

**CHARLES STURT**  
UNIVERSITY



# CSU Masters Equity Scholarship

Policy and Guidelines for 2010

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## 1 UNIVERSITY STRATEGY

During 2006 the Vice Chancellor launched the University Strategy 2007-2011. This strategy outlines the vision, the mission, the key objectives and the values for the University for the next five years.

Vision: A national university for excellence in education for the professions, strategic and applied research and flexible delivery of learning and teaching.

One of the key objectives of the University's Mission is to continue to build institutional strength, reputation and sustainability by ensuring ethical and effective governance practices and the responsible stewardship of resources.

Another key objective of the University's Mission is to provide distinctive educational programs for the professions that prepare students for work and citizenship and which are accessible to students who have the capacity for university study.

Further, within the Equity operational plan of the Division of Student Services, The Charles Sturt University (CSU) Equity Goal is:

"To enhance the capacity of CSU to contribute to Australia's social, cultural, political and economic vitality and strength through action which embraces the full diversity of the community and results in a student profile that fairly reflects that diversity."

## 2 PREAMBLE

Consistent with the CSU Equity goal, CSU aims to provide a transparent, confidential, fair and consistent application of these Guidelines in its implementation of the CSU Masters Equity Scholarship Programme.

### 2.1 CSU Masters Equity Scholarships

Students are facing increasing financial pressures as costs associated with tertiary education increase. In recognition of this, Charles Sturt University (CSU) has approved the allocation of funds for the purpose of providing equity scholarships to assist students from disadvantaged groups to study at CSU.

## 3 LEGISLATION

The following legislation is directly relevant to this policy:

- Higher Education Support Act 2003
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Privacy Act 1988
- Higher Education Support (Transitional Provisions and Consequential Amendments) Act 2003
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)

Subordinate Legislation:

- Higher Education Support Act 2003 – Guidelines for Commonwealth Scholarships

## 4 SCHOLARSHIP VALUE AND NUMBER

### 4.1. Value of Scholarships and Indexation

- In 2010 the CSU Masters Equity Scholarship is worth \$2,000 per annum and is allocated for one year, paid in 2 instalments of \$1,000 per session.

### 4.2. Number of Scholarships

- In 2010 CSU will provide funding for approximately 20 CSU Masters Equity Scholarships.

## 5 POLICY

- 5.1 A student must meet eligibility criteria.
- 5.2 Special consideration will be given to Indigenous students.
- 5.3 A student may receive a CSU Masters Equity Scholarship for a maximum duration of two half years provided they meet the ongoing eligibility criteria.
- 5.4 A student in receipt of a Commonwealth, Equity or Institutional Scholarship from another University will not automatically continue to receive an Equity or Institutional Scholarship at CSU, and must reapply.
- 5.5 A CSUMES recipient taking an Approved Leave of Absence in the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of their CSUMES allocation will forfeit that session's payment and their CSUMES cancelled.
- 5.6 A CSU Masters Equity Scholarship recipient deferring their offer to study will forfeit their CSUMES and should reapply direct to CSU for scholarship allocation in the following year.
- 5.7 A CSUMES recipient may not concurrently hold a CSU Equity Scholarship (Undergraduate), Commonwealth Scholarship, Relocation Scholarship or Start Up Scholarship.
- 5.8 Due to privacy laws, any discussion of an application or scholarship recipient must take place only with the applicant/scholarship recipient.

## 6 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

### 6.1 CSU Masters Equity Scholarship (CSUMES) Eligibility

To be eligible for a CSUMES as a new or continuing student in 2010 a student must, by the Census date of their 1<sup>st</sup> session as a CSUMES recipient:

- 6.1.1 be undertaking a Masters (coursework) course by on campus mode of study, as a Commonwealth supported student, as defined in the Act, i.e. a HECS-HELP student; and

Note: Students who are enrolled in an enabling or non-award programme are not eligible for a CSU Masters Equity Scholarship.

- 6.1.2 be enrolled as a full-time student; and

Note: A full time student is one who is enrolled to undertake an amount of study of at least three quarters (or 75%) of an equivalent full-time study load (EFTSL). At CSU this equates to being enrolled in three or more (8 point) subjects or 24 subject points per session. Students who are enrolled to undertake less than this amount of study are not eligible for a CSUMES unless there are exceptional circumstances that prevent the student from studying full-time as set out in Paragraph 7.5 of these Guidelines.

