



**GOVERNMENT OF TOKELAU
SCHOLARHIP SCHEME**

**APPLICATION FOR THEOLOGICAL STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP
2023**

Applications close on 31st October 2022

Applications are to be forwarded to the Department of Education, Apia Office, SAMOA before 4.00pm on the stated deadline. E-copies can be emailed to Wong Chiu Tuipoloa (wong.tuipoloa@tokelau.org.nz), copying Elaine Lameta (elaine.lameta@tokelau.org.nz).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: Personal Details	Page 3
Section 2: Medical Background	Page 5
Section 3: Criminal Clearance	Page 6
Section 4: Academic Background	Page 7
Section 5: History on Scholarship Scheme	Page 8
Section 6: Proposed Study Program	Page 9
Section 7: Why it Matters	Page 10
Section 8: Applicant Declaration	Page 11
Section 9: Document Checklist	Page 12
Annex 1: Policies	Page 13

SECTION 1: PERSONAL DETAILS

Eligibility

The Government of Tokelau Tertiary Study and Post School Education Scholarships is offered to applicants who meet the criteria for eligibility as noted in the Scholarships Policy (see Annex 1).

Write your responses or tick the suitable answer in the provided spaces. You must complete all applicable sections

Which of the following eligibility criteria applies to you? Please tick the circle next to the criteria.

- A New Zealand citizen of Tokelauan descent living in Tokelau
- A permanent resident (PR) in Tokelau
- A Tokelauan living overseas, who had resided in Tokelau for no less than one year (12 months) and that your application is done within this one-year period while in Tokelau

Note: Those of Tokelau descent who are citizens **only** of other countries by virtue of the passports they hold, for example, an American national, incur international fees at overseas tertiary institutions. As such, their applications will be viewed in light of their non-NZ citizenship status.

Biodata

First name: _____ Surname: _____

(Names as in passport/ Birth certificate)

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Gender: _____

Marital Status: _____

Number of Children (biological and adopted): _____

Ethnicity: _____

Citizenship (Passport holder of which country?): _____

Passport Number: _____

Date of issue: ____/____/____

Expiry date: ____/____/____

Residency

Village/ Atoll in Tokelau: _____

Place of usual residence (IF not the same as the above): _____

Tokelau Permanent Residency attained: Yes No

If Yes, what year was your Permanent Resident (PR) Status bestowed: _____

Provide a certified copy of your PR Certificate. Tick the circle if provided **Number accompanying student to country of study**

How many dependants would accompany you to country of study? _____

List them in order by age.

Name	Age	Gender	Relationship

Contact

Email: _____ Phone (home): _____ Mobile _____

SECTION 2: MEDICAL BACKGROUND

Applicant With Disability

Declare in writing if you have a Disability, noting the details and special assistance you require

Disability: _____

Other details:

General

Do you have other medical conditions that require special medical attention and support?

Yes No

If yes please specify the medical condition (s)?

Are you taking special medicine for the named condition (s)? Yes No

If Yes, state their names

Please attach the most recent Medical Report (within the last month). Tick if provided

SECTION 3: CRIMINAL CLEARANCE

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence? Yes No

If Yes, briefly explain, and state the country the offence was committed

Are you currently under investigation or a part of an ongoing investigation? Yes No

If Yes, Elaborate:

Provide a recent police report (within last 3 months). Tick the circle if provided

SECTION 4: ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Prior Education

You must attach **certified copies of all official results** (e.g., academic transcripts, completion certificates) of all completed and partially completed secondary, vocational, technical and tertiary qualifications to this application form. Include the grade assessment schedule used at each institution the qualifications and transcripts were attained from. List the most recent qualification first.

Name of educational institution	Location (city and country)	Years attended		Qualifications	Major subjects
		From	To		

SECTION 5: HISTORY ON SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME

Were you a former recipient of scholarship under the Tokelau Scholarship Scheme? Yes No

If Yes,

Please fill in the following table

Times on the scheme	Approved program	Institution	Started (Semester & Year)	Ended (Semester & Year)	Tick which one	
					Completed	Incomplete
1st						
2nd						
3rd						

Explain why, if you were unable to complete your program and graduate while last on scholarship.

