Early Childhood Teaching Scholarships

Frequently Asked Questions

The Early Childhood Teaching Scholarships provide between $7,500 and $10,000 to support experienced early childhood educators to upgrade their Diploma qualification to become early childhood teachers.

It is well-documented that the early childhood education and care workforce needs access to professional development opportunities, and there is strong evidence that shows access to an early childhood teacher has a significant effect on children’s early learning outcomes.

Who are the scholarships open to?

The scholarships are available to educators who are currently employed in the sector in any capacity, including full-time, part-time or casual employment.

This requirement ensures that the scholarships are targeted at people who are engaged in and familiar with the early learning environment. It also means that as they learn, scholars will be able to apply the knowledge and skills they are gaining in their services.

To be eligible you must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident who is:

- a Diploma-qualified educator currently working in the early childhood education and care sector
- intending to apply for and enrol in an early childhood teaching qualification that meets ACECQA’s requirements and is published on the approved qualification list

How will the scholarships help rural and regional communities?

The Early Childhood Teaching Scholarships are targeted at helping to increase the number of early childhood teachers working in rural, regional and remote areas of NSW where there are teacher shortages.

Applicants from all over NSW can apply for a scholarship, but preference will be given to rural and regional applicants.

Preference will also be given to applicants working in services in disadvantaged communities, and applicants working in services with high numbers of Aboriginal children.

This round also includes identified scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants and educators working with children with additional needs in identified regional centres.

Scholarships are open to educators who have not yet started their early childhood teaching degree.
How much money can I receive through a scholarship?

Scholars receive between $7,500 and $10,000 over the course of their degree.

When you enrol in your degree, you may be offered Recognition of Prior Learning (that is, your degree is made shorter because you get credit for skills and knowledge you have acquired through your previous experience). If you receive recognition of prior learning from your previous study, the maximum amount you will receive through the scholarship is $7,500.

This is because it will take you less time to complete your qualification than someone who did not receive Recognition of Prior Learning.

If you do not receive Recognition of Prior Learning, the maximum amount you will receive over the course of your degree is $10,000 to reflect that you will spend a longer time studying.

What can I use the money for? Will the Department pay my HECS or fees?

You can use the money for any costs that you incur in your study. These costs are different for different people. They could be, for example, textbooks or resources, travel costs, technology to support your study, or paying your course fees.

The Department will not directly pay your course fees or HECS on your behalf. How you pay for your course is your responsibility.

If you choose to use the money to pay your HECS or course fees, you will need to make this arrangement with the institution in which you choose to study your degree.

How does the funding work?

You will receive payments each semester or trimester, depending on your course structure.

The payments are calculated based on your study load for the semester or trimester, and how much that study load represents of the total load you need to complete the whole degree.

Specific information about payment calculation will be made available to successful scholarship recipients.

When will I know the outcome of my scholarship application?

The Department is aiming to finalise scholarship offers by January 2013.

For more information on the Early Childhood Teaching Scholarships please contact Early Childhood Education and Care via email at NPinitiatives@det.nsw.edu.au or phone (02) 9244 5683

Tips for a successful application

The assessors of the scholarship applications are looking for educators who are passionate about working with young children and are interested in taking the next step in their career. They are also looking for people who are good candidates to study for and complete a degree.

When you are answering the questions for the Personal Reference (page 6 of the application form), think of it as making a case for yourself as a candidate in the same way you would put yourself forward in a job interview.

Think about what sets you apart from other candidates. Is it your experience and achievements in your career to date? Your relationships with children and families in your service? Your relationship with staff in your service? Your commitment to achieving your goals?

Keep your responses clear, concise and to the point.