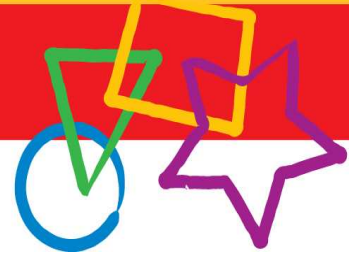


## Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship

**Frequently Asked Questions**

This document provides answers to some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in relation to the *Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Program*. The questions are organised in the following categories:

- **Eligibility**
- **Employment**
- **Qualifications**
- **Teacher Registration**
- **Citizenship**
- **Scholarship Benefits**
- **Study Program**
- **Changes in Employment**
- **Contacts**

If you do not find an answer to your question in this document, please refer to the contacts list at the end of these FAQs for further assistance.

## Eligibility

### 1. Who can apply for an Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship?

As outlined on page 3 of the *Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Guidelines 2012*, the scholarship program is open to individuals who:

- are currently employed in a licensed centre-based long day care or kindergarten service;
- hold a minimum three (3) year Higher Education Institution (HEI) qualification, and are eligible for entry into one of the specified pathway programs;
- are not currently registered with the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT);
- are not currently studying in one of the specified scholarship pathway programs;
- have the support of their employer to undertake further study;
- have a demonstrated commitment to the early childhood education and care sector; and,
- are an Australian or New Zealand citizen or a permanent resident of Australia.

### 2. I am interested in undertaking further study and I meet the eligibility criteria for the Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship. How do I apply?

Please download the following documents for the *Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Guidelines 2012* from the Department of Education and Training (DET) website at

<http://education.qld.gov.au/hr/recruitment/teaching/early-childhood-scholarships.html>:

- *Application Form*
- *Guidelines*

Applicants must ensure that they read the *Guidelines* as well as these FAQs to ensure that they understand the benefits, conditions, expectations and application process for the scholarship. If

there are any outstanding queries after reading the program documentation, please refer to the contacts list on page 9 of these FAQs and contact the appropriate organisation for further information or advice. Applications forms must be printed, completed by hand and submitted by post to the address shown on the Application Form, by **Friday, 12 August 2011**.

**3. I am interested in undertaking further study but I do not meet the eligibility criteria for the scholarship program. Where can I get more information?**

Please refer to the contacts list on page 9 of these FAQs for access to information about HEIs offering relevant study programs.

Individuals with a Certificate 3, Certificate 4, Diploma or Advanced Diploma in Children's Services are not eligible to apply for this scholarship. If you have one of these qualifications or other early childhood related studies, you may wish to explore options for degree programs, including those leading to registration as an early childhood teacher. Holders of Diploma, Bachelor or Masters degrees in teaching or early childhood related studies may consider postgraduate programs that will enable them to extend their knowledge and career potential.

A list of HEI courses approved by the QCT for the purposes of teacher registration can be accessed at <http://www.qct.edu.au/education/approved/html>. Please contact the applicable HEI for information about admission requirements, enrolment procedures, modes of study, program costs and course content.

**4. Can I apply for a scholarship if I have been awarded a scholarship from another organisation?**

Your eligibility for an Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship may be affected, depending on the nature and amount of the other scholarship, grant or funding. You are still encouraged to apply for an Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship, ensuring that you provide full details of the other funding in *Section 3 – Access to Other Scholarships or Funding* on your Application Form.

## **Employment**

**5. What is a licensed centre-based long day care or kindergarten service?**

A licensed centre-based **long day care or kindergarten service** is a licensed provider of long day care services and/or approved kindergarten programs that provides care and education for children up to school age. These centres may also offer additional services such as occasional care, school age care or vacation care, however this is not the principal service.

**6. How can I find out if my employer is a licensed centre-based early childhood education and care service?**

Potential applicants should visit <http://www.communityservices.qld.gov.au/childcare/search/text/> to search for their service online. If "Long Day Care" or "Kindergarten" is specified as the Type of Care provided, then the service meets required employer eligibility criteria.

**7. Can I apply for a scholarship if I currently work at an outside school hours care service or centre?**

No. The scholarship is not available to individuals who are employed in outside school hours care services.

**8. Can I apply for a scholarship if I currently work at a family day care service?**

No. The scholarship is not available to individuals who are employed in family day care services.

