlines the different roles of Sending and Study Country Posts, and the role of MFAT Wellington in each of these.

3 Scholar responsibilities and obligations

3.1 Scholarship Conditions



You must meet all your obligations under the Scholarship Conditions of the Letter of Scholarship Offer. As a scholar, you agree to:

- return to your home country for at least two years on completion of your scholarship
- maintain an acceptable standard of conduct, as outlined below
- attend classes, meet all course requirements, and sit exams
- notify the Study Country Post of any change of personal circumstances
- be responsible for the care and support of any dependants you bring to the study country
- allow MFAT to use your relevant details in publicity and alumni-related activity as outlined in the Letter of Scholarship Offer
- participate in MFAT or institution feedback surveys.

You may have specific obligations, including bonded periods to your home government. Neither MFAT nor institutions are responsible for meeting such obligations. If these obligations affect your ability to meet the New Zealand Scholarship obligations, then the provisions of the Letter of Scholarship Offer take precedence while you are in the study country or undertaking a component of the approved Study Programme in your home country.

3.2 Conduct



Scholars agree to maintain an acceptable standard of conduct while on scholarship, as specified by the Scholarship Conditions in the Letter of Scholarship Offer. The Conditions apply to you from the date of departure from your home country for the study country, until the date of arrival in your home country on completion of the scholarship. These

Conditions also apply when you undertake a component of the approved Study Programme in your home country.

Acceptable scholar conduct includes:

- abiding by the laws of the study country
- treating others with respect
- behaving with honesty and integrity
- acting in a manner that reflects your role as a representative of your home country.

You should be aware that it is a criminal offence to use violence of any kind against another person, which includes physical, sexual, or psychological violence including against family members such as partners or children. It is also unacceptable to neglect or exploit children in your care, or to use physical discipline of any kind.

3.3 Academic requirements

Scholars agree to meet all of the academic requirements outlined in the Letter of Scholarship Offer and in this handbook. This includes attending all classes, completing all assessments that are compulsory course requirements, and sitting all exams. You are required to achieve satisfactory academic progress in accordance with the continuation criteria set by MFAT and the institution.

3.4 Change of circumstance

If your personal circumstances change while you are on scholarship, you must let your Study Country Post know as soon as possible. The Post can provide support, and advise you of any impacts on your scholarship. Examples of a change in personal circumstances include getting married, having a child, becoming seriously ill or being diagnosed with a serious health condition. In the case of pregnancy, you must let your Study Country Post know of your pregnancy as soon as you become aware.

You must tell the Study Country Post immediately if you are charged with an offence by the local police.

You must also advise the Study Country Post if you change your address or contact details, and if there are any changes in the personal circumstances of any dependants who are in the study country with you.

3.5 Deferring an offer prior to commencement

You must take up your scholarship in semester one of the academic year immediately following the year you applied.

Pre-scholarship deferrals are permitted only when you are experiencing one of the following: significant temporary personal or family problems, temporary medical problems, or pregnancy. A scholarship offer cannot be withdrawn by MFAT due to scholar pregnancy.

If you are seeking a pre-scholarship deferral, you must apply in writing to MFAT with the reasons for, and proposed duration of, the deferral. For all non-PhD scholars, deferrals

can be for either one semester (depending on course availability) or up to one year. PhD scholars may apply to defer for any time period of up to one year.

MFAT will consider other circumstances on a case-by-case basis, including where a scholar experiences delays outside of their control in obtaining a passport or student permit.

Pre-scholarship deferrals are **not** permitted:

- for the convenience of the scholar or their employer
- when the scholar fails to meet the unconditional entry requirements of the institution, including English language requirements
- when the scholar fails to obtain a passport or student permit (where applicable) in time for departure, and this failure is due to their inaction.

3.6 Debt to the New Zealand Government



The Letter of Scholarship Offer is an agreement under New Zealand law. Under it, you acknowledge and agree that you will incur a debt to the New Zealand Government if:

- you do not return to your home country within the time specified in the Scholarship Conditions described in the Letter of Scholarship Offer
- you do not remain in your home country for a minimum period of two years at the end of your scholarship.

You also acknowledge and agree that where you incur a debt to the New Zealand Government, the amount of this debt is the total cost of your scholarship including actual tuition fees, airfares, allowances, stipends and other costs (all including Goods and Services Tax) paid by the New Zealand Government to you or on your behalf in relation to your scholarship.

You undertake to fully discharge the debt by either:

- immediately returning home for a period of two years in your home country, **or**
- promptly repaying in full the total amount of the debt to MFAT.

You acknowledge and agree that these debt provisions survive the duration of your scholarship.

3.7 First point of contact



The Study Country Post becomes your primary point of day-to-day contact from the time that you sign the Letter of Scholarship Offer through to the end of your scholarship. Suva Post, however, will be your MFAT contact point in relation to some provisions in this handbook, regardless of study country. The handbook outlines when you need to contact

Suva Post. In addition, the MFAT Post (Sending Post) in your home country will have certain responsibilities.¹

You must respond to all requests for information from Posts in a timely manner.

 The Study Country Post will make initial contact with you after you have signed and returned the Letter of Scholarship Offer.

The Post will provide advice and guidance to you on travel to, and accommodation in, the study country; permits; allowances and entitlements; course enrolment processes; and living in a new country.

The Sending Post will make some of the necessary arrangements for you before you depart your home country, such as travel to the study country. The Sending Post will also provide advice and guidance to you on studying overseas. The Study Country Post will assist you with arranging or advising on accommodation for when you first arrive in the study country. Each of these areas is discussed in detail below.

 You will be required to make some of the necessary arrangements before you are able to depart your home country. This includes applying for and obtaining police clearance, and completing the necessary medical checks. What you are required to do is set out in detail in the relevant sections in this handbook. It is important that you read these sections carefully.

4 Preparing to travel to the study country

4.1 Pre-departure briefing

 In countries with a New Zealand Embassy or High Commission, MFAT will provide a pre-departure briefing for all scholars, where possible.

 The briefing is an essential aspect of preparing for your scholarship, and you are expected to attend. Family members who may accompany you to the study country may be invited to the briefing.

MFAT may, at its sole discretion, arrange and cover the costs for you to attend this briefing. MFAT may pay for some or all of these costs if you live in a remote part of a country or region and the cost to attend the pre-departure briefing is extremely high, or if a group of scholars is travelling together to an embassy or high commission located in another country to attend the briefing.

¹ For the purpose of this handbook, the definition of Sending Posts includes New Zealand-based MFAT teams in those instances where country accreditations are Wellington based.

However, MFAT will **not** provide funding towards these costs if there are a small number of scholars in a country without a New Zealand Embassy or High Commission who are departing at different times for these briefings.

MFAT will **not** provide funding towards the costs of family members attending the briefing.

4.2 Initial planning for student permits and travel

Before you are able to travel for your scholarship, it is essential that you do the necessary preparation. It is important that you start and complete necessary student permit application processes as early as possible, and that you respond in a timely way to requests for further information. You must make sure that you are able to arrive in the study country in time to commence your study programme.

Although the Study Country Post will provide you with information on living in the study country, we would encourage you to do your own research. This will help you to be prepared and ready to transition to your study.

More information about immigration requirements is included in section 9 of this handbook.

5 Initial travel to Study Country

The initial travel to the study country to commence your scholarship is funded through the scholarship offer.

You must respond to the Sending Post's requests for information relating to your travel to the study country in a timely manner. This includes:

- providing a copy of your approved student visa, where applicable
- providing any other information as requested
- notifying the Sending Post if you have any family accompanying you.

Initial travel for you will include:

- travel from the closest departure point to where you live (airport, bus terminal, train station, or seaport, as relevant) to your accommodation in the town or city where your institution is located
- standard economy-class ticketing on the most economical route
- overnight accommodation for unavoidable stopovers en route, if these costs are not covered by the airline.

You must not make any changes to flights booked for you without consulting with, and obtaining the approval of, the Sending Post. Any unauthorised alterations are a breach of your Scholarship Conditions.

Initial travel for you will **not** include:

- unnecessary stopovers in third countries or within the study country

- funding for any accompanying family members
- transportation from the airport in study country to accommodation if you are accompanied by family members in your initial travel. Accompanying family members on initial travel are strongly discouraged.

When arranging international travel for new scholars, Sending Posts should ensure that:

- the arrival date enables the scholar to:
 - establish themselves in their accommodation
 - attend all orientation and preparatory programmes
 - settle into their new environment before the semester begins
- scholar stipends are paid from the start date of the scholarship, as stated in the Letter of Scholarship Offer, but only if the scholar is in the city they will be studying in by that date
- air tickets are issued with special restrictions to limit alterations by the scholar and restrict any refunds to MFAT only
- air tickets are issued with flexible return dates towards the end of the year, including for domestic travel, as actual return dates are dependent on available flights and the timing of the final class, exam or assignment
- alterations to international travel to allow for an unnecessary stop-over in another country are not permitted
- alterations to international travel that will lead to increased costs are not permitted, even if the scholar offers to pay the difference
- alterations to international travel to allow for initial travel commencing from a third country are not permitted, even if the scholar offers to pay the difference or the alteration has no impact on costs.

6 Insurance

6.1 What is provided



You will be provided with insurance cover as part of your scholarship, as set out below.

It is important that you carefully read the insurance information provided by Suva Post and the detailed terms and conditions contained in the insurance policy. You must comply with the provisions of this policy, including what you must do if you need to make an insurance claim. You need to be aware that any fraudulent claims may affect your ability to retain future insurance cover, including being able to submit further claims under the insurance policy.



Suva Post will arrange travel and medical insurance for you. This insurance commences from the time that you depart your home country, and covers the full period that you are in the study country. It concludes when you return to your home country.

This insurance will cover:

- full coverage for emergency and urgent medical care
- repatriation costs in the event of death while being treated
- travel delays and cancellations
- baggage and personal items while travelling

The insurance will **not** cover any pre-existing medical conditions that you may have. Nor will it cover ancillary services, such as dental visits, optical services and physiotherapy. There will also be other limits – for example, you will need to pay for pharmacy and doctor costs. The insurance information you receive will set out in detail what health-related costs will not be covered.

You will need to pay for any additional expenses that you incur. It is recommended that you purchase additional health insurance to cover such ancillary services as dental visits and optical services.

The insurance cover you will have does not include any dependent family members who may accompany you to the study country. You are responsible for obtaining and paying for appropriate insurance cover for your dependants. It is strongly recommended that you obtain sufficient cover for each of your dependants, including for medical care and disability support services, dental care, and personal items. The insurance information you receive will set out in detail what health-related costs will not be covered.

6.2 Repatriation provisions in case of death

If either you or one of your accompanying dependants dies in the study country while you are on scholarship, MFAT will pay for actual and reasonable repatriation costs and associated family airfares, if these costs are not covered by insurance. Study Country Posts can advise you or your accompanying family on the details if this assistance is required.

7 Arriving in the study country



Before you leave your home country, you must ensure that you have with you:

- current passport with at least six (6) months longer than the expected completion date of your scholarship
- four witnessed passport photos
- completed immigration forms
- signed copy of Letter of Scholarship Offer
- offer of place from your education institution
- certified copy of birth certificate
- certified copy of marriage certificate, if applicable
- return flight ticket

- medical forms
- police clearance certificates
- cover letter from Sending Post addressed to the immigration authorities in the study country, and any country you may transit through
- cash for emergencies and initial living costs.

 Study Country Posts must arrange for all new scholars to be met at the airport and taken to their accommodation when they first arrive in the study country.

