



## **GUIDELINES 2009**

Students are facing increasing financial pressures as costs associated with tertiary education increase.

In recognition of this, and to maintain and extend the University's position as a national leader in distance and flexible learning and providing excellence in practicum and clinical based learning, Charles Sturt University (CSU) has approved the allocation of funds for 2009 for the purpose of providing equity scholarships and grants to assist students from disadvantaged groups to study at CSU. \$100,000 of this will be used to assist students who are attending compulsory professional placements as part of their undergraduate course.

Student Services is responsible for the administration of the Professional Placement Equity Grants (PPEG), including guidelines, forms, promotion, applicant notification and allocation.

### **1.0 Definition**

The term 'professional placement' encompasses all terms that infer authorised professional experience and development for the subject in which the student is enrolled. These terms include 'practicum', 'placement', 'clinical placement', 'fieldwork placement', 'internship' and 'professional experience'.

### **2.0 Grant benefits**

A PPEG will provide a specified amount of funds for professional placement, approximately \$50 to \$100 per week of placement to a maximum of \$1000.

The Professional Placement Equity Grant can only be used in the semester for which it is offered. Payments can be retrospective i.e. if the application closing date for the semester's PPEG is after the placement has occurred, an application may still be submitted. *Example: if the professional placement is in June of 2009 but applications for the PPEG don't open until July 2009, the PPEG application should still be submitted and the grant can still be awarded and paid retrospectively.*

### **3.0 Students Ineligible for a PPEG**

Students who meet the following criteria are not eligible to apply for a PPEG. Applications submitted from these students, will automatically be culled.

- 3.1 Does not have a professional placement;
- 3.2 home address (not term address) **and** placement address non rural or non remote, according to the ASGC Code, which can be checked on the Equity website at:  
<http://www.csu.edu.au/division/studserv/equity/>;
- 3.3 enrolled at CSU as a postgraduate student, fee paying student, associate student or enrolled in an enabling or non-award course;
- 3.4 overseas placement (usually these are not compulsory practicum),
- 3.5 applicant cannot or has not demonstrated **financial hardship**;
  - i.e. not in receipt of a means-tested Commonwealth (Centrelink) income support payment, for example, Youth Allowance, Austudy, ABSTUDY or Parenting Payment;
  - cannot or has not submitted a Financial Hardship Form or letter and supporting documentation;
  - or has been assessed as not being in Financial Hardship by a comprehensive assessment conducted by or on behalf of CSU.
- 3.5 being paid by the workplace for the placement;
- 3.6 the applicants Grade Point Average (GPA) is below 3.0.

#### 4.0 Students Eligible to Apply for a PPEG

To be eligible to be considered for a PPEG in 2009, a student must:

- 4.1 be undertaking an undergraduate course of study at Charles Sturt University as a Commonwealth supported student, as defined in the Act, that is, a HECS-HELP student; and

*Note: An undergraduate course of study includes honours. But full fee paying students, associate students, postgraduate students and students who are enrolled in an enabling or non-award program are **not eligible**.*

- 4.2 students must have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher to be eligible for this grant;

- 4.3 **demonstrate financial hardship; and**

- 4.4 be enrolled in a subject for which professional placement attendance is compulsory.

*Note: This scheme is not intended to assist students attending residential schools. For information on financial assistance to attend a residential school please visit*

<http://www.csu.edu.au/division/studserv/equity/rses/index.htm>

#### 5.0 Application

- 5.1 To be assessed for a PPEG, students must complete an online PPEG Application Form and submit by the closing date;

- 5.1 incomplete applications where eligibility cannot be determined will be deemed ineligible.

Students should be aware that the number of applications often exceeds the funds available and not all eligible applicants will receive a PPEG.

#### 6.0 Documentation

- 6.1 Applicants must provide the appropriate documentation as requested in the Professional Placement Equity Grant Application Form by the application CLOSING DATE.

- 6.2 Applications will only be assessed if the required documentation is provided;

- 6.3 Proof of Financial Hardship is compulsory documentation, i.e. copy of Centrelink Income Statement or complete the CSU Financial Hardship Form with supporting documentation;

- 6.4 Where documentation is required to determine eligibility is not supplied, the applicant will be deemed ineligible.

#### 7.0 Selection

There will be no interviews. The Professional Placement Equity Grant Selection Committee will apply the eligibility criteria; rank and select the successful candidates from among all eligible applications that are submitted.