**9. Can I apply for a scholarship if I am not currently working in an early childhood education and care service?**

No. The scholarship is only available to individuals currently employed in licensed centre-based **long day care or kindergarten services**.

**10. Will you help me find employment in an early childhood education and care service?**

No. To be eligible to apply for a scholarship you must already be employed in an early childhood education and care service. Once scholarship holders complete their study program and obtain teacher registration, they will be in a position to deliver an approved kindergarten program at their place of employment.

**11. Can I apply for a scholarship if I work as a casual early childhood education and care service employee but I am employed through a Recruitment Agency?**

No. The scholarship is only available to employees of licensed centre-based **long day care or kindergarten services**.

**12. I am a TAFE teacher/tutor and work at a licensed centre-based long day care or kindergarten service on a part-time basis. Can I apply for the scholarship?**

Yes. You may be eligible to apply for the scholarship if you meet all of the other eligibility criteria.

**13. My employer is supportive of me undertaking the extra study. What does he/she need to do?**

Supporting employers must read the *Information for Employers* section of the *Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Guidelines 2012* to ensure that they understand their responsibilities and entitlements with respect to the program. They are also required to complete the Supporting Employers Report to indicate the level of support and assistance that they can offer their employee, should they be successful in obtaining a scholarship.

**14. If I receive a scholarship will my employer receive any assistance?**

Scholarship holders' employers may claim some financial assistance from the department to meet the additional costs associated with scholarship holders being released to undertake required practicums/professional experience.

Once scholarships have been awarded, the employers of scholarship holders will be advised about the process for seeking reimbursement for 50% of salary costs for the employee for the duration of the approved release time.

**15. My employer does not support me undertaking the extra study. What can I do?**

The scholarship program will place increased demands on the employees who are selected to participate. These employees will need to balance work requirements with part-time study and assessment, and many will be required to be released from the workplace for significant periods to complete their professional experience/practicums.

The department recognises that a significant commitment is required on the part of scholarship holders and their employers to fulfil all program requirements, and that in some cases, operational,

work and local demands may mean that the additional requirements cannot reasonably be accommodated.

Employees who are still interested in undertaking further study should contact the relevant HEI for information about independent admission requirements. HEI contact details are provided on page 9 of these FAQs.

## Qualifications

### 16. I have a Certificate 3, Certificate 4, Diploma and/or an Advanced Diploma of Children's Services. Can I apply for the scholarship?

No. The scholarships are only open to individuals who hold a minimum three (3) year HEI qualification.

The study pathways identified for the Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Program are not applicable to individuals with certificate, diploma or advanced diploma qualifications. However, the Department of Education and Training is currently exploring alternative ways to support current early childhood education and care service employees with these qualifications to gain access to further study.

### 17. In the Study Pathways table on page 5 of the *Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Program Guidelines 2012*, what does "or equivalent" mean?

The Study Pathways table uses the phrase "or equivalent" to indicate that other similar qualifications may serve to meet the applicable HEI admission requirements, requirements for teacher registration with the QCT and specifications under the Child Care Act 2002. Current employees in the early childhood education and care sector hold many different qualifications from different institutions and not every one is able to be listed.

It is the responsibility of HEIs, the QCT and the Office for Early Childhood Education and Care to ensure that legal requirements are met with respect to course entry requirements, content, and/or accreditation.

It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that they are undertaking a study program which meets their own needs in terms of intended future registration and/or employment.

### 18. I hold a three (3) year qualification which is not listed in the Study Pathways table on page 5 of the *Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Program Guidelines 2012*, however I think it may be "equivalent" to one listed. What should I do?

If you are interested in applying for a scholarship, you should contact the QCT ([www.qct.edu.au](http://www.qct.edu.au)) and request assessment of your existing qualification and your potential to gain teacher registration if you were to undertake one of the listed study pathways. You should also contact the HEI listed for that pathway to discuss your eligibility for admission into the specified study program.

While the Department of Education and Training is pleased to offer and administer the scholarships, and to provide general assistance and advice, the department does not have responsibility for the assessment of your eligibility for admission to specific HEI programs or teacher registration with the QCT. You must contact the applicable HEI and the QCT for this verification. Contact details are provided on page 9 of this document.