Study Country Posts do not arrange for transportation from the airport if new scholars are accompanied by family members in initial travel.

7.1 Arrival briefing

 You must attend an arrival briefing with the Study Country Post as soon as possible after arrival in your study country.

 Study Country Posts must complete an arrival briefing for all new scholars as soon as possible after their arrival in the study country. This must occur within four working days after arrival, and preferably within 48 hours. This briefing must provide scholars with practical information and assistance to support them between arrival and the start of their full orientation programme, and include setting up a bank account. The briefing will also provide critical information on scholar obligations, allowances, and other key aspects of the Scholarship.

7.2 Accommodation

 First-year accommodation for new undergraduate, unaccompanied scholars is arranged by the Post and institution in the study country. Accommodation is not arranged for those scholars who arrive in the study country accompanied by dependants or for scholars undertaking postgraduate studies. Relevant scholars are responsible for making accommodation arrangements in these cases.

Wherever available, unaccompanied scholars are to live on campus for at least the first full academic year of their scholarship. Any first-year scholars who wish to live off campus must have prior approval from the Study Country Post before arranging other accommodation.

Scholars are responsible for paying accommodation costs from their living allowance (stipend). The establishment allowance can also be used to cover some accommodation-related costs such as bonds. The sole exception is when the Study Country Post pays for initial temporary accommodation costs after scholars arrive in the study country.

All scholars are responsible for their own accommodation arrangements in their second year of study and subsequently. Scholars may move off campus if they wish. Scholars who decide to move off campus should try to secure basic furnished accommodation

(including beds, table, chairs, laundry facilities, kitchen facilities such as stove and refrigerator) as close as possible to the institution. The institution and Post can provide scholars with advice on this.

Accompanied scholars are responsible for finding their own accommodation for themselves and their families.



Posts, together with institutions, are responsible for arranging accommodation for all new scholars in the study country, with the exception of the categories listed above.

8 Support while you are studying

8.1 Orientation



You must attend the full orientation programme provided by your education institution. The start date of the scholarship will include orientation.

The orientation programme provides scholars with practical information and assistance to support them to successfully transition to tertiary study in the study country, and provides essential study, computer, and life skills.

You are encouraged to attend the follow-up sessions to orientation arranged by your education institution. These normally occur in semester one and provide you with the opportunity to raise academic, health and wellbeing issues.

Scholars undertaking papers at USP campuses in their home country should attend orientation sessions provided by these centres.

8.2 Monitoring your health and wellbeing



Your health and wellbeing are important. You are responsible for your own welfare, and that of your dependants.

Adjusting to life in a new country may bring unexpected personal or academic challenges, including culture shock. The social norms, mannerisms, etiquette, food and weather in the study country may differ to what you are used to in your home country. Services and support are available to help you adjust. It is important that you communicate any difficulties you are experiencing to your Study Country Post so they can work with you to overcome these. You can contact the Study Country Post via email to discuss your concerns or to make an appointment to discuss these in person. You are also encouraged to utilise the services available on campus at your institution.

You must attend all meetings scheduled by the Study Country Post. At these meetings, you should bring to the attention of the Post any personal or academic issues, or any change of personal circumstances (including pregnancy) that may affect your study or for which you require support. If you do not attend these meetings or respond to requests from the Study Country Post, you will be in breach of your Scholarship Conditions.



Study Country Posts must:

- regularly monitor scholar welfare and academic progress and provide scholar support, to maximise each scholar's chance of successfully completing their studies within the duration of the scholarship
- ensure they support the welfare and pastoral care needs of all scholars
- at a minimum, meet scholars individually at least once each semester to assess their welfare and academic progress and discuss any issues (MFAT Wellington recommends formal monitoring in the middle and at the end of each semester).

PhD scholars are expected to meet with their supervisor early in semester one, and subsequently meet with the supervisor at least once every semester.

Study Country Posts must inform MFAT Wellington immediately should they become aware of any of the following:

- the scholar, or a scholar's immediate family member, has died
- the scholar has breached, or is likely to breach, their Scholarship Conditions, including in relation to appropriate conduct
- there is a potential risk to MFAT or the Scholarships Programme, reputational or otherwise
- there is a police investigation involving a scholar.

Study Country Posts must:

- monitor and support scholars' academic progress using the scholarship continuation criteria (see section 18) and the institution's academic monitoring or continuation criteria
- recommend to Suva Post any extensions, on-scholarship deferrals, split-site study, or summer school
- recommend to MFAT Wellington any terminations, downgrades, course or institution changes or withdrawals.

8.2.1 Health services

Your institution has student health services to assist you with any health problems or concerns you may have while studying. If necessary, the student health service will refer you to a specialist.

The student health service can also provide you with **confidential** information about family planning and sexual health.

8.2.2 Student counselling

Your institution has counselling services to help you overcome problems you may experience while studying. These services are included in your fees covered by your scholarship.

8.2.3 Other support services

Academic support services, budgeting advice, and other student support services are also available at your institution. You should discuss your needs with the Study Country Post.

8.2.4 Pregnancy

Study Country Posts must ensure that any pregnant scholar is made aware of the nearest medical and counselling services and facilities, either on or close to, campus, and how to access those services and facilities.

To maximise scholars' chances of successfully completing their scholarship, MFAT strongly recommends that pregnant scholars consider deferring their scholarship and resuming their studies in the study country after the birth of their child (see sections 21.1.1 and 21.2).

If you are pregnant and do not use an on-scholarship deferral, MFAT expects that the scholarship will be completed in the original scheduled timeframe.

You must:

- notify the Study Country Post of your pregnancy as soon as you become aware
- consider an on-scholarship deferral and resuming your studies in the study country after the birth of your child
- keep the Study Country Post informed of your condition.

8.3 Course planning

Scholars should prepare a semester-based plan for the full duration of their study programme. This should be done in the first semester of the study programme. Institutions will be able to assist with this. This plan will help scholars focus on what major and minor subjects are required to be completed at each level in each semester in order to complete the approved study programme within the approved scholarship duration. Scholars must provide Study Country Posts with a copy of this plan and any subsequent amendments.

9 Immigration and visa/permit requirements

9.1 Passports

You need a current passport to enter the study country. You also need to ensure that your passport is valid for at least six (6) months longer than the expected completion date of your scholarship. If you do not have a current passport, you are responsible for applying for one and for paying all of the necessary costs.

If your passport is lost or stolen, you must apply for a replacement passport immediately at your nearest embassy, high commission or consulate. You will be responsible for paying the necessary costs. You will need to report the loss of the passport to the local police.

9.2 Visas and permits



If you are from Papua New Guinea, you will need to apply for a student permit as soon as you have accepted your Letter of Scholarship Offer. The Sending Post can assist you with this.

If you are from any other country, the Study Country Post will assist you in obtaining an entry permit. You will need to apply for a student permit on arrival in your study country, before the entry permit expires. You must provide the necessary documentation for your student permit to the Study Country Post.

You should arrange the documentation you will require ahead of time; this is likely to include police clearances and medical checks.

If you have dependants accompanying you on your initial travel, you are responsible for all of your family's visa/permit applications, including your own. The Study Country Post will not lodge these on your behalf.

Further information can be found at the relevant immigration authority website:

- Fiji <www.immigration.gov.fj/student-permit>
- Samoa <www.mpmc.gov.ws/divisions/immigration/permits-2/>
- Papua New Guinea <www.immigration.gov.pg/student.html>
- Vanuatu <www.immigration.gov.vu/index.php/student-visa/>



Study Country Posts may lodge passports and permit applications on a scholar's behalf if they are travelling alone; however, Posts should not lodge applications for dependants. Scholars are solely responsible for organising visas/permits for their dependants. If a scholar has dependants accompanying them on their initial travel, the scholar is responsible for organising their own visa/permit as well as those of their dependants.

MFAT and the institution have no influence or control over visa/student permit decisions made by study country immigration authorities. If you are unable to secure a visa/student permit, the scholarship offer will be withdrawn.

The sections below outline associated costs and payments/reimbursements where applicable.

9.3 Visa fees, medical checks, and other visa costs

9.3.1 Application fee and immigration levy

MFAT will reimburse the student permit application fee (including the application service fee, if applicable), and the immigration medical check fee, on your arrival in the study country, unless the New Zealand High Commission or Embassy in your home country has already paid for these.

You must provide receipts to the Study Country Post on your arrival to be eligible for reimbursement. The costs that MFAT will cover are set out below.



9.3.2 Cost of medical checks

MFAT will cover:

- the cost of your standard medical check for immigration purposes as part of the scholarship. One standard medical check will be paid for the entire immigration application process
- the cost of a second standard medical check if required for a visa/permit extension.

MFAT will **not** cover:

- travel and any related costs for you to undergo medical checks
- any additional tests and reports required because of identification of a health condition during the standard medical check
- any medical checks required for immigration purposes for your dependants.

In some countries, MFAT, via Posts, will pay for the standard medical check undertaken in your home country. Where MFAT has paid these costs directly to the provider, you are not eligible for reimbursement.

If you have paid for the one standard medical check associated with a visa application, you will be reimbursed for this after you arrive in the study country, via the Study Country Post. You must provide receipts to be reimbursed.

9.3.3 Police character clearances

You must pay for any required police or character clearances.

The cost of subsequent renewals of your police clearance will only be reimbursed by Study Country Posts where the clearance requested is from the police in the study country.

9.3.4 Other costs associated with applying for a visa/permit

You must pay any other costs associated with applying for a visa/permit, including courier fees. MFAT will not reimburse you for these costs.

9.3.5 Reimbursement guide: visa-related costs for new scholars

Cost	Paid by MFAT via Sending Post or reimbursed via the Study Country Post on arrival (only with receipts)
Visa/permit application fee	Yes
Immigration medical check fee (maximum of one per visa application)	Yes
Travel to location where medical check occurs	No

Travel to location where visa/permit interview occurs	No
Police clearance fee	No for initial (Yes for renewals, if request is for clearance in the study country)
Courier fee for visa application	No
Passport application fee	No
Passport renewal fee (for example, for expired passport or name change)	No
Any costs, including application fee and medical check, for dependants' visas/permits	No

9.4 Visa/permit obligations

You must make sure that you have a current, valid visa/permit for the full duration of your scholarship.

You must make sure that you comply with all of the conditions associated with your visa/permit, as set out below. You are obligated to inform the study country immigration authorities of any changes in your circumstances that would affect the conditions associated with your visa/permit.

- You must maintain full-time enrolment in your study programme. Failure to be enrolled full time or to meet the minimum attendance requirements may mean that your scholarship is terminated by MFAT.
- You must not apply to change the type of visa/permit you hold without the written approval of MFAT. Also, you must not apply to extend your visa/permit beyond the duration of the scholarship without the written approval of MFAT. If you seek to change your visa/permit status without MFAT's approval, your scholarship may be terminated. If one of your accompanying dependants seeks to change their visa status without MFAT's approval, your scholarship may be terminated. If your scholarship is terminated for one of these reasons, you will be required to repay to MFAT the total costs of your scholarship in full. Alternatively, you can discharge the debt by returning to your home country for a period of two years.
- If you do not have a current valid visa/permit, or if your visa/permit is revoked or cancelled by the study country authorities, MFAT will terminate your scholarship as per the termination process. If your scholarship is terminated for this reason, you will be required to repay the total costs of your scholarship in full to MFAT. Alternatively,



you can discharge the debt by returning to your home country for a period of two years.