Did you honour your bond to Tokelau after completion, and or adhere to the stand-down period if your program was incomplete?

Yes No

If No, Please explain.

SECTION 6: PROPOSED STUDY**Program / Qualification Levels**

Tick the level applying for

Bachelor of Divinity Bachelor of Theology Masters PhD/Doctorate

Other (please state): _____

Placement

Have you applied for placement?

Yes No

Which Theological institution did you apply to?

Institution: _____

Country: _____

What is the outcome of your application for placement to date?

Accepted Declined unknown

Endorsement for Theological Applicant

You must provide a letter of character endorsement (1) from the Parish Priest (Catholic), or Faifeau Toeaina (EFKT) confirming appropriate church processes have been satisfied.

Endorsed by the Parish Priest (Catholic), or Faifeau Toeaina (EFKT): Yes No

The letter of endorsement with official stamp is provided: Yes No

Village/ Address: _____

Telephone number: _____ Fax number: _____ Email address: _____

SECTION 8: APPLICANT DECLARATION

To be completed and signed by the applicant for a Scholarship

I certify that the statements made by me in this application for a Scholarship are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge, and I acknowledge that providing incomplete or false information will result in the Scholarships Board rendering my application invalid.

I fully understand the conditions of this application form and agree to:

- a. carry out such instructions and abide by such conditions as may be stipulated by the Scholarships Committee
- b. the release of information contained in this form to relevant authorities to enable being considered for a scholarship overseas.
- c. the exchange of information between the Department of Education (who administer the Government of Tokelau Tertiary Scholarships) and authorities such as the immigration authorities or any other relevant government agency;

I am not aware of any medical or other conditions of which might prevent me from taking up a scholarship overseas.

I fully understand that if I am offered a scholarship, it may be subsequently withdrawn at any time if I fail to meet any of the conditions outlined in this application form.

I fully understand also that if I am offered a scholarship, there will be formal agreement in the Scholarship Acceptance document that is signed which includes the Scholarship Bond.

Printed name (as in your passport or birth certificate): _____

Signature of applicant (if applicant is over 21 years and/ or married): _____

Signature of parent/ guardian (if the applicant is under 21 years old or still single)

_____ **Date:** _____

SECTION 9: DOCUMENT CHECKLIST

It is important that you **clearly and correctly** fill out all relevant sections in the application form, and attach **all** documents requested in the application form. Applications with incomplete documentation **will not be considered for a scholarship**.

- **ONE COPY** of the application form is required.
- **Certified** copies of the required documentation should accompany this application.

A certified copy is where an authorized official of a school, or department, or village, church, or a Justice of Peace, Solicitor, Notary Public, or equivalent other authorized official signs, dates and gives an official stamp that the document is a true copy. If you are unsure about who is the appropriate person to certify your documents, you should contact the Department of Education.

Please check that you have attached the following documents in support of your application:

All Applicants

- A signed and completed scholarship application declaration (Section 10)
- An official certified copy of all secondary and/or tertiary results
- A certified copy of the graduation or completion certificate for each completed secondary/tertiary qualification.
- A copy of the grade assessment schedule used at each institution for all academic results or transcripts.
- A current Curriculum Vitae (CV) detailing your education background, job skills and work experience (adult applicants only)
- At least 2 letters of reference.
- Completed endorsement from your Employer, Village Taupulega, Church Leaders
- A recent Medical Report. Including vaccination status
- A recent Police Report.
- A copy of Bio-data page of Passport.

For Accompanied Applicants

- A copy of Bio-data page of dependants' passports
- Recent Medical reports of dependants including vaccination status

IMPORTANT NOTICE – PLEASE READ

The information given in this application will be used for the scholarship selection process and the Department of Education will record details from this form.

ANNEX 1 POLICIES

A series of relevant policies. Students are welcomed to request for information that may not be included here.