- 6.1.3 be studying their first Masters degree; and

- 6.1.4 not be in receipt of a Commonwealth Scholarship, Relocation Scholarship, Start Up Scholarship or CSU Equity Scholarship; and

- 6.1.5 not be in receipt of any other scholarship that is valued at greater than the value of a Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship (CAS) for 2010 being \$4,508 per annum;
- 6.1.6 meet satisfactory academic progress requirements defined as having and maintaining a grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or higher, if the student is enrolled as a continuing student at CSU; and
- 6.1.7 be of low socio-economic status, for the purpose of these Guidelines,
  - a) demonstrated by the student being in receipt of a means-tested Commonwealth income support payment, for example Youth Allowance, Austudy, Abstudy, Parenting payment etc ; or
  - b) on the basis of a comprehensive assessment conducted by or on behalf of CSU.
- 6.1.8 be an Australian citizen or the holder of a permanent humanitarian visa (*note: students who are only Australian permanent residents and not Australian citizens are not eligible for a CSUMES*)

## **6.2 CSUES Ongoing Eligibility Criteria**

To maintain eligibility for the second session payment of a CSUMES, by the Census Date, a student must:

- 6.2.1 continue to meet the Eligibility Criteria as outlined in 6.1 above; and
- 6.2.2 continue meet the satisfactory academic progress requirements defined as maintaining a grade point average of 3.00 or above; and
- 6.2.3 complete a CSU Ongoing Eligibility form and have their eligibility for a CSUMES confirmed by CSU prior to scholarship payment.

## **7 APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT**

### **7.1 Application Form**

- 7.1.1 To be in the applicant pool and assessed for a CSUMES, students must complete and submit a 2010 Masters Equity Scholarship Application Form, direct to the Equity Scholarship Office, Charles Sturt University;
- 7.1.2 Incomplete applications where eligibility cannot be determined will be deemed ineligible.

### **7.2 Documentation**

- 7.2.1 Applicants must provide the appropriate documentation as requested in the 2010 Masters Equity Scholarship Application Form.
- 7.2.2 Sections will only be assessed if the required documentation is provided.
- 7.2.3 Where documentation required to determine eligibility is not supplied, the applicant will be deemed ineligible.

### **7.3 Selection**

- 7.3.1 There will be no interviews.
- 7.3.2 CSU will only offer a CSUMES as a result of an application lodged as part of a competitive application process.
- 7.3.3 CSU Masters Equity Scholarship applications will be assessed and ranked based on the information provided in the application and supporting documentation, in accordance with

Paragraph 6.1 of these Guidelines.

#### **7.4 Access for Indigenous students**

- 7.4.1 CSU will give special consideration to Indigenous students.
- 7.4.2 Consistent with Commonwealth ABSTUDY Policy, CSU will normally accept completion of the declaration on the application form as evidence to assess a student as Indigenous.

#### **7.5 Exceptional circumstances for studying part time**

- 7.5.1 In accordance with paragraph 6.1.2 of these Guidelines CSU will take into account factors such as disability and significant carer responsibilities in determining a student's inability to study full-time.
- 7.5.2 Students must complete the Long Term Medical Condition / Disability section of the CSU Masters Equity Scholarships Application form, should they fail to meet the full-time study requirements as set out in paragraph 6.1.2 of these Guidelines, due to a disability.
- 7.5.3 For the purpose of this programme, a carer is defined as a person of any age, who without being paid (excluding Centrelink), cares for another person who needs ongoing support because of a long-term medical condition, a mental illness, a disability, frailty or the need for palliative care. A carer may or may not be a family member and may or may not live with the person. Volunteers under the auspices of a voluntary organisation are not included. CSUMES applicants may be in receipt of a Centrelink Carer Allowance or Carer Payment.
- 7.5.4 Students must complete the Sole Parent / Carer Responsibilities section of the CSU Masters Equity Scholarships Application form, should they fail to meet the full-time study requirements as set out in paragraph 6.1.2 of these Guidelines, due to carer responsibilities as defined above.