9.5 Visa/permit extensions or changes

If your scholarship duration is extended and the study country immigration authorities require you to undertake new medical checks, MFAT will reimburse you for these costs, via the Study Country Post.

You are entitled to reimbursement of costs for visa/permit extensions when a change to your programme of study has been approved by MFAT.

If you need a replacement passport during the duration of your scholarship because your existing passport is lost or stolen, you may need to apply for a replacement visa/permit. Your Study Country Post can advise you on this. You will need to provide the study country immigration authorities with a copy of the police report in which the loss of the passport is reported. If your passport is lost or stolen, you should inform your Study Country Post, the police and your high commission/consulate as soon as possible.

Full details of when MFAT will reimburse you are set out below.

Circumstance	Reimbursed via the Study Country Post (only with receipts)
The original visa/permit was issued for a shorter period than the duration of the scholarship	Yes
Immigration medical check fee, if required (maximum of one per visa application)	Yes
You changed course with MFAT approval	Yes
You were granted an extension because you failed one or more papers	Yes
You were granted an extension because of circumstances outside your control (for example, health issues)	Yes
You were granted a deferral following receipt of your visa, which necessitated a visa extension	Yes
You lost your passport or it was stolen	No
Any costs associated with changes to dependants' visas/permits	No

9.6 Study Country Posts' obligations

The Study Country Post will have certain responsibilities on immigration-related issues. The Study Country Post will:

- contact the study country immigration authorities if you have any enquiries about immigration restrictions for you or your dependants after you arrive in the study country
- inform the study country immigration authorities about any scholarship changes that affect student visas/permits – in particular, if you complete your scholarship early or your scholarship is terminated. Study Country Posts will advise the immigration authorities in writing of these details and advise the authorities that you are not permitted to remain in the study country
- advise you that if you become pregnant during your scholarship, you need to ensure you are not in breach of your student visa/permit or the Scholarship Conditions.

10 Visa/permit and other requirements for accompanying dependants



You are responsible for ensuring that you inform your spouse or partner and any dependent children who accompany you to the study country of their visa/permit-related obligations.

You must make sure that your spouse or partner and any dependent children who accompany you to the study country hold current passports. You also need to ensure that their passports are valid for at least six (6) months longer than the expected completion date of your scholarship. You, and your spouse or partner, are responsible for applying for a passport, if required, and for paying all of the necessary costs.

You must ensure that your spouse or partner and dependent children who accompany you to the study country hold current, valid visas/permits. You will be responsible for paying any visa/permit application fees, and for paying for all of the other costs involved with the visa/permit application, including medical checks, police clearances, and bonds payable to the immigration authorities in the study country. If your scholarship is extended, and your spouse or partner and any dependent children require new visas/permits, you are responsible for applying for these and for paying all necessary costs.

Your spouse or partner and any dependent children who accompany you to the study country cannot apply for permanent residency in any country during the duration of your scholarship, or within two years of the completion of your scholarship.

You are solely responsible for the living costs, permits, welfare and wellbeing of your dependants while they are with you in the study country. You may, however, be eligible to receive an accompanied stipend which will help you meet some costs. You must also ensure that your dependants abide by the laws of the study country. You may contact your high commission/embassy/consulate in the study country for any assistance or advice if required.

MFAT support is limited to providing an accompanied allowance, and repatriation costs if required, for scholars whose dependants are in the study country.

11 Working while on scholarship



As scholars are expected to study full time, and your student permit prohibits working, you are not entitled to work while on scholarship, unless the work is an unpaid work attachment or other approved and compulsory practical training component.

If, in breach of your scholarship declaration, you apply for a work visa to remain in, or return to, the study country to work during or within two years of completion of your scholarship, you will incur a debt to the New Zealand Government for the total cost of their scholarship. You must repay the debt in full or return to your home country for at least two years.

12 Family entry policy and procedures

12.1 Accompanying family members

If you have dependants, you and your family will need to decide whether they will accompany you to the study country, and, if so, when this will occur. MFAT defines dependants as your spouse or partner, and children aged 19 years or younger. Before you decide whether to bring your dependants with you to the study country, you need to think carefully about whether you have adequate funds available to support them.

You need to ensure that your spouse or partner and any dependent children who accompany you are cared for while they are in the study country. This includes ensuring they receive adequate financial support for living costs. If your children are aged between 6 and 16 years, they must be enrolled in a primary or secondary school. All children who are enrolled must attend classes. If any of your children aged between 16 and 19 years are not enrolled in school, they must comply with the relevant conditions of their visa/permit.

You may be eligible for an accompanied stipend to help meet some of the costs of family members (dependants) who join you in the study country. You must meet all of the necessary requirements. The relevant details are outlined below.

The scholarship does not, however, provide financial assistance to help scholars meet the costs incurred by family members should they decide not to join you in the study country.

12.2 Scholarship support for families

An accompanied stipend rate is available to support eligible scholars to help meet some of the costs of dependants who join them in the study country. To be eligible for the accompanied stipend rate, you must have provided the Study Country Post with full written details of your immediate family members, and passport entry evidence that an immediate family member has joined you in the study country.

Immediate family is defined as the spouse or de facto partner and the dependent children (aged 19 years and under) of the scholar and/or their spouse or partner. The status of a de facto partner must be verified.

The accompanied stipend rate is estimated to meet modest living costs for up to two adults and two children while in the study country. It will **not** be sufficient to cover travel and related costs, nor living costs for large families. There is no additional financial support available from MFAT to help cover these costs. Neither is there any financial support available from your institution or any other New Zealand government agency. Local immigration authorities may require evidence of funds when your dependants apply for permits.

If you decide to bring your dependants, you are responsible for paying for all costs. These costs include: family travel, immigration (for example passports, entry permits, and airport departure tax), travel insurance, any living expenses not covered by the accompanied stipend, medical/healthcare, school fees and childcare.

You should think carefully about whether you will have adequate funds available to support any dependants who accompany you. You should also consider other factors, including how your family will adjust to life in the study country, including schooling and employment that may be different to that in your home country. Your studies may suffer if your family is unhappy.

12.3 Timing of family entry

If you decide to bring your dependants with you to the study country, we recommend that you wait at least six months before they join you. This gives you enough time to settle into life in the study country, become accustomed to the study requirements for the study country, and find suitable accommodation and schooling in preparation for your family's arrival. If you are completing a bridging qualification prior to gaining entry into a main qualification, you are strongly advised to wait until you have completed this and have gained entry into the main qualification before bringing your family to the study country.

Family entry for scholars must not disrupt the scholar's study and cannot be used to justify a request for an extension.

12.4 Other considerations

Approval of family entry is dependent on the agreement of the immigration authorities in the study country. MFAT has no influence or control over permit decisions made by the immigration authorities in the study country.

Your spouse or partner may be able to obtain a work permit for the duration of your scholarship. However, even if your spouse or partner is able to obtain a work permit in the study country, it may be difficult for them to find work. The work that is available may not be in the occupation that they worked in at home, or it may not provide a sufficient income.

12.5 Process for family entry



Scholars must provide complete family details to Study Country Posts in writing. This includes certified copies of relevant birth certificates (or certified church baptism certificates), marriage certificate, and where relevant, statutory declarations that confirm the family member's relationship to the scholar. Scholars must respond to any requests for further information in a timely manner.

Scholars must give the Study Country Post at least three weeks' warning of planned family entry travel. You must also ensure that the Sending Post is advised of travel plans.

12.6 Immigration requirements related to family entry



You and your family can only apply for the necessary permits after you have provided Study Country Posts with complete family details as outlined in section 12.5. Study Country Posts must acknowledge receipt of these details before you and your family can apply for permits.

Each of your dependants will need a current passport to be able to enter the study country. If dependants do not have a current passport, they are responsible for applying for one. You and your family are responsible for paying all of the necessary costs. All family members seeking to enter the study country will need a return air ticket.

You need to be aware that the immigration authorities in the study country are solely responsible for assessing permit applications. Your receipt of a Letter of Scholarship Offer does not guarantee that your dependants will receive a permit.

You must independently meet all requirements as set by the immigration authorities in the study country.

12.7 Eligibility for accompanied stipend rate



To be able to receive the accompanied stipend rate, scholars must provide the Study Country Post with passport entry evidence that an immediate family member has joined them in the study country. The accompanied stipend rate is payable from the date of the family's arrival. A previously unaccompanied scholar must have any child born in the study country or spouse (married while on scholarship) included on their SAM record, in order to be eligible for an accompanied stipend rate.

Payment of the stipend at the accompanied rate continues when:

- family members leave the study country for absences that coincide with institution holiday (vacation) periods, or are of no more than six weeks' duration outside holiday (vacation) periods
- a scholar returns to their home country for approved fieldwork or work attachment
- a scholar requires urgent hospitalisation outside the study country.

If your personal circumstances with regard to immediate family members changes, while you are in receipt of the accompanied stipend rate, you must let the Study Country Post know as soon as possible.

If these changes mean you are no longer eligible for the accompanied stipend rate, and you have not advised the Study Country Post, the accompanied allowance will cease immediately, and you will be required to repay any overpaid allowance.

12.8 Scholar couples

If you are married to, or the de facto partner of, another scholar who is on a New Zealand Scholarship, adjusted stipend arrangements apply. One scholar receives the accompanied stipend, and the other receives the unaccompanied rate.

If you complete your study programme before your spouse/partner, you may remain in the study country, subject to Study Country Post approval, as the dependant of the scholar who is still on scholarship. The period of time that you may remain in the study country is subject to Study Country Post approval. One accompanied stipend is paid from that date.

12.9 Short visits

If any immediate family members are in your home country but seek to visit the study country to join you for a period of under six months, they can seek a visitor's permit (subject to the study country's immigration requirements).

You and your family members are responsible for fulfilling all of the necessary travel and immigration requirements. No funding assistance is provided by MFAT towards the costs of immediate family members making short visits.

Scholars should let Study Country Posts know as soon as possible if immediate family members have arrived for a short visit.

13 Two-year stand-down period

You will be required to depart the study country within 14 days of the date you complete your study programme and your scholarship ends. Your spouse or partner and any dependent children will also be required to depart the study country at the same time. You will need to return to your home country for a minimum period of two years. During this period, you may not apply to return to the study country for purposes of work, study or residence. You may, however, travel to the study country for one short-term visit, subject to the visa application process.

Your spouse or partner is not eligible for any visa class in the two-year period following completion of your scholarship, unless they have written approval from MFAT (with the exception of a short-term visitor visa or if you are posted overseas on a diplomatic assignment).

During this two-year stand-down period, you may not apply for a work permit for, or permanent residency in, any other country.

13.1 Spouse or partner on non-New Zealand scholarship

If your spouse or partner entered the study country on the basis of a non-New Zealand scholarship, then the stand-down provisions do not apply. In these instances, your spouse or partner may remain in the study country to complete their scholarship and there are no visa eligibility restrictions on them in the two-year period. Any dependent children whose entry to, and position in, the study country is tied to that of the spouse or partner who is on a non-New Zealand scholarship are also exempt from the provisions in this section.

14 Scholarship allowances and entitlements

This section covers the allowances and entitlements available to scholars. Please note that, depending on the level and duration of your study, you may not be eligible for all of the following allowances and entitlements.

You should not expect to receive any allowances or entitlements in addition to those listed in this section, either from MFAT or from your institution.

 You are responsible for managing and paying your expenses in the study country, except for:

- tuition and associated fees
- travel to and from the study country
- insurance.

You should also note that:

- scholarship allowances are tax free
- scholarship allowances and entitlements are subject to review at MFAT's discretion.