3. ELIGIBILITY

3.2 Residency:

To be eligible for a scholarship under the Government of Tokelau Scholarship Scheme (GoTSS), applicants

- must be a New Zealand citizen of Tokelauan descent living in Tokelau
- must be a permanent resident (PR) in Tokelau
- who are Tokelauans living overseas, must firstly reside in Tokelau for no less than one year (12 months). Their application should be done within this one-year period while in Tokelau

Note: Those of Tokelau descent who are citizens **only** of other countries by virtue of the passports they hold, for example, an American national, incur international fees at overseas tertiary institutions. As such, their applications will be viewed in light of their non-NZ citizenship status.

4.5 Scholarship offers

The Scholarship Committee, through the Department of Education, makes scholarship offers to nominees who have been successfully placed at an institution and selected for a Government of Tokelau Scholarship Scheme award.

4.6 Pre-departure arrangements

- The Department of Education arranges the awardee's international travel and will work with relevant administration personnel at each institution to arrange pre-departure and immigration requirements. Pre-departure briefings are given so that awardees are aware of the terms and conditions of their scholarship and are well prepared for full-time study overseas.
- Schools to prepare students for their transition to institutions overseas when on scholarship encouraging them to succeed
- Taupulega, Parents & schools to work together in supporting the students with their transition to universities abroad, encouraging them to succeed in their future endeavours.

7 SELECTION GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

7.2 Selection Criteria

Selection must be transparent, fair and merit-based in accordance with the scholarship scheme policies.

Each year the Government of Tokelau through the Scholarship Committee, in consultation with the Human Resource Capacity Development Plan will agree on the number of scholarships, the applicant categories, sector priorities, restricted programmes, and level of study that will apply to new scholarships in the next academic year.

The Scholarship Committee will prioritise national human resource development priorities alongside students' interests and skills when considering applications.

In addition, the Scholarship Committee should consider that the applicant has:

- A positive set of skills and attitudes needed to study, evidenced through Reference letters from Principal, a record of learning (such as a transcript). It may also include references from a Teacher/or work Coordinator, Manager, Supervisor, or Church leaders
- Provided a current Police Report
- Provided a current Medical Report
- Supplied a supporting letter from parents, family or relevant department, church and the villages
- Offer letter from the appropriate institution
- An academic record, transcript or work history that demonstrates that the applicant is able to take up the offer
- A complete application form

Programmes provided by private education providers could be funded by the Tokelau Government Scholarship Scheme, provided the applicant presents an offer letter as proof and information about the institution that shows the organisation is an accredited registered provider with the relevant Qualifications Authority.

8 PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

8.3.1 Nominees with a disability

If a nominee with a disability requires modification to their physical or learning environment this should be indicated in the application form and subsequently in the placement request. The Department of Education must obtain a medical certificate from the nominee. Specific care arrangements and any additional costs should be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the preferred institution. If extra funds are required to assist the nominee, then this should be included in the placement budget. Any necessary arrangements should be finalized before the awardee leaves Tokelau.

8.4.1 Successful placements

The Institution will provide placement offers to potential awardees. The Scholarship Officer will send a copy of the Placement Advice and Placement Budget to the Director of Education within two days. The Director of Education will advise the Scholarship Committee of the placement details, get approval and sign off for placement of awardees and budget. Where costings are not given in the Institution Placement Offer, the Scholarship Officer will derive these from the latest institution calendars

The Department of Education will advise the Scholarship Committee of placement details as soon as possible after this.

11.3 Travel Documents

The Department of Education should advise awardees to take the following with them to the country of study:

- Passport;
- Vaccination cards or passes;
- Scholarship Offer/Acceptance letters;

- Institution placement offer;
- NZ\$50 (or current approved amount) contingency entitlement provided by the Department of Education for unexpected situations en route to their country of study;
- Additional personal funds (at least NZ\$200 where possible) for immediate on-arrival costs;
- Certified copy of their birth certificate;
- Certified copy of their marriage certificate, if applicable;
- Certified copies of birth certificates (or adoption certificates) for each Dependant child, if applying for the accompanied stipend;
- Copy of their medical forms and police/security clearance (in a sealed envelope), where applicable;
- Completed immigration forms; and
- Institution's contact details.