#### **7.6 Ranking**

Following assessment, CSU will rank students on the consideration of primary and secondary information. Primary information is information that demonstrates:

- 7.6.1 low socio-economic status as set out in paragraph 6.1.7 of these Guidelines; and
- Secondary information is information that demonstrates either:
- 7.6.2 sole parent and/or carer responsibilities; and/or
  - 7.6.3 English language difficulty; and/or
  - 7.6.4 long term medical condition / disability; and/or
  - 7.6.5 the ongoing effects of trauma or abuse.

#### **7.7 Notification**

- 7.7.1 All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the selection process in writing sent direct to the applicant.

#### **7.8 Provisional Offer for a CSU Masters Equity Scholarship**

- 7.8.1 A provisional offer is an offer of a scholarship made prior to the University confirming a students' enrolment at the Census Date.
- 7.8.2 A provisional offer is made on the condition that the student is eligible to receive a scholarship at Census date.
- 7.8.3 The offer will include a CSUMES Acceptance form as appropriate to the provisional offer;
- 7.8.4 Following the Census date, CSU will run a final eligibility check. If a student who has been made a provisional offer is still eligible the provisional offer is then automatically deemed a firm offer and payment will proceed.

- 7.8.5 If a student does not meet the eligibility requirements the provisional offer will be withdrawn and the scholarship will not be paid.

## **8 PAYMENT**

- 8.1 Payments will occur via electronic funds transfer (EFT), payable at half the annual scholarship value, in each of the Session 1 and Session 2.
- 8.2 Recipients upon accepting the offer of a CSU Masters Equity Scholarship will be required to provide banking details to Charles Sturt University for scholarship payments to occur.
- 8.3 CSU Masters Equity Scholarship payments in 2010 will be made within 6 weeks following the Census date in Session 1, and Session 2.
- 8.4 Payments will be made directly to students by electronic funds transfer by CSU.

## **9 SUSPENSION**

- 9.1 CSUMES recipients may not apply to have their scholarship suspended.

## **10 TERMINATION**

CSU will terminate a CSU Masters Equity Scholarship:

- 10.1 if the student ceases to meet the eligibility criteria as specified in section 6 of these Guidelines; or
- 10.2 once the maximum duration of the CSUMES has been reached; or
- 10.3 if CSU determines that a student:
- 10.3.1 is guilty of serious misconduct, including but not limited to the provision of false or misleading information in terms of paragraph 12 of these Guidelines; or
  - 10.3.2 if CSU determines that the scholarship was awarded on the basis of false or falsified information.

## **11 EXPENDITURE**

- 11.1 It is the University's expectation that a CSUMES will be spent on general education or accommodation costs associated with studying at CSU.

## **12 PROVISION OF FALSE INFORMATION**

If CSU knows or has reason to believe that a CSU Masters Equity Scholarship recipient has provided false or misleading information to CSU in relation to a CSU Masters Equity Scholarship, CSU will immediately:

- 12.1 provide the student with an opportunity to explain; and
- 12.2 re-assess the student's entitlement to a CSUMES.

## **13 TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- 13.1 A CSUMES recipient must provide in writing, at the earliest possible convenience, the details of changed circumstances, to those provided in their CSU Masters Equity Scholarship Application Form 2010. Changed circumstances details are to be sent to the Scholarship Equity Officer.

- 13.2 Upon receipt of change in circumstances details CSU may re-assess the student's entitlement to a CSUMES.
- 13.3 Upon signing and returning a CSUMES Acceptance Form, students agree to fulfil all requirements as set out in these Guidelines, and consent to the University accessing the student's records for the purposes of assessing and administering their CSUMES.

## 14 PRIVACY

Personal and health information provided for the administration of the CSU Masters Equity Scholarship is protected by the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) and the 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 CSU Masters Equity Scholarship. 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 office 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 the Scholarship 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 the Scholarship Equity Officer.

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

## 15 AMENDMENTS

Amendments may be made to these guidelines from time to time, by the CSU Masters Equity Scholarship Management Committee.

## 16 VERSION CONTROL

Date	Version	Author	Description / Amendments
20 October 2008	1.0	Carol Colombera	First version for 2009
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