14.1 Payment of allowances and entitlements

 Posts in the study country arrange payment to scholars of:

- an initial establishment allowance
- an ongoing establishment allowance in subsequent years
- a fortnightly allowance (the scholarship "stipend")
- any other allowance entitlements that scholars may be eligible for.

The stipend and any other allowance entitlements are credited directly into scholars' bank accounts every fortnight. The initial establishment allowance (see section 14.5) is paid in full on arrival.

The stipend is payable from the start date of the scholarship (as stated in your Letter of Scholarship Offer), but only if you have arrived in the city you will be studying in by this date. It is paid continuously throughout the year while you remain on scholarship, including during:

- public holidays and the institution's normal vacation periods during the academic year

- the November–February period between academic years
- approved summer school
- approved extensions
- approved reunion travel
- approved, compulsory practical training/work attachment/internship (where the position is unpaid) in your home country for up to 12 weeks, or in the study country for up to 12 months
- approved, compulsory study towards a professional qualification
- approved, home-located research for up to three months for master’s scholars, and up to six months for PhD scholars
- approved compassionate leave for up to four weeks
- approved brief absences from your study country for personal international travel
- the first three weeks if you are hospitalised.

14.2 Ceasing payments of allowances and entitlements

Once you have completed your final exam (or attended your final class or submitted your final assignment if you do not have exams) or submitted your thesis (for research scholars), the scholarship ends. This date may be different from the end date on the Letter of Scholarship Offer. When the scholarship ends, you must return to your home country within 14 days, or before your permit expires, whichever comes first. Stipends will continue to be paid during this 14-day period, and then will cease.

The stipend and other entitlements will also cease if you:

- have an unexplained absence from the study country
- fail to return to the study country from personal international or domestic travel in time for the start of a semester
- fail to return to the study country following the completion of any home-located research
- are on compassionate leave for more than four weeks
- have been hospitalised for more than three weeks
- are on a paid, full-time work attachment as a compulsory component of your study
- (for undergraduate scholars) are undertaking compulsory practical training in your home country and remain longer than the approved duration of the practical training
- are on an on-scholarship deferral
- have your scholarship terminated
- voluntarily withdraw from your scholarship
- breach any conditions of the scholarship (including applying for a work permit without approval or applying for permanent residency to New Zealand or another country)

Stipends are not paid where scholars undertake a semester at the USP Centre in their home country, if studying fewer than two papers.

14.3 Allowances and entitlements guide – summary

Type	Description	See section
Tuition fees	Full tuition fees for the approved study programme, including enrolment, orientation, student union fees and associated fees as invoiced by the institution.	14.8
Travel between a scholar's home country and the study country at the start and end of the scholarship, and also at the start and end of any approved on-scholarship deferrals	Standard economy class travel from the closest departure point to a scholar's home (airport, bus terminal, train station, or seaport) to the town or city where their institution is located, by the most economical route.	5
Establishment allowance	<p>A set amount in the first academic year, to meet textbook costs and for other set-up costs in the study country.</p> <p>A set amount at the beginning of each additional calendar year, to cover the full year. For scholars with less than a calendar year remaining in their study, this amount is pro-rated.</p>	<p>14.5</p> <p>14.6</p>
Unaccompanied living allowance (stipend)	<p>A set amount per week paid over the scholarship duration, and any extension of the scholarship to scholars not accompanied by their immediate family in the study country.</p> <p>Stipends are paid fortnightly in arrears.</p>	14.7
Accompanied living allowance (stipend)	<p>A set amount per week paid over the scholarship duration and any extension of the scholarship to scholars with at least one member of their immediate family accompanying them in the study country.</p> <p>Stipends are paid fortnightly in arrears.</p>	14.7.1

Type	Description	See section
Additional tutoring	Up to F\$500 per semester for tutoring if a undergraduate scholar; up to F\$400 per semester for tutoring if a postgraduate scholar. These amounts are paid at equivalent levels in local currency for any scholars not studying in Fiji.	14.9
Postgraduate research allowance	F\$1,500 for postgraduate research scholars (one-off payment). These amounts are paid at equivalent levels in local currency for any scholars not studying in Fiji.	14.10
Postgraduate thesis allowance	Up to F\$650 for non-PhD postgraduate scholars. Up to F\$1,150 for PhD scholars. (See section 14.12 for details). These amounts are paid at equivalent levels in local currency for any scholars not studying in Fiji.	14.11
Transition allowance	F\$1,428 for Bachelor of Laws (LLB) scholars based at the University of the South Pacific's (USP) Emalus Campus in Port Vila, Vanuatu when transferring to USP's Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji to undertake the Professional Diploma in Legal Practice (PDLP).	14.5, 14.6.2
Reunion travel	Scholars may be entitled to a reunion airfare to visit their home country.	22.1
Reintegration allowance	Scholars are entitled to an allowance to meet costs of departure and getting reestablished in their home country after completing their studies.	23.4

14.4 Allowances and entitlements guide – study country-specific details

Note: Allowances and entitlements are subject to review, and possible amendment, as MFAT deems necessary.

Study country	Allowance	Unaccompanied Scholar Rate	Accompanied Scholar Rate
Fiji – F\$	Establishment allowance (Year One)	2,250	2,250
	Establishment allowance Year Two and subsequent years (this amount pro-rated as per details below)	750	750
	Fortnightly stipend	602	1,099
	Reintegration allowance	750	750
Samoa – SAT\$	Establishment allowance (Year One)	3,955	3,955
	Establishment allowance Year Two and subsequent years (this amount pro-rated as per details below)	1,318	1,318
	Fortnightly stipend	725	1,227
	Reintegration allowance	1,318	1,318
Vanuatu – Vatu	Establishment allowance (Year One)	330,509	330,509
	Establishment allowance (Year Two and subsequent years) (this amount pro-rated as per details below)	110,170	110,170
	Fortnightly stipend	70,555	113,147

	Reintegration allowance	110,170	110,170
Papua New Guinea – Kina	Establishment allowance (Year One)	7,129	7,129
	Establishment allowance Year Two and subsequent years (this amount pro-rated as per details below)	2,376	2,376
	Fortnightly stipend	1,116	3,768
	Reintegration allowance	2,376	2,376

14.5 Initial establishment allowance

The initial establishment allowance helps scholars with their immediate costs on arrival in the study country. It is paid in the first year of study.

The initial establishment allowance helps with costs such as:

- accommodation bonds, and rent in advance (usually equivalent to one month's rent)
- utility bonds for services at rental properties, such as electricity and telephone
- suitable clothing
- course expenses
- textbooks
- household items, if moving into rental accommodation.



The Study Country Post must pay you the initial establishment allowance, as soon as practicable and within five working days after you arrive.

Scholars transferring to another institution midway through the academic year are **not** entitled to a second establishment allowance, even if the transfer is an approved part of their study programme.

Scholars at the University of the South Pacific's (USP) Emalus Campus in Port Vila, Vanuatu who need to transfer to the Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji at the conclusion of their Bachelor of Laws (LLB) study to undertake the Professional Diploma in Legal Practice (PDLP) are entitled, however, to a transition allowance to cover their establishment costs.

14.6 Ongoing establishment allowance



Study Country Posts must pay scholars subsequent yearly establishment allowances at the beginning of each calendar year. This applies to all scholars who started their scholarship in the preceding year, regardless of the actual month of study commencement. These funds help with your housing costs, course-related costs, and research costs.

If your scholarship finishes in the middle of a year, you receive a portion of this amount to the nearest three-month period, as illustrated by the following example of scholars studying in Fiji:

Months of scholarship remaining	Pro-rated establishment amount
1–3 months	F\$187.50
4–6 months	F\$375
7–9 months	F\$562.50

If you:

- have fewer than four weeks of study remaining, you are not eligible to receive any establishment allowance for that period of time
- are enrolled as the result of a scholarship extension, you are entitled to receive an establishment allowance as a pro-rated amount
- are returning from an on-scholarship deferral at the beginning of the calendar year, you are entitled to receive an ongoing establishment allowance on return
- are returning from an on-scholarship deferral during the calendar year, you are entitled to receive an ongoing establishment allowance on return.

14.6.1 Provisions for scholars at USP campus in home country



Scholars completing the first semester of their study programme at the USP campus in their home country are not entitled to the initial establishment allowance until they arrive at the USP campus in the study country (for their second semester of study).

Scholars completing their final semester of their study programme at the USP campus in their home country should receive the standard ongoing establishment allowance entitlement (whether they commence the academic year in the study country or their home country.) They are not entitled to an additional ongoing establishment allowance.

In this instance, the reintegration allowance will be paid by the Study Country Post before the scholar departs the study country. No further reintegration allowance will be paid at the completion of the scholarship.

14.6.2 Course-specific provisions

Scholars at the USP Emalus campus in Port Vila who need to transfer to the Laucala campus in Suva at the conclusion of their Bachelor of Laws (LLB) study to undertake the

Professional Diploma in Legal Practice (PDLP) are entitled to a transition allowance to cover their re-establishment costs. This is paid by Suva Post.

Scholars enrolled in postgraduate study programmes in Medicine will have their registration and indemnity insurance costs paid for. This is paid by Suva Post.

14.7 Stipend (living allowance)



The Study Country Post must pay you a stipend, which covers basic day-to-day expenses, such as:

- accommodation (rent or board)
- food
- living expenses, such as telephone, electricity, and water bills
- transport to and from the institution
- incidentals and personal items, such as clothing and toiletries.

The stipend also covers less regular expenditure on:

- course-related clothing, such as uniforms and protective wear, where these costs are not included in tuition fees
- stationery, photocopying, internet, and other course-related costs, where not included in tuition fees
- field trips, projects, workshops, and conferences
- computer equipment and software
- doctor visits, optical and dental treatment, where services are not provided by the institution or insurance.

See sections 14.1–14.4 for information about payment of stipends.

14.7.1 Accompanied stipend



The Study Country Post must pay you an accompanied stipend, which contributes towards day-to-day expenses, if you are accompanied by approved immediate family members (dependants) in the study country. See information about family entry (section 12), for further details.

14.7.2 Adjusted stipend arrangements



The Study Country Post pays an adjusted set of stipends when a scholar is the spouse of, or the de facto partner of, another current New Zealand scholarship recipient.

If both scholars are on a New Zealand Scholarship and there are dependent children in the study country, then one scholar is paid the accompanied stipend rate and the other is paid the unaccompanied rate.

If one scholar is on a New Zealand Scholarship, and their spouse/partner is on another (non-New Zealand) Scholarship, then the stipend received by the New Zealand scholar is

based on whether there are dependent children in the study country, and on whether these dependent children are in the study country as dependants of the New Zealand Scholarship recipient or of the non-New Zealand Scholarship recipient. If is the latter, then the scholar on a New Zealand Scholarship is paid the unaccompanied stipend rate.

14.8 Tuition fees



The Study Country Post pays for scholars' institution tuition fees and any other compulsory fees.

14.9 Additional tutoring allowance

You may apply for funding for additional academic, study or skills tutoring.



Study Country Posts approve requests for additional tutoring.

Support for additional tutoring can be considered, subject to:

- the institution determining it necessary
- you already making use of tutorials and support provided free of charge by the institution or other on-campus providers, but requiring additional tuition and support.

14.10 Postgraduate research allowance



Study Country Posts can approve up to F\$1,500 (or the equivalent in local currency) towards the costs incurred by postgraduate scholars when they carry out research as a mandatory component of their qualification. The allowance may support home-located research or research in another, approved country.