11.3.1 Passports

It is the awardee's responsibility to ensure that they have a current passport, and that their dependants travelling also have valid passports. The passport should be valid for the scholarship duration and for at least six months beyond the scholarship completion date. The cost of obtaining/renewing a passport is the awardee's responsibility.

11.3.2 Pre-departure medical check-up

Awardees are required to have a medical clearance before they travel overseas, the Department of Education will provide the awardee with the name of an approved doctor. The doctor will give the awardee a medical examination and chest x-ray (which may include screening for tuberculosis). The awardee should provide the Department of Education with the result. If the awardee does not receive a medical clearance, then their scholarship should be deferred or withdrawn, as applicable and the Department of Education, Scholarship Committee and the institution should be notified. The Department of Education pays the costs of pre-departure medical examinations for the scholarship awardees.

14 STIPENDS AND ENTITLEMENTS

The Department of Education is responsible for stipend and most entitlement arrangements for Government of Tokelau Scholarships awardees.

14.1 Stipend and Allowance System

The scholarship pays for tuition fees, approved travel to and from their country of study, and a living allowance. These are explained below.

An establishment allowance and fortnightly stipend (for living allowance) are paid to awardees to assist them to meet those expenses.

14.2 Establishment Allowance

The establishment allowance is to assist awardees with their immediate costs on their arrival in their country of study. The allowance covers awardees' initial costs including rental bonds, the purchase of suitable clothing, textbooks and other expenses. The establishment allowance shall be paid by in a manner as permissible by the GoT Finance rules, as soon as practicable within the first week of the awardee's arrival. A portion of the establishment allowance will be paid each additional year of the original study programme.

Awardees who have been granted an extension to their original scholarship duration will not be entitled to an additional allowance.

Awardees transferring between institutions are not entitled to a second establishment allowance.

14.3 Stipend Coverage

The stipend is sufficient to meet an awardee's routine expenditure on:

- Accommodation (rent/board)
- Food;
- Living expenses (telephone bills, internet, electricity and water);
- Personal items such as toiletries and clothes;
- Transport to and from the institution; and
- Incidentals.

The stipend also covers awardees' less regular expenditure on:

- Course-related clothing (e.g. uniforms and protective clothing);
- Stationery, photocopying and textbooks; and
- Field trips, projects, workshops and conferences.

Awardees are responsible for managing their finances so that they are able to pay for these expenses throughout the year. Guidance on budgeting should be included in pre-departure and on-arrival briefings, and during the awardee's scholarship.

Allowance or entitlement	Provision	Paid by
Visa-related expenses	Costs related to visa application for GoTS awardees, including medical examination, police clearance and the visa application fee.	Dept of Education
Contingency allowance	\$50 (or current allowed amount) for emergencies en route to country of study.	Dept of Education
Initial travel to country of study	Return, standard economy class air ticket (including departure tax) by most direct route from Samoa International Airport to the international airport closest to the institution. Return travel by boat to Apia from Tokelau, including appropriate accommodation and incidental allowances while in Apia awaiting the next international flight to the institution of study.	Dept of Education
Establishment allowance	Unaccompanied students \$1750NZD in the first year \$250NZD at the beginning of each additional full year (as per scholarship offer). Accompanied students \$2500NZD \$550NZD at the beginning of each additional full year (as per scholarship offer).	Department of Education
Stipend (living allowance)	All stipends are paid on a pro rata basis depending on the number of months an awardee is on scholarship in their country of study:	Department of Education