#### 8.0 Selection Criteria

The following information will be considered when allocating a Professional Placement Equity Grant.

##### 8.1 Rurality:

- 8.1.1 Students who are living in, **or** undertaking professional placement in, 'Remote', 'Very Remote', 'Inner Regional' and 'Outer Regional' postcodes using the ASGC Remoteness Areas classification.

To determine a postcode classification please visit the Student Equity website at

<http://www.csu.edu.au/division/studserv/equity/>

##### 8.2 Financial:

- 8.2.1 The applicant is in receipt of a means-tested Commonwealth income support payment (Centrelink, DVA), for example: Youth Allowance, Austudy, Disability Support Pension, Parenting Payment; or

- 8.2.2 Have submitted a CSU Financial Hardship Form, supported by an Australian Tax Office - Notice of Assessment or relevant documentation (i.e. current pay slips showing YTD amount earned) relating to the student and partner/parents as relevant; *and* the appropriate financial information supplied on the PPEG application form.

- 8.2.3 The applicant holds a current Centrelink Health Care Card, together with proven financial hardship.

- 8.2.4 The requirement to take leave without pay to attend the placement.

- 8.2.5 The cost of temporary accommodation and relevant expenses involved in attending the professional placement (evidence of having to maintain rent, board, etc at permanent residence, travel, petrol, childcare etc).

8.2.6 Ineligibility for other funding support for travel such as ABSTUDY *Away from Base*, or employer support, or other scholarship.

8.2.7 Evidence of other factors causing financial hardships e.g. disability, family or carer responsibilities.

8.2.8 The student does not receive remuneration from the placement agency/site.

### 8.3 Other criteria that may be considered include:

8.3.1 the duration of the placement/s;

8.3.2 additional costs due to a disability;

## 9.0 Notification

9.1 All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the selection process via eBox or their nominated email address.

## 10.0 Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients will be:

10.1 informed of the amount they have been awarded, and any conditions of the grant;

10.2 informed that the Professional Placement Equity Grant is only valid for the semester in which it is offered;

10.3 notified that they must read these Professional Placement Equity Grant Guidelines; and

10.4 notified that if they change their professional placement duration or location, or not attend placement altogether, they must notify a Student Equity Officer immediately.

## 11.0 Changes to Professional Placement

11.1 Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients are required to inform a Student Equity Officer immediately if changes to a professional placement duration or location are made.

**Note:** *Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to consult a Student Equity Officer prior to making alterations to their professional placement duration or location so as not to jeopardize their grant recipient status.*

11.2 Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients who do not attend their professional placement will forfeit grant monies.

11.3 Grants are non-deferrable and cannot be 'carried over' into the following semester; however, students are eligible to reapply in the following semester.

11.4 Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients who have been paid and subsequently do not attend their professional placement will be required to return grant monies.

## 12.0 Payment

12.1 Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients will be paid via electronic funds transfer (EFT).

12.2 Payments where possible will be made prior to recipients attending professional placements; however, as professional placements occur throughout the entire semester this will not always be possible.

12.3 Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients are not to rely on payment occurring prior to attending their placement.

## 13.0 Expenditure

13.1 The Professional Placement Equity Grant is to cover costs associated with professional placement.

13.2 It is the University's expectation that a Professional Placement Equity Grant will be spent on costs associated with attending professional placement.

13.3 Professional Placement Equity Grants are not to be spent on paying HECS-HELP debts up front.

13.4 The University will undertake random periodic audits of a sample of Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients in any given semester, to ensure adherence to these Guidelines.

13.5 The University reserves the right to undertake audits of individual Professional Placement Equity Grant recipients, to ensure adherence to these Guidelines, when information is brought to the attention of the University.

## 14.0 Promotion

The primary location of information concerning the Professional Placement Equity Grants will be the Professional Placement Equity Grants website at <http://www.csu.edu.au/division/studserv/equity/ppes/index.htm>

Primary availability of these Guidelines and the Professional Placement Equity Grant Application Form will be via this website.

Where possible, there will be links to the Professional Placement Equity Grants website from the following websites:

- 14.1 All CSU School and Faculty websites
- 14.2 Student Services Financial Assistance
- 14.3 Scholarships
- 14.5 Professional Experience Network

## 15.0 Timelines

Where possible, the closing date for applications will be sufficiently early to allow for allocation of the grants before the commencement of a student's professional placement.