The postgraduate research allowance is paid once during the scholarship, usually at the time that home-located research is carried out (see section 20.3).

14.11 Postgraduate thesis allowance



MFAT contributes towards the costs incurred by postgraduate scholars for proofreading, printing, and binding a thesis.

The postgraduate thesis allowance:

- is a one-off allowance, not an annual payment
- is a reimbursement for actual and reasonable costs incurred, with the expectation that scholars will invoice only for actual costs or a reasonable estimate (which may be less than the entire amount allowed for)
- can be paid in a number of instalments
- is reimbursed by Study Country Posts directly to institutions or other suppliers
- might not cover all thesis costs, in which case scholars are expected to fund the additional costs from their stipend, establishment allowance, or personal funds.



Scholars should also make full use of the thesis support provided free of charge by the institution, including:

- postgraduate thesis-writing seminars
- individual appointments with student learning support services on writing, editing, and proofreading
- reimbursement for thesis costs available from some faculties and universities.

Scholars may seek to use the additional tutoring allowance (see section 14.9) for additional one-on-one tutoring in editing and writing, as well as for proofreading services.

15 Modes of study

Some Pacific institutions, including the University of the South Pacific (USP), offer study programmes through a variety of delivery modes across their regional campuses.

15.1 Split-site study

It is expected most scholars will study full time on campus in a country other than their own (“the study country”). A scholar may be approved to study in their home country where:

- the study programme is offered only in their home country and not elsewhere in the Region. Examples include:
 - a Vanuatu scholar studying Law at USP Emalus (Port Vila)
 - a Samoa scholar studying Agriculture at USP Alafua (Apia), **or**
- they have completed all but one semester of their study programme in the study country and request to return to their home country to complete the final semester, **or**
- it is their first time studying at tertiary level and they request to complete the first semester of their study programme in their home country



You must apply in writing to your Study Country Post if you wish to complete your first semester of study, or your last semester of study, in your home country.

Split-site study will only be approved where:

- there is evidence that completing either the first or last semester of study in the home country will be of benefit to the scholar
- there is confidence that the scholar will successfully complete their study programme within the original scholarship timeframe, or within the approved extension period where applicable.

16 Conjoint degrees/double majors

A conjoint degree is where two degrees are studied concurrently. They carry a higher workload than single degrees and, therefore, a higher risk of non-completion. For this reason, MFAT prefers scholars to complete single degrees only where possible.

At some Regional institutions, a qualification may only be offered as a conjoint degree (or “combined programme”). In these instances only, MFAT will support the conjoint degree. Similarly, MFAT will support double majors only where the double major is a study programme requirement.

Conjoint degrees and double majors are approved by MFAT Wellington at the time of placement.

17 Professional qualifications

Some professions require practitioners to complete a professional qualification before they can gain admission to the profession.

The scholarship will only provide for a professional qualification where:

- the scholar’s original qualification is insufficient to allow them to gain professional registration or membership of a professional body in their home country, without which they are unable to practice, **and**
- it is short term, **and**
- it is approved by the institution.

The professional qualification must be approved by MFAT Wellington at the time of placement and will therefore form part of the scholarship duration, outlined on the Letter of Scholarship Offer.

In most instances, it is expected scholars will complete the professional qualification in the study country immediately following the completion of their original qualification. The only exception is where the professional qualification is not offered in the study country. In this case, the scholar should complete the professional qualification in their home country where available, or in another Pacific country (excluding New Zealand or Australia). Suva Post makes decisions on professional qualifications.

Scholars undertaking an approved professional qualification will continue to receive their stipend at the standard rate. Scholars must not receive payment from other sources as this will put them in breach of their visa conditions.

18 Scholarship continuation

Each semester, you are assessed against scholarship continuation criteria. If you do not meet all of the criteria below, there are options available ranging from attending summer school, to downgrading the qualification, to terminating the scholarship. Success plans are also put in place.

18.1 Criteria

At the end of each semester the Study Country Post assesses you against the scholarship continuation criteria. You are deemed to have met the scholarship continuation criteria if you:

- are on track to complete the qualification(s):
 - within the original scholarship offer duration stated on the Letter of Scholarship Offer (including summer school), **or**
 - within the original scholarship offer duration (including summer school) **plus** one approved extension (conditional or otherwise) up to the maximum duration listed in section 18.3, **or**
 - within a revised duration approved by MFAT for compassionate reasons (for example, resulting from an on-scholarship deferral), **and**
- meet the education institution's continuation criteria, such as the minimum grade-point average required to continue to the next stage, **and**
- have complied with all the Scholarship Conditions, including expectations around conduct, **and**
- have met the conditions of the conditional extension, if applicable, **and**
- have fulfilled the requirements of the scholar success plan, if applicable.

If you do **not** meet all of the scholarship continuation criteria, the Study Country Post makes one of the following recommendations to MFAT Wellington:

- **Downgrade – academic:** the qualification is downgraded to a lower level qualification at the same institution, as a consequence of poor or marginal academic performance. The scholar may either depart the study country immediately, as they have already qualified for the downgraded qualification, or remain in study country to complete the remainder of the downgraded qualification (see section 19.2).
- **Termination:** MFAT terminates the scholarship (see criteria in sections 18.6 and 18.7).
- **Non-completion:** the scholarship duration ends without the scholar having completed a qualification. This includes cases where a scholar is unable to complete their qualification within their extension period.
- **Institution change:** the scholar changes to a different institution to complete a qualification (see criteria in section 19.3).

If you meet the scholarship continuation criteria but need an extension or have marginal academic performance, the Study Country Post may:

- recommend to MFAT Wellington a **Course change:** the scholar changes to a different course at the same institution (see criteria in section 19.1), and the Study Country Post puts a scholar success plan in place (see section 18.4)



- recommend to MFAT Wellington a **Downgrade – academic**: the scholar changes to a lower-level qualification at the same institution (see criteria in section 19.2), and the Study Country Post puts a scholar success plan in place (see section 18.4)
- recommend to Suva Post a conditional extension (see section 18.3), and put a scholar success plan in place (see section 18.4).

18.2 Winter/summer school

In certain instances, subject to approval of Suva Post, scholars may attend winter/summer school. Relevant situations in which winter/summer school may be approved are:

- a scholar is required to pass a previously failed prerequisite paper
- a scholar has only one paper left to complete, **or**
- the scholar wishes to accelerate their study to reduce their future workload.

18.3 Extensions

Suva Post makes decisions about extensions, on recommendation from Study Country Posts. Extensions are only granted in exceptional circumstances, due to unforeseen events outside of the scholar's control. Scholars should not expect an extension will be approved automatically.

When considering extension requests, Study Country Posts should take into account that scholars are permitted only one extension during their scholarship, and only if they meet criteria (see section 18.1). Study Country Posts must also be confident that the scholar can successfully complete their qualification within the period of the extension.

Scholars must submit a written request, including supporting documents, to the Study Country Post outlining the reason for the extension request. The Study Country Post will then submit a recommendation to Suva Post.



If you are at the end of your original scholarship timeframe, an extension may be approved without conditions, subject to meeting the criteria below. However, if you do not require an extension immediately, but will require an extension in the future in order to complete your qualification, an extension may be **conditionally** approved.

You must continue to pass all other papers, either over winter/summer school or during semesters, up until the point of requiring the extension; at this point the extension will become final. If you fail any other papers, the conditional extension will be withdrawn, and the Study Country Post will recommend to MFAT Wellington a downgrade (academic), termination or non-completion. See sections 19.2 (downgrade), 18.1 (non-completion), and 18.6 (termination).

Study Country Posts must only recommend an extension to Suva Post if:

- the extension is essential to complete the qualification; **and**
- there is evidence of exceptional circumstances outside of the scholar's control that have led to them requiring an extension; **and**

- there is confidence the scholar can complete the qualification within the extension; **and**
- it is the scholar's first extension (only one extension is permitted per scholar during the entire duration of their scholarship, including any English language, bridging or pathway programmes); **and**
- the extension is no longer than:
 - one semester for coursework scholars (this may include summer school, where summer school falls outside the original term of the scholarship as per the Letter of Scholarship Offer)
 - one year for scholars in full-year academic programmes, or for scholars who must undertake compulsory full-year papers
 - a maximum of three months for research master's scholars
 - a maximum of six months for PhD scholars. A PhD extension must not result in the scholarship exceeding a maximum of four years total to the date of thesis submission.

Suva Post must also take into account:

- that MFAT does not wish to continue to fund a scholar who is unlikely to complete their study
- extensions to bridging or pathway English language training programmes are permitted only where there is confidence the scholar will not also require an extension to the main qualification (an extension to any of these is considered the one extension permitted, and no further extensions will be available)
- the scholarship should be downgraded or terminated if there is a low level of confidence the scholar can complete all study programmes within the scholarship duration plus one extension. See sections 19.2 (downgrade) and 18.6 and 18.7 (termination)
- for master's by thesis or PhD scholars, whether the requested extension period is necessary or whether a shorter extension period should suffice
- in the case of undergraduates, the structure of papers and majors. An extension would not be approved to complete a non-compulsory double major or additional minor. Summer school may be an alternative to a full semester extension to complete the scholar's original major.

18.4 Scholar success plan

Study Country Posts must put in place scholar success plans (SSPs) for scholars in certain situations to maximise their chance of successfully completing their studies within the period of scholarship.

Study Country Posts **must** put a scholar success plan in place for all scholars who:

- have failed one or more papers in the previous semester

- had a conditional extension approved (this scholar success plan must remain in place and be updated each semester until the completion of the scholarship)
- are currently completing an extension
- had a downgrade approved by MFAT Wellington in the previous semester
- had a course change approved by MFAT Wellington in the previous semester
- have returned to study in the last 12 months following an on-scholarship deferral.

Study Country Posts **may** put a scholar success plan in place for scholars who have:

- passed all papers in the previous semester, but with marginal academic performance as determined by the institution
- experienced other significant issues that may affect their ability to complete their scholarship within the original scholarship duration
- been approved for an on-scholarship deferral and are in their home country.

Scholars must meet the conditions of their scholar success plan. If they do not comply with the SSP in full, the scholarship may be considered for termination.

18.5 Withdrawal from scholarship

Some scholars may experience unexpected personal or medical issues that prevent them from continuing with their study. In the first instance, MFAT encourages these scholars to take a deferral of study of up to one year to resolve these issues (see section 21).

However, if these issues cannot be resolved through pastoral care support or a deferral, the scholar may voluntarily withdraw from their scholarship.

Withdrawal is not available to scholars who have not met the academic continuation criteria or whose scholarship is being considered for termination.



To withdraw from your scholarship, you must notify your Study Country Post in writing of your intention to withdraw and the reason for doing so. The Study Country Post will then inform MFAT Wellington and Suva Post of your decision. All scholarship funding will cease, and you and your spouse or partner, and any other dependants, must return to your home country within 14 days. The Study Country Post will organise the return travel.

If you do not return to your home country within 14 days of withdrawal, you forfeit your return airfare and will need to fund your own return home. The total cost of your scholarship becomes a debt to the New Zealand Government, and you will be required to repay the full cost.

Withdrawing from a scholarship is permanent, and you cannot take it up again at a later date. However, there is no penalty for withdrawing from a scholarship voluntarily, and you may apply again for a further scholarship after spending a minimum period of two years in your home country.