**19. Can I apply for the scholarship if I received my HEI qualifications outside of Queensland?**

You may be eligible to apply for a scholarship. You will need to contact the QCT ([www.qct.edu.au](http://www.qct.edu.au)) to determine your current and potential eligibility for teacher registration on the basis of your existing qualifications.

- If you are currently eligible for teacher registration without undertaking further study, then you are not eligible to apply for the scholarship program.
- If you are not currently eligible for teacher registration without undertaking further study, then you may be eligible to apply for the scholarship program. The QCT will be able to assess your current qualifications and determine what additional study you would need to undertake to obtain registration. If the prescribed additional study fits within the study pathways outlined on page 5 of the *Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Program Guidelines 2012*, then you may be eligible to apply for the scholarship if you also meet the other eligibility criteria.

**20. Can I apply for a scholarship if I have completed my qualification overseas in a language other than English?**

You may be eligible to apply for a scholarship. You will need to contact the QCT ([www.qct.edu.au](http://www.qct.edu.au)) to determine your current and potential eligibility for teacher registration on the basis of your existing overseas qualifications.

- If you are currently eligible for teacher registration without undertaking further study, then you are not eligible to apply for the scholarship program.
- If you are not currently eligible for teacher registration without undertaking further study, then you may be eligible to apply for the scholarship program. The QCT will be able to assess your current qualifications and determine what additional study you would need to undertake to obtain registration. You will need to supply evidence of your abilities in speaking, listening, reading and writing English according to one of the following: Certificate of Achievement of Level 4 in the Australian Secondary Language Proficiency Rating (ASLPR) or Achievement of Level 7 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). If you satisfy prescribed language requirements, including for the purposes of HEI admission, and the prescribed additional study fits within the study pathways outlined on Page 5 of the *Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship Program Guidelines 2012*, then you may be eligible to apply for the scholarship if you also meet the other eligibility criteria.

**21. Can I apply for the scholarship if I have already commenced study related to obtaining registration as an early childhood education and care teacher?**

No. The scholarship is not open to individuals who have already commenced their studies. The scholarship program provides an opportunity to encourage early childhood education and care employees, who have not previously considered further university study to upgrade their qualifications.

## **Teacher Registration**

**22. Can I apply for a scholarship if I am already a registered teacher with the QCT?**

No. If you are a currently registered teacher with the QCT you are not eligible to apply for this scholarship. The purpose of the scholarship program is to provide individuals who are not already a registered teacher, with the opportunity to obtain registration by upgrading their existing qualifications.

### **23. Can I apply for a scholarship if I have previously held teacher registration with the QCT?**

If you have previously held teacher registration with the QCT, you may or may not be eligible to apply for the scholarship. You will need to contact the QCT ([www.qct.edu.au](http://www.qct.edu.au)) to determine your current eligibility status, with respect to teacher registration.

- If you are currently eligible for teacher registration without undertaking further study, then you are not eligible to apply for the scholarship program.
- If you are not currently eligible for teacher registration without undertaking further study, then you may be eligible to apply for the scholarship program, if you also meet the other eligibility criteria.

## **Citizenship**

### **24. Can I apply for the scholarship if I am a citizen of New Zealand?**

Yes. You will need to provide certified copies of the following from your New Zealand passport:

- photo/details page; and,
- page containing the entry date stamp issued at the time of your last arrival in Australia.

For more information about the eligibility of New Zealand citizens to work in Australia, please refer to Fact Sheet 17 – New Zealanders in Australia on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship website at <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/17nz.htm>.

### **25. I am not a citizen of Australia or New Zealand but I have permanent residency of either Australia or New Zealand. Can I apply for the scholarship?**

Yes. You will need to provide certified copies of the following:

- photo/details page of your passport; and,
- permanent residency stamp/certificate for Australia.

### **26. I am not a citizen of Australia or New Zealand and I do not have permanent residency of either Australia or New Zealand. Can I apply for the scholarship?**

No. Individuals who are employed in Australia on a student, working holiday or other temporary visa as at the closing date for the receipt of applications are not eligible to apply for the scholarship.

## **Scholarship Benefits**

### **27. What does the scholarship pay for?**

The Early Childhood Teacher Scholarship covers payment of HEI program fees and student service fees which are paid directly to the HEI by the department.

The scholarship holder will also be paid a study allowance of \$500 per semester (maximum of \$2,000 during the scholarship period).