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unaccompanied awardee: \$ 2. Awardee with spouse or one child: \$ 3. Awardee with spouse and child (USP Suva): \$ 4. Awardee with spouse and child (other study centres): \$ 5. Awardee with spouse and two or more children (USP Suva): \$ 6. Awardee with two children (USP Suva): \$ 7. Awardee with two children (other study centres): \$ 8. Awardee with spouse and two or more children (other study centres): \$ 	
Tuition fees	Full tuition fees for the approved study programme, including enrolment and orientation fees and Student Union costs. Includes Summer School tuition fees, where approved by the Scholarship Committee.	Department of Education
Course related costs	Up to \$500 per awardee for compulsory special course purchases required by all students in a course. Can also be used for thesis production or specialist equipment. Costs above \$500, which have not been included in the Placement Budget, must have Department of Education approval before they are purchased.	Department of Education
Medical and travel insurance	The Department of Education will meet costs for travel insurance for awardees and eligible dependants. A medical fee will be paid to institution (outside of Samoa) to cover medical treatment during course time. Also available for eligible dependants.	Department of Education
Additional tutoring	Up to a maximum of 30 hours per annum. This can include provision for proofing and/or editing of a research awardee's final thesis.	Department of Education
Dependants' study	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. School fees for up to three Dependant children up to the age of 19 years, including secondary school external examinations fees. The school fees will be equivalent to that payable at the government (public schools) in the country of study. 2. Up to an equivalent of 20 weeks English language training for a Dependant spouse. 	Department of Education upon evidence receipt or payment directly to the school or English language provider upon evidence of invoice
Childcare allowance	Awardees may qualify if they have Dependant pre-school aged children (or children in after-school care) where the awardee and the spouse are both full-time GoTS funded awardees; or where the awardee is accompanied by their children, but their spouse, if applicable is not in the country of study.	Department of Education (directly to the registered childcare provider)
Other travel	A return standard economy class air ticket (including departure tax) for awardees on home leave (Section 12.3.3).	Department of Education

	A return standard economy class air ticket (including departure tax) for research awardees approved to undertake Tokelau-based research (Section 15.3)	
Final travel to Tokelau	One-way standard economy class air ticket (including departure tax) by the most direct route from the international airport closest to the institution to Samoa International Airport and then cost of travel by boat to Tokelau following the completion of the GoTS. This includes provision for dependants' final travel costs to Tokelau.	Department of Education
Unaccompanied baggage allowance	Door to port on completion of scholarship. Up to a maximum of 100 kilograms for unaccompanied awardees. Up to a maximum of 150 kilograms for accompanied awardees.	Department of Education

19 FAMILY ENTRY POLICY AND PROCEDURES (Accompanied students and dependants)

The Department of Education and the institution are responsible for family entry arrangements for Scholarship awardees.

19.1 GoT Scholarship Support for the Families

The stipend provides sufficient financial support to meet the reasonable average costs of the awardees for the purposes of their study. The scholarship does not provide financial assistance for awardees' families in Tokelau.

Awardees may be permitted to have their immediate family join them in the country of study where their approved study programme is 18 months or longer.

Immediate family is defined as spouse and/or children of the awardee who are under 19 years of age. The Scholarship will not support the awardee bringing children of the awardee's extended family unless the child has been legally adopted by the awardee before application for a scholarship.

Family entry approval will depend on the agreement of the Department of Education, Government of Tokelau approval and the country of study's immigration regulations.

The accompanied stipend rate does not cover the full cost of providing for a family in the country of study, particularly where families have more than three dependant children.

The awardee is responsible for the following costs:

- Passports,
- Travel for dependants where there are more than 3;
- Accommodation arrangements;
- Full cost of living expenses;
- Any school costs (e.g. uniforms, school donations) other than school tuition fees for three dependant children.

A childcare allowance may be paid only when both parents are on concurrent GoT Scholarships or the awardee's spouse, if applicable remains in Tokelau.

19.2 Applications for Family Entry

Awardees are responsible for applying for, and arranging, family entry. Awardees should be advised to allow about two months for the request to be processed. When applying for family entry, all awardees should be fully briefed by the institution regarding the financial and other difficulties that may be faced if their family join them in their country of study.

Before family entry can be approved:

- An application for family entry should be submitted to the Department of Education and institution;
- The institution and Department of Education must sight copies of relevant birth certificates, marriage certificates, passports, or statutory declarations that show the family member's relationship to the awardee;
- Financial approval for the accompanied stipend rate should be obtained through the Variation Request Form; and
- The awardee must have successfully completed any preparatory programme, or bridging programme of six months or less, and be eligible to commence their main qualification.

Travel and immigration formalities can then be arranged.

Family entry cannot be approved for New Zealand or