18.6 Termination criteria and responsibilities

MFAT may terminate a scholarship if:

- a scholar does not meet the scholarship continuation criteria at the end of a semester (see section 18.1) and a downgrade is not suitable or not available
- a scholar is excluded by the institution because of misconduct (as defined by the institution), including academic misconduct such as plagiarism
- a scholar completes the maximum period of English language training available under the scholarship and is still unable to meet English language requirements for entry to their main programme of study
- at any time, a scholar breaches any of the Scholarship Conditions, including expectations around conduct.

If a scholar shows insufficient academic ability, rather than terminating the scholarship, the scholarship should, wherever possible, be changed to a lower-level qualification if available at the same institution (for example, bachelor's degree to diploma). The scholar may have already met the institution's completion criteria for the lower-level qualification (see section 19.2 on downgrades).

Study Country Posts must monitor the welfare and academic progress of scholars (see section 8.2) including applying the scholarship continuation criteria (see section 18.1), and make recommendations to MFAT Wellington about termination.

MFAT Wellington makes final decisions on terminations.

If a scholar reaches the end of their original scholarship duration without completing their qualification and is not eligible for an extension or a downgrade, the Study Country Post must notify MFAT Wellington of the non-completion.

18.7 Termination process

Termination of a scholarship is serious. MFAT Wellington is responsible for making the decision to terminate a scholarship.

Study Country Posts, following consultation with Suva Post, make the initial proposal for a termination if it believes a scholarship should be terminated. Study Country Posts must:

- meet with the scholar to advise that it will recommend to MFAT Wellington that the scholarship be terminated and the reasons for this
- submit the recommendation for termination to MFAT Wellington, including the reasons for this
- monitor and address any concerns about the scholar's safety, and ensure they are aware of support services available to them, such as counselling.

If MFAT Wellington agrees with the recommendation, the Study Country Post will advise the scholar in writing that termination is proposed. Before a final decision is made, the scholar has the opportunity to submit a written response to the Study Country Post about

the proposed termination. This must be submitted within three working days of receiving the proposed termination letter.

MFAT Wellington must then:

- review the proposal for termination and the scholar’s response (if provided)
- make the final decision on the scholarship termination and inform the scholar and the Study Country Post.

If MFAT Wellington’s decision is to **not** terminate the scholarship:

- MFAT Wellington must:
 - inform the Study Country Post why the scholarship is not being terminated
 - consider issuing a warning to the scholar (for example, for breach of visa conditions or violation of expectations around conduct)
- the Study Country Post must:
 - meet with the scholar to advise them that their scholarship is not being terminated and deliver MFAT’s written reply, including any warning issued. If this is not possible, the Study Country Post should send the letter to the scholar by email
 - put in place any scholar success plan as required by MFAT.

If MFAT Wellington’s decision is to terminate the scholarship:

- the Study Country Post must:
 - monitor and address any concerns about the scholar’s safety, and ensure they are aware of support services available to them, such as counselling
 - meet with the scholar to inform them that their scholarship is being terminated, and to deliver the termination letter. If this is not possible, the Study Country Post should send the letter to the scholar by email
 - arrange the scholar’s final travel
 - advise the Sending Post of the decision to terminate the scholarship.

Where a scholar has had their scholarship terminated on academic grounds, they cannot apply for a further New Zealand Scholarship for a period of five years.

Where a scholar has had their scholarship terminated on grounds of inappropriate conduct, they are permanently prohibited from applying for any further New Zealand Scholarships.

18.8 Subsequent eligibility

The table below sets out a scholar’s subsequent eligibility to apply for a New Zealand Scholarship, including at regional institutions, if their scholarship is terminated or downgraded, or they withdrew or did not complete. It includes the mandatory stand-down period before the scholar can apply again.

Circumstances	Subsequent eligibility to apply
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Circumstances	Subsequent eligibility to apply
Scholarship is terminated on grounds of inappropriate conduct	Scholar permanently prohibited from applying for a further New Zealand Scholarship.
Scholarship is terminated on academic grounds	Scholar prohibited from applying for a further New Zealand Scholarship for a period of five years after returning home.
Scholarship is downgraded on academic grounds	Scholar prohibited from applying for a further New Zealand Scholarship for a period of five years after returning home.
Scholar returns home without completing a qualification	Scholar prohibited from applying for a further New Zealand Scholarship for a period of five years after returning home.
Scholarship is downgraded on personal grounds	Scholar can apply for a further New Zealand Scholarship after a stand-down period of two years after returning home.
Voluntary withdrawal from scholarship on compassionate grounds due to unforeseen personal circumstances	Scholar can apply for a further New Zealand Scholarship after a stand-down period of two years after returning home.

19 Course, major, qualification or institution changes

19.1 Course, major or qualification changes



MFAT Wellington makes decisions on course, major or qualification changes when it receives a recommendation from a Study Country Post.

MFAT offers New Zealand Scholarships for a specific field, level of study, and qualification that meets the human resource development training needs of a scholar's country. Course changes are only approved in exceptional circumstances, and must be within the original duration of the scholarship.



When requesting a change to a course or qualification, you must provide:

- a letter to the Study Country Post advising why you want to change your course or major, and demonstrating how the proposed course will meet the development needs of your home country
- written confirmation from the faculty confirming that you would be accepted into the new course

- a copy of your academic transcript.

When MFAT Wellington receives the change request from a Study Country Post, it may seek input from the Sending Post and the partner government before reaching a final decision.

19.2 Change to a lower-level qualification (downgrade)



Sometimes you are unable to complete your original qualification for personal or academic reasons. Rather than withdrawing or terminating the scholarship, the Study Country Post must consider changing the scholarship to a lower-level or downgraded qualification (for example, bachelor's degree to diploma), if available at the same institution.

If you are undertaking a pathway qualification and do not meet the entry requirements for the next level of study, MFAT will downgrade your scholarship to the highest level of study completed. For example, a postgraduate scholar who has a pathway of postgraduate diploma to master's, but does not meet the entry criteria for master's, will complete their scholarship after the postgraduate diploma portion and must then return to their home country.

Usually the scholar will have already met the completion criteria for the downgraded qualification at the time their scholarship is varied to allow the qualification change.

If a downgrade is likely, Study Country Posts should discuss this option with scholars as soon as possible (that is, as soon as the Post becomes aware of significant academic difficulty or that the scholar has not met the continuation criteria for their intended programme of study).



MFAT Wellington approves downgrades.

Where a scholarship has been downgraded for personal reasons, MFAT considers the downgraded qualification to be successful completion of a scholarship. No penalties will apply, which means scholars can reapply for further scholarship study after the two-year stand-down period.

Where a scholar has been downgraded due to academic performance, they will not be eligible to apply for a further New Zealand Scholarship for five years.

19.3 Institution changes

MFAT strongly prefers that scholars do not change institutions. Therefore, institution changes will be approved only in exceptional circumstances.

Study Country Posts make a recommendation to MFAT Wellington, after consultation with Suva Post, where they believe an institution change may be appropriate for a scholar.

MFAT Wellington is responsible for final approval of an institution's recommendation about institution changes.

Institution changes may be considered in any of these cases:

- The scholar has not met the continuation criteria for their current programme of study for reasons other than fail grades (for example, the courses have a higher grade-point average standard of entry, or there are fewer places available in the programme at their current institution), and is eligible for entry to a similar qualification in the same priority sector at another institution.
- The scholar has not met the continuation criteria for their programme of study at their current institution, and a relevant downgraded qualification is available at another institution.
- Circumstances outside the scholar's control affect their ability to continue study at the current institution, such as lack of appropriate supervisors, or compelling medical or personal situations.

The Study Country Post's recommendation to change institutions must demonstrate that:

- they have considered all options for a scholar to remain, including downgraded qualification, course change, or change of supervisor
- the scholar could complete their qualification at the alternative institution within the guidelines in this handbook for extensions of their original scholarship (that is, within one semester for undergraduates, one year for full-year courses, or three to six months for postgraduate scholars)
- there is a high likelihood of the scholar succeeding at the new institution
- the scholar would be accepted into the proposed course at the new institution.

In deciding whether to grant the transfer, MFAT Wellington will consider whether:

- the scholar's proposed programme of study at the new institution contributes to a priority sector for their home country
- all appropriate options for remaining at the current institution have been thoroughly investigated
- there is evidence the scholar could successfully complete a qualification within the guidelines in this handbook for extensions of their original scholarship
- any budget changes resulting from the proposed institution change are reasonable.



If you receive MFAT approval to change institutions, you are entitled to funding for travel costs to the new institution.

- Travel must be taken by the most economical route possible.
- MFAT does not fund other relocation costs, such as moving furniture or loss of accommodation bonds.
- You should discuss the procedure for funding and arranging such travel with your Study Country Post at least two months in advance of travel, where possible.

20 Postgraduate research and PhD examinations

20.1 Home-located research criteria



If you are enrolled in a PhD or a postgraduate qualification with a mandatory research component, you are eligible for support for fieldwork/research in your home country.

To meet the criteria the fieldwork should be:

- essential for the successful completion of your programme (your supervisor must provide evidence of this)
- undertaken in your home country, so that:
 - it is under local conditions
 - it can contribute to the development of your home country
 - it can support you to develop and maintain professional and employment networks in your home country.

As an alternative, you may seek to undertake fieldwork in New Zealand or another developing country. You must make a strong case to the institution that clearly demonstrates why this fieldwork will be of greater benefit to your research than fieldwork in your home country. Any request to support fieldwork in another developed country will not be approved.



Study Country Posts approve home-located research:

- for a maximum period of up to three months for master's scholars and up to six months for PhD scholars
- only if the fieldwork will not result in the need for a scholarship extension
- normally once only per scholarship
- only after the institution and the relevant Ethics and Research committees have approved the detailed research plan submitted by the scholar
- only if the detailed research plan accords with the criteria listed above for home-located research.

In exceptional circumstances, a particular research topic may require two periods of home-located research. If a second period is approved, the total time spent overseas for fieldwork/research must not exceed the maximum time available to the master's or PhD scholar.

20.2 Home-located research plan



You must submit a home-located research plan to your institution at least three months in advance of the proposed fieldwork. The plan must include:

- an itinerary/timetable and description of research, including key milestones

- any justification for home-located research that does not meet the home-located research criteria – for example, research in another developing country
- any relevant supporting documentation.

You must provide any additional information sought by the institution. The institution, in conjunction with you, will determine whether you could feasibly undertake primary research within the constraints of your study programme without needing an extension to your scholarship. For some scholars, depending on the duration of their programme and size of their intended research project, there will not be sufficient justification to support home-located research.

Following discussion with the institution, you may be expected to make adjustments to the home-located research plan that you initially submitted.

After the institution has approved this plan, you must submit it, along with evidence of the institution's approval, to the Study Country Post. You must also provide budget information on what the post-graduate research allowance will be spent on.

The post-graduate research allowance will be provided only after the Study Country Post endorses the home-located research plan. The Study Country Post will consult Suva Post before endorsement is able to be given. If this plan is approved by the institution and then endorsed by the Study Country Post, you must follow it, and be aware that assessments of your scholarship progress will be made with reference to the approved plan.

20.3 Home-located research funding



MFAT limits financial assistance during home-located research to:

- your stipend, which continues at the same rate during the fieldwork research period. The rate is the same regardless of whether any family members accompany you or remain in the study country
- your travel, including appropriate insurance, to and from home-located research (including domestic travel) under a standard economy class air ticket by the most economical air travel route to your home country. MFAT will not fund travel to multiple research locations in your home country
- a postgraduate research allowance to assist with additional costs related to the fieldwork (the level of allowance provided is the same regardless of whether one or two periods of home-located research are approved).