Below is the timeline for the Spring Semester 2009, to be used as a guide only.

Date	Action
Mon 20 July 2009	Application for 200970 Professional Placement Equity Grants open
Fri 21 August 2009	Application closing date
Friday 11 September 2009	Notification of application outcome to all applicants via ebox
Monday 14 September 2009	Week beginning – successful PPEG applicants will be paid their grant money via EFT to their nominated bank account with CSU.

## 16.0 Provision of False Information

Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the Criminal Code. If the University knows or has reason to believe that a Professional Placement Equity Grants recipient has provided false or misleading information to CSU in relation to a Professional Placement Equity Grant, CSU will immediately:

- 16.1 provide the student with an opportunity to explain; and
- 16.2 re-assess the student's entitlement to a Professional Placement Equity Grant.

## 17.0 Terms and Conditions

Upon receipt of a Professional Placement Equity Grant, students agree to fulfil all requirements as set out in these Guidelines.

In the submission of an online Professional Placement Equity Grant Application Form, students consent to the University accessing the student's records for the purposes of assessing and administering the Professional Placement Equity Grants.

## 18.0 Privacy

Personal and health information provided for the administration of Professional Placement Equity Grants program is protected by the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) and the National Privacy Principles and Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW).

The information collected will only be used by authorised staff to assess eligibility, rank applicants and administer the Professional Placement Equity Grants. The information collected may also be used for assessment purposes for other scholarships and equity programs where permission is given by the applicant. Students should be aware that they provide information of their own free will.

Personal and health information provided by the applicant will not be made available to any person within the University or any person or organisation outside the University for any other purpose without the applicant's consent, except where the University may be legally required to do so.

Applicant files will be held in a secure filing cabinet which is accessible only to authorised employees and will be kept for the appropriate legal time limit and then destroyed.

Students may access their personal and health information to ensure that it is not inaccurate, irrelevant to the purpose for which it was collected, misleading, incomplete or out-of-date. Students may also ask a Student Equity Officer to amend any of the information held about them or to add comments or explanations in relation to their information. To do any of these things, students should contact one of the Student Equity Officers.

Students dissatisfied with the way a Student Equity Officer has handled their personal or health information may apply to have the matter reviewed by lodging a formal application with the CSU Ombudsman.

## 19.0 Management Committee

The Professional Placement Equity Grants Management Committee shall consist of the Executive Director of the Division of Student Services (or nominee), Manager Access and Work, Student Equity Officers and, if deemed appropriate, staff member/s from nominated Schools.

## 20.0 Amendments

Amendments may be made to these guidelines from time to time, by the Professional Placement Equity Grants Management Committee.

## 21.0 Version Control

Date	Version	Author	Description / Amendments
1 Aug 2006	1.0	Danielle Toole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First version for 2006</li> </ul>
31 Jan 2007	1.1	Susan Bragg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removed notify students of receiving application</li> <li>Added retrospective payments under 'Scholarship Benefits'</li> <li>Added 'additional costs due to a disability' as a criteria for assessment</li> <li>Dr Jane Ross - Updated key dates for 200740</li> </ul>
April 2007	1.1	Susan Bragg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removed section 'Acceptance'. Once a student is notified that they are successful in gaining a PPES, they do not need to 'accept' the scholarship or provide bank account details via this form.</li> </ul>
July 2007	1.1	Susan Bragg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated key dates for 200770</li> <li>Changed Scholarship to Grant</li> </ul>
July 2007	1.1	Susan Bragg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated key dates for 200840</li> </ul>
Nov 2007	1.1	Susan Bragg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added- Students must have a grade point average of 3.0 or higher to be eligible for this grant.</li> </ul>
April 2008	1.2	Carol Colombera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timeline Updated for 200870 PPEG Applications</li> </ul>
July 2008	1.2	Carol Colombera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligibility Criteria clarified and Ineligible/Culling criteria added.</li> </ul>
February 2009	1.3	Carol Colombera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2009 PPEG Guidelines – year and timeline amendments</li> </ul>
July 2009	1.4	Carol Colombera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2009 PPEG Guidelines – Updated numbering style and 200970.</li> </ul>

<b>Approved:</b> Executive Director, Division of Student Services	<b>Assigned review period</b> Biannually	<b>Date of next review</b> January 2010
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