The scholarship holder's employer can seek reimbursement for 50% of gross salary costs for the duration of practicums undertaken by the scholarship holder, via a reimbursement process. This amount is payable where:

- the scholarship holder has participated in an approved practicum on a full-time basis;
- the employer has accepted the scholarship holder's participation in the practicum as the employee's duties over that period and has not deducted the period from the employee's leave entitlements; and,
- the employer has paid the scholarship holder his/her usual salary in relation to the period that the

scholarship holder is undertaking the practicum.

**28. What is the study allowance for?**

The study allowance will assist scholarship holders to meet study related expenditure not otherwise covered by the scholarship, such as textbooks, photocopying charges, internet access, and learning materials and equipment.

**29. How and when is the study allowance paid?**

The study allowance will be paid at the beginning of the semester to which it relates. Scholarship holders are required to provide the department with evidence of enrolment in the study program for that semester, and evidence of successful completion of the previous semester. Once this information has been received and verified, the allowance will be paid directly into the scholarship holder's nominated bank account. Scholarship holders are required to provide the department with advice of their bank details by completing the Personal Details Advice form, available on the department's website, at the time of accepting an offer of scholarship.

Scholarship holders are not required to provide the department with evidence of expenditure in order to receive the study allowance. However scholarship holders are advised to retain receipts or other documentary evidence for audit and/or taxation purposes.

**30. Is the scholarship taxable?**

Some components of the scholarship may be taxable (eg. study allowance). You are advised to seek independent financial and/or taxation advice in relation to self education expenses and taxation responsibility with respect to scholarship payments. More information about taxation on scholarships is available on the Australian Taxation Office website at:

<http://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/content.asp?doc=/content/34815.htm>.

**31. How are my HEI fees paid?**

The applicable HEIs will invoice the department directly, for fees pertaining to Early Childhood Teach Scholarship holders. If a HEI requests payment of fees by a scholarship holder, the scholarship holder should contact the Scholarship Project Officer in the first instance to discuss.

**32. Does the scholarship pay for my Queensland Tertiary Admissions (QTAC) application fee?**

Successful scholarship applicants who must apply for their nominated study program through QTAC will be provided with a late-lodgement voucher which will enable them to lodge their application, without incurring the cost of the late fee.

**33. Does the scholarship pay for my Blue Card registration?**

No. Scholarship holders must pay for the application and maintenance costs of Blue Card registration, currently \$70 per three (3) year registration. Further information can be obtained from the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian website located at <http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/employment/index.html>.

**34. Does the scholarship pay for my teacher registration?**

No. Scholarship holders must pay for the application and renewal costs of teacher registration with the QCT (from \$125.10). Further information can be obtained from the QCT website located at <http://www.qct.edu.au/registration/fees.html>.

## Study Program

### 35. What happens to my scholarship if I fail a course/unit?

Scholarship holders are required to satisfactorily complete all components of the study program. At the conclusion of each semester, scholarship holders are required to provide the department with evidence of successful completion of each semester of enrolled study. If a scholarship holder fails to successfully complete a course/unit or fails to provide the department with evidence of successful completion, the scholarship may be terminated.

If a course/unit is not satisfactorily completed, the scholarship holder must immediately notify the department in writing of the circumstances, providing relevant explanatory information. The department will assess the circumstances to determine the impact on the scholarship holder. The scholarship holder may be required to self-fund re-enrolment in the failed course/unit or to repay part of the scholarship funds.

### 36. What happens if I don't complete the study program?

Scholarship holders enter into an agreement with the department, formalising their commitment to complete the nominated study program. Should a scholarship holder withdraw from the study program before the termination date specified in the Scholarship Agreement, they must immediately notify the department's scholarships project officer in writing, providing relevant explanatory information. The department will assess the circumstances to determine the impact on the scholarship holder. The scholarship holder may be required to repay all or part of the scholarship funds.

### 37. Can I defer my studies?

No. Scholarship holders enter into an agreement with the department, formalising their commitment to complete the nominated study program, within a specified period of time (usually two (2) years). As the deferral of studies may extend the total period of study, this is not permitted under the Scholarship Agreement.

### 38. Can I take leave during the study period?

If a scholarship holder wishes to take an extended leave of absence during the scholarship period, they must notify the department in writing, providing all relevant explanatory information. The department will assess the circumstances to determine if, and to what extent, the absence will impact on the scholarship.