Institutions may provide or source funding for you to undertake research or fieldwork not covered by the scholarship. Any such research or fieldwork must not extend the maximum periods of up to three months for master's scholars and up to six months for PhD scholars, or the duration of the scholarship, and cannot be taken after the scholarship is completed.

20.4 PhD oral examinations and thesis-related tasks



If you are a PhD scholar, you must submit your thesis in the study country by the end of your scholarship.

Usually, you will undertake PhD oral examinations in the study country three to six months after you submit your thesis. This means that, after you have submitted your thesis, you must return to your home country to await the oral examination. Where required, you must return to the study country to sit the examination and complete thesis tasks (see section 20.4.1 for criteria).

On return, you may remain in the study country for a maximum of six weeks to prepare for and sit the oral examination and make necessary revisions to the thesis required to complete the PhD.



MFAT will support only the minimum amount of time required. For example, in some cases, two to three weeks will be sufficient.

20.4.1 PhD returning scholars – entitlements

If you return to your home country to await the oral examination and then return to the study country to sit it, you are entitled to:

- a return airfare between your home country and the study country (in addition to your final travel)
- permit application costs, if required
- entitlements and allowances that apply to your scholarship while you are in the study country. No additional establishment allowance will be provided.

MFAT will **not** pay allowances and entitlements while you are out of the study country.



You must take your return travel to the study country for oral examinations within one year of submitting your thesis.

21 On-scholarship deferrals

21.1 On-scholarship deferral criteria and process

After commencing your study programme, you may request a scholarship deferral if you are affected by:

- serious family problems, either in the study country or in your home country
- a serious medical or mental health condition
- pregnancy
- being in hospital for more than three weeks during term time.

An on-scholarship deferral can be for the length of one semester, or up to one year, but must not exceed 12 months.

Your scholarship remains in place, but you will not be entitled to a stipend while on a deferral. The travel entitlement for you returning home at the start of the deferral and returning to the study country at the end of the deferral is the same as for your initial travel to, and final travel from, the study country.

You must:

- apply in writing to the Study Country Post outlining the reasons for the request and the duration, **and**
- return to your home country.

The Study Country Post will consider the request and make a recommendation to Suva Post.

Suva Post makes decisions about on-scholarship deferrals. When approving on-scholarship deferrals, Suva Post must consider:

- the scholar's situation, including input or additional information from the scholar, faculty, or healthcare provider
- that scholars who defer their scholarship must return to their home country and cannot remain in the study country during the deferral
- that the scholarship can be deferred only once, except in cases when the scholar is pregnant.

If Suva Post approves the on-scholarship deferral, the Study Country Post must:

- issue the scholar with an on-scholarship deferral letter
- put in place a scholar success plan, where appropriate, that covers the deferral period and will support a scholar's return on the completion of the deferral
- give the scholar a deadline to contact the Study Country Post so they have sufficient time to return to the study country. MFAT recommends contact at least two months prior to returning for one-semester deferrals, and at least three months prior to returning for 12-month deferrals.

If you apply for a deferral and Suva Post decides not to grant it, you may either continue or withdraw from your scholarship.

If you have been granted an on-scholarship deferral, you may apply to extend it. The period of deferral (including any extensions to the original deferral period) must not exceed 12 months. You may extend your deferral period up to the maximum of 12 months. As long as the extension to your deferral period follows on from the original deferral period approved, it is still considered one deferral period. If you decide not to return from an on-scholarship deferral, you can withdraw voluntarily from the scholarship with no penalties applied; that means you can reapply for further scholarship study after the two-year stand-down period.

21.1.1 Pregnancy

To maximise scholars' chances of successfully completing their scholarship, MFAT strongly recommends that pregnant scholars consider deferring their scholarship and

resuming their studies in the study country after the birth of their child (see section 8.2.4).

If you are pregnant, you may request a second deferral, which can be for the length of one semester or up to one year, but must not exceed 12 months. This provision is available only when your study programme is over 12 months in duration; that means it is not available for one-year master's or diploma programmes.

21.2 Returning from an on-scholarship deferral

If you have an on-scholarship deferral, you must:

- be reaccepted by the institution before continuing again
- be able to demonstrate that the reasons for your on-scholarship deferral have been resolved
- contact the Study Country Post, with the required supporting evidence, by the deadline stated in the on-scholarship deferral letter
- check your student permit status and, where necessary, renew or reapply for an appropriate permit.

Study Country Posts must:

- be satisfied that the circumstances that led to the deferral are no longer likely to negatively impact on the scholar's studies
- confirm that the scholar has been reaccepted by the institution
- put in place a scholar success plan on the scholar's return.

If the Study Country Post is not satisfied that the scholar can be reaccepted or return to study without negative impacts, they must notify Suva Post. Scholars that do not contact the Study Country Post by the deadline outlined in their on-scholarship deferral letter will have their scholarship terminated.

22 Travel while studying

22.1 Reunion travel

Reunion travel enables scholars who are away from home for an extended period to maintain links with their families, employers or potential employers, and communities. To be eligible for funding to return to your home country for visits, your scholarship must be for a period of more than 1.5 years (548 days).

Reunion travel entitlements are calculated on the duration of your study programme, starting from the first study component (includes bridging, pathway or main qualification). It does not include arrival date or the orientation period.

MFAT does not consider whether you have dependants, or the location of those dependants, when determining eligibility for reunion travel.

The number of reunion travel entitlements varies depending on the study programme duration:

Study programme duration	Reunion travel entitlements
Under 1.5 years (0–548 days)	None
1.6 to 2.5 years (549–913 days)	1
2.6 to 3.5 years (914–1,278 days)	2
3.6 to 4.5 years (1,279–1,643 days)	3
4.6 to 5.5 years (1,644–2,008 days)	4

 You may take reunion travel at any time as long as it does not interfere with your academic obligations. For example, the Scholarship Conditions in your Letter of Scholarship Offer require that you must attend all classes and submit all assignments on time. Where applicable, such as for block courses, you must be present for the entire period of the relevant semester or semesters. You should discuss the most appropriate time to undertake reunion travel with your institution. Any reunion travel must be taken during the scholarship period, but not within the last six months of the scholarship.

PhD scholars are entitled to a maximum of four weeks' reunion travel per entitlement, as they are expected to be working on their thesis full time throughout the calendar year.

The reunion travel entitlement is for standard economy class travel from the town or city where you are studying to the closest arrival point to your home (airport, bus terminal, train station or seaport) by the most economical route. It includes the cost of departure taxes.

A scholarship extension does not entitle you to an additional reunion travel entitlement.

You cannot use a reunion travel airfare to pay for a dependant to travel to or from your study country.

 Study Country Posts approve requests for reunion travel, and will arrange this travel.

22.2 Compassionate travel

 You may be entitled to one compassionate travel entitlement to return to your home country in the event of the death or imminent death of a family member. To be potentially eligible for this entitlement, family members are defined as:

- your parents
- your spouse or partner

- your children
- your siblings (brothers and sisters) and grandparents
- if relevant, the family member who has been your primary caregiver.

For the purposes of this entitlement, the following are **not** defined as family members, unless they have been your primary caregiver:

- your uncles and aunts,
- your cousins
- your friends.

MFAT will fund compassionate travel as long as you can provide medical details about the family member's death or critical medical condition. Sending Posts are also to be contacted by Study Country Posts to verify circumstances, especially where documentation is not readily available.

If you seek the compassionate travel entitlement on the basis that the eligible family member has been your primary caregiver, you will need to demonstrate written evidence of this.



MFAT provides only one compassionate travel entitlement for the duration of the scholarship. If you require additional compassionate travel, you can use your reunion travel entitlement.

You must inform your Study Country Post if you wish to apply for compassionate travel. Study Country Posts approve compassionate travel requests where the above conditions are met, and advise Suva Post accordingly.

In exceptional circumstances, such as a significant natural disaster in your home country, MFAT may approve an additional compassionate travel entitlement to enable you to return home for a short period of time.

Posts should consider whether the timing of compassionate travel means you will fail a semester. In this case, you should be granted an on-scholarship deferral rather than compassionate travel, and return to the study country at the start of the next available semester.

22.3 Personal travel



You must ensure that any personal travel will not affect your scholarship, study, or academic performance. You should ensure that you have adequate insurance cover, which would be at your own expense, prior to personal overseas travel. If not, you should arrange extra cover at your own expense.

Undergraduates and scholars in taught courses can only undertake personal international or domestic travel outside semester time.

You must advise the Study Country Post of any personal international travel prior to such travel being undertaken. You must ensure you return to your institution in your study country in sufficient time for the start of the semester.

Research scholars who are expected to continue studying outside of semester time should contact their research supervisor to determine an appropriate time and duration for any personal travel.

You must fund your own personal travel.

22.4 Practical training and work attachments

Some qualifications, such as Engineering, require scholars to complete a period of practical training before the qualification is awarded. This may take the form of a work attachment or practical training connected with the academic programme.

The work attachment or practical training must be approved by MFAT Wellington at the time of placement and will therefore form part of the scholarship duration, outlined on the Letter of Scholarship Offer.

Where possible, and depending on the length of the training, scholars are expected to do their work attachment or practical training in their home country so that: the experience is under local conditions, it maintains their links with their home country, and it contributes to their country's development. The only exception is when it would be more beneficial for the scholar (and their home country) to undertake industry experience in the study country or another Pacific country (excluding New Zealand or Australia), due to a lack of opportunity at home. Study Country Posts makes decisions on practical training and work attachments.

The practical training/work attachment may be approved where:

- it is approved by the institution, **and**
- the qualification will not be awarded without completion of the practical training/work attachment, **and**
- it can be completed within the original scholarship timeframe

Scholars undertaking an approved work attachment or practical training will continue to receive their stipend at the standard rate. Scholars must not receive payment from the employer, as this will put them in breach of their permit conditions.

22.5 Study-related travel and conference attendance

You must seek approval from your institution before undertaking any travel to attend conferences. This includes conferences held in the city where you are studying.

Conference attendance and any other study-related travel (for example, attending a workshop or a field visit which is not a core course component) must not have a negative impact on, or extend the duration of, your scholarship, and cannot be taken after the scholarship is completed. Such travel and conference attendance must not unduly impact on the scholar's study programme, including class attendance and submission of assignments.



Institutions may provide or source funding for you to undertake study-related travel (including conference attendance) that is not covered by the scholarship.

No additional funding will be available from MFAT.

Failure to gain approval from your institution for study-related travel and conference attendance will be considered a breach of the Scholarship Conditions.

Scholars may, after scholarship completion, apply for a short-term visitor's visa to be able attend a conference or participate in a short-duration exchange programme sponsored by their institution (of up to two weeks). This is permitted within the stand-down period.

22.6 PhD oral examinations



Travel provisions are outlined in section 20.4.1.

23 Preparing to return home

The purpose of the scholarship is to provide you with academic study or skills training so that you can contribute to the social and economic development of your country when you return home.



At the end of your scholarship you are obligated to return to your home country for a minimum of two years. The only exception would be where you are working for your home government overseas on a diplomatic assignment.

23.1 Scholar final travel and departure



You (and your spouse or de facto partner and any other dependants) must leave the study country within 14 days of you completing your study. The completion date will be one of the following:

- your final class
- your final exam
- your final assignment
- your thesis submission in accordance with the study plan
- the date of the withdrawal letter from MFAT
- the date of the termination letter from MFAT.

The dates listed on your Letter of Scholarship Offer and/or your student permits are indicative only, and your scholarship end date is determined by the factors listed above. Once the scholarship has been completed, you and your dependants must depart the study country within 14 days or before your permit expires, whichever comes first.



Study Country Posts must arrange travel at the end of the scholarship for all scholars.

The return travel entitlement for all scholars includes:

- standard economy class travel from the town or city where you are studying to the closest arrival point to your home (airport, bus terminal, train station, or seaport) by the most economical route
- overnight accommodation for unavoidable stopovers en route, if these costs are not covered by the airline.

The entitlement does **not** include:

- unnecessary stopovers in third countries or within New Zealand, including for purposes of sightseeing or to visit family and friends
- travel costs for any dependants.



You are not allowed to make changes to travel arrangements or dates.

Local immigration authorities will be notified if you do not depart on the expected date.

23.2 Completion ceremony



Study Country Posts will normally arrange a function before the end of the semester, such as a presentation ceremony or reception for completing scholars, to mark the completion of their scholars' study and scholarships.

23.3 Reintegration briefing



You must attend and participate in reintegration planning. The Study Country Post will provide a reintegration briefing in the final semester of your scholarship. This will include practical information and assistance to support your preparation to depart the study country and to reintegrate into your home country. You will only be eligible to receive the reintegration allowance if you attend the reintegration briefing in full.

23.4 Reintegration allowance

A reintegration allowance is available to help you meet the costs associated with leaving your study country.

It also will help you to meet the costs of re-establishing yourself in your home country. These costs may include temporary accommodation, accommodation bonds, costs associated with searching for employment, and other incidentals.

The allowance entitlements are set out in section 14.4. The allowance is usually paid with the last stipend payment (see section 14.2).

To be eligible for the reintegration allowance, you must attend your Study Country Post's reintegration briefing in full.



MFAT will **not** pay the reintegration allowance if the scholarship is terminated for a breach of the Personal Conduct condition in the Letter of Scholarship Offer.

MFAT pays PhD scholars either when they return home to await their oral examinations, or with allowances paid at the time they return to sit oral examinations. Posts should determine the appropriate payment date in consultation with the scholar.

23.5 Scholars who wish to remain in the study country

If a scholar or their dependants wish to remain or have remained in the study country following the completion of their scholarship, the scholar will be reminded by the Post that:

- they have agreed as a condition of their scholarship to return directly to their home country for a minimum period of two years, to use the knowledge they have gained to contribute towards the social and/or economic development of their home country
- if they remain in the study country in breach of the Scholarship Conditions, they will incur a debt to the New Zealand Government for the total cost of their scholarship and must repay the debt in full or return to their home country for at least two years
- they and their dependants cannot remain in the study country for more than 14 days following the scholarship date of completion for any reason, including:
 - to pursue other studies
 - to undertake paid or unpaid work
 - to seek medical treatment
 - to seek permanent residency
 - to continue schooling for any dependants.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic year	The academic year at Pacific tertiary institutions normally runs from February to November. Some courses are trimester-based and commence in January.
Accompanied stipend	The fortnightly living allowance that MFAT pays to a scholar on scholarship when the scholar is accompanied by approved immediate family members in the study country.
Alumni	A scholar who has successfully completed a study programme and obtained a qualification.
Applicant	An individual who has submitted an application for a New Zealand Scholarship in the Pacific.
Arrival date	The date a scholar arrives in the study country. Scholars are considered to be on scholarship from this time.
Academic pathway	Qualification comprising two or more levels of study. For example, a diploma followed by a bachelor's degree.
Breach of Scholarship Conditions	Not meeting, or failing to comply with, a condition/conditions agreed to in the Letter of New Zealand Scholarship Offer.
Bridging programme	Programme to prepare scholars who do not meet the academic or English language admission requirements to enrol in their nominated tertiary qualification. It is also for scholars who need to improve aspects of their academic skills. Bridging programmes may be short-term academic preparatory studies or English language courses, or long-term, full-time study for up to one year. An example is foundation studies for scholars who do not have a university entrance qualification.
Calendar year	A calendar year is from 1 January to 31 December.
Completion of studies	The successful completion of all requirements of the study programme. This includes any required attendance, assignments, essays, exams, assessments, dissertations, practical experience, and/or work experience.

Term	Definition
Adjusted stipend arrangements	The fortnightly living allowance rates that MFAT pays in those specific cases when a scholar on scholarship is the spouse of, or the de facto partner of, another scholar. The latter person would also be on a New Zealand Scholarship.
Conditional offer of place	An offer of a place from an institution that is conditional on the fulfilment of specified criteria – for example, successful completion of senior secondary school exams.
Conduct	The manner in which a scholar behaves, especially in a particular place or situation.
Conjoint degrees	Two qualifications studied concurrently (at the same time), usually with cross-crediting arrangements for optional papers – for example, Bachelor of Commerce/Graduate Certificate of Education or Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws.
Country programme	New Zealand Aid Programme country programme governed by a strategic plan. This includes mutually agreed development needs and priorities of the partner country, and planned development activities that will address these.
Deferral (pre-scholarship)	A preferred candidate's status of having accepted a place at an institution and a scholarship, but having approval to postpone the commencement of their studies and scholarship for one semester or up to one year.
Deferral (on-scholarship)	A scholar's status of having commenced their scholarship, but having approval to defer their studies and return home (normally for personal or medical reasons, or on grounds of pregnancy) for one semester or up to one year.
Departure date	The date by which scholars must leave the study country at the end of their scholarship.
Extension	Any increase in the length of a scholarship from the original duration specified in the Letter of Scholarship Offer.
Family Entry Policy and Procedures	The specific section of the Handbook which covers those provisions applicable when scholars' dependants join them in the study country.

Term	Definition
Field of study	The academic discipline or grouping of courses that are similar in a field of specialisation or in principal subject matter, such as agriculture or health.
Financial year	The New Zealand financial year is from 1 July to 30 June.
Home-located research	Research undertaken in the scholar's home country as part of their postgraduate research programme.
Human resource development	In this context, the development of human capabilities, abilities, knowledge, and skills in key sectors to meet the needs of a developing country and its people to improve their standard of living and quality of life.
Immediate family	The spouse or de facto partner and/or the dependent children (aged 19 years and under) of the scholar. The status of a de facto partner must be verified.
Institution	An eligible tertiary education institution in the Pacific where scholars can study. Also provides support services.
Letter of Scholarship Offer	A formal letter offering a scholarship place at a tertiary institution in the Pacific, setting out the details in the Scholarship Conditions. Acceptance of the Scholarship Offer, including the Scholarship Conditions, is a legally binding agreement between the scholar and the New Zealand Government.
Level of study	The stage at which a scholar is studying. For example, diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree; or first year, second year, or third year.
Mandatory	Required by a law or rule; compulsory.
Major subject	The main subject that a scholar is taking for their degree, such as biology, public policy, or linguistics.
Minor subject	A subsidiary (related or supplementary) subject taken in addition to a major subject for a degree.
MFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Comprises Head Office in Wellington and Posts.

Term	Definition
New Zealand Scholarship in the Pacific	A full tertiary scholarship funded by the New Zealand Government through the New Zealand Aid Programme for eligible Pacific students to complete full-time study at MFAT-approved Pacific education institutions.
On scholarship	The status of a scholar who is currently receiving scholarship entitlements.
Off scholarship	The status of a scholar who has either completed their scholarship or had it terminated or withdrawn.
Paper or course	The basic unit of study that is offered in a particular subject towards a qualification over a semester, trimester, or full-year period at undergraduate or postgraduate level. For example, within the subject of geography there are a number of papers/courses at the 100- (first year), 200- (second year), or 300- (third year) level.
Partner government	The government of a country with which the New Zealand Government works to implement an agreed development programme and/or development activities. This is normally via some form of bilateral arrangement. This is also the scholar's home country government.
Pastoral care	A range of support services provided for scholars' safety and wellbeing while studying in the study country.
Plagiarism	Taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own.
Post	A New Zealand diplomatic mission, normally an embassy or high commission.
Prerequisite	A paper that must be passed before a scholar can enrol in a subsequent, normally higher-level, paper.
Qualification	The official academic record of achievement awarded by an education institution on the successful completion of a programme of study.
Qualifying programme	Studies that an institution may require a scholar to pass – for example, a postgraduate diploma, to demonstrate they have the required level of knowledge in their major subject before proceeding to a nominated higher-level qualification.

Term	Definition
Regional Development Scholarship (RDS)	The previous term used to describe New Zealand Scholarships in the Pacific.
Scholar	An individual who has been offered and has accepted a scholarship.
Scholar success plan (SSP)	A structured plan, containing specific activities and timelines, put in place to support a scholar to succeed.
Scholarship	Financial support from the New Zealand Government through the New Zealand Aid Programme to study at an MFAT-approved tertiary institution in the Pacific.
Scholarship Conditions	The provisions of a scholarship that set out what is required of scholars by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). When scholars accept the Letter of Scholarship Offer, they agree to comply with the Scholarship Conditions, which is a legally binding agreement between them and the New Zealand Government.
Scholarship offer duration	The original length of the approved scholarship study programme, including any preparatory or bridging programme, from the prescribed start date to the end date specified in the original Letter of Scholarship Offer.
Scholarship change	Any approved change to the scholarship from that specified in the original Letter of Scholarship Offer.
Semester	A teaching period equivalent to one-half of the academic year of tertiary study.
Sending Post	The post in the partner government country the scholar comes from. Responsible for initial travel and pre-departure briefing.
SAM	The online MFAT Scholarships and Alumni Management system. Holds scholar data for New Zealand Scholarships, for operational and reporting purposes.
Split-site study	The study modality which enables a scholar to commence and/or complete their study programme at the USP Campus in their home country.

Term	Definition
Spouse or partner	A person a scholar is legally married to, or with whom a scholar is in a civil union or de facto relationship, and with whom the scholar lives in a genuine and stable partnership. Partners can be of the same or opposite sex.
Stand-down period	The two-year period a scholar is required to live in their home country after their scholarship ends (whether through completion of study, termination by MFAT, or voluntary withdrawal). Only after this time may a scholar move to another country without incurring a debt to the New Zealand Government. A scholar working for their home government on a diplomatic assignment during the two-year period is considered to be meeting their stand-down obligations. The stand-down period may also be known as the bond service period.
Stipend	The fortnightly living allowance that MFAT pays to a scholar on scholarship.
Study country	The Pacific country in which a scholar undertakes an approved full-time study programme.
Study Country Post	A New Zealand diplomatic mission which manages in-country scholars on scholarship.
Study programme	The approved academic qualification and components (such as any preparatory, bridging, or qualifying programme; or related work attachments, practical training, or fieldwork, where known at time of placement) for which the scholarship is offered.
Suspension	When an education institution temporarily ceases a scholar's enrolment for a specified period of time, usually for academic or disciplinary reasons. Sometimes the scholar can appeal their right to re-enrol.
Termination	When a scholar's scholarship is ended before the completion of study for a breach of Scholarship Conditions. The scholar must immediately return to their home country.
Unaccompanied stipend	The fortnightly living allowance that MFAT pays to a scholar on scholarship who is not accompanied by any other immediate family members in the study country.

Term	Definition
Winter/summer school	Intensive, on-campus papers taught over a period of up to six weeks of full-time study during the winter/summer vacation period. Lecturers teach the same amount of material that an on-campus scholar would normally study within a semester period of 13 weeks. Winter/summer School can be undertaken in the study country or the scholar's home country.
Withdrawal	When a scholar ends their scholarship before the completion of study for personal or medical reasons that prevent them from continuing.