### 39. Can I withdraw from the Scholarship Agreement after I have signed it?

Scholarship holders enter into an agreement with the department, formalising their commitment to complete the nominated study program within a specified period of time. This represents a significant commitment and it should not be made without due consideration to the demands that part-time study will place on the individual.

Where a scholarship holder wishes to withdraw from the scholarship, they must notify the department immediately in writing. The department will assess the circumstances to determine the impact for the scholarship recipient. The scholarship recipient may be required to repay all or part of the scholarship funds.

Scholarship holders may withdraw from the study program, and the scholarship agreement, without penalty, during the cooling off period specified in the Agreement. The cooling off period expires **two (2) weeks prior to the commencement of the first semester of study in the nominated study program**. Scholarship holders seeking to make use of the cooling off period clause in the

scholarship agreement must notify the department's scholarships project officer in writing, and the course coordinator of the study program at the relevant HEI in writing before the date specified in the agreement.

## **Changes in Employment**

### **40. What happens if I change employers?**

The scholarship holder must arrange for their new employer to complete a Change of Employer Advice form, available on the department's website, and submit this to the department for consideration as soon as possible after the change occurs. The scholarship holder will be advised of the outcome of this assessment, and the impact on their scholarship, and any obligation on the scholarship holder to repay any part of the scholarship funds.

If a scholarship holder takes up a new position at a licensed centre-based long day care or kindergarten service during the scholarship period, and their new employer is supportive of them continuing the scholarship, then the scholarship may not be affected.

If however, a scholarship holder's new employer does not provide a licensed centre-based long day care or kindergarten service and/or is not supportive of the continuation of the scholarship, the scholarship may be terminated, and the scholarship holder may be required to repay all or a part of the scholarship funds.

### **41. How long do I need to continue working in early childhood education and care after completing the scholarship?**

The intention of the scholarship program is to provide scholarship holders with an opportunity to upgrade their qualifications, knowledge and skills for teaching the kindergarten program in the early childhood education and care sector. Scholarships are awarded to staff that have indicated a commitment to the early childhood education and care sector and it is anticipated that scholarship holders will continue to work in this sector.

## Contacts

Organisation	Information	Contact
<b>ATO</b> Australian Taxation Office	✓ Taxation on scholarships	<b>Visit:</b> <a href="http://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/content.asp?doc=/content/34815.htm">http://www.ato.gov.au/individuals/content.asp?doc=/content/34815.htm</a>
<b>CCYPCG</b> Commission for Children and young People and Child Guardian	✓ Blue Card eligibility ✓ Application processes ✓ Fees	<b>Visit:</b> <a href="http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/employment/whats-new.html">http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/employment/whats-new.html</a>
<b>DET</b> Department of Education and Training	✓ Scholarship program	<b>Visit:</b> <a href="http://education.qld.gov.au/hr/recruitment/teaching/early-childhood-scholarships.html">http://education.qld.gov.au/hr/recruitment/teaching/early-childhood-scholarships.html</a> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:earlychildhoodscholarships@deta.qld.gov.au">earlychildhoodscholarships@deta.qld.gov.au</a> <b>Telephone:</b> (07) 3225 2214
<b>DIC</b> Department of Immigration and Citizenship	✓ Permanent residency ✓ Citizenship	<b>Visit:</b> <a href="http://www.immi.gov.au/">http://www.immi.gov.au/</a>
<b>QCT</b> Queensland College of Teachers	✓ Teacher registration eligibility ✓ Assessment of existing qualifications ✓ Accredited HEI courses ✓ Application processes ✓ Fees	<b>Visit:</b> <a href="http://www.qct.edu.au">www.qct.edu.au</a>
<b>OECEC</b> Office for Early Childhood Education and Care	✓ About OECEC ✓ Kindergarten Initiatives ✓ National Reforms ✓ OECEC e-Newsletter	<b>Visit:</b> <a href="http://education.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/">http://education.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/</a> <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ECEC@deta.qld.gov.au">ECEC@deta.qld.gov.au</a>
<b>QTAC</b> Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre	✓ HEI admissions ✓ HEI Application processes	<b>Visit:</b> <a href="http://www.qtac.edu.au/index.html">http://www.qtac.edu.au/index.html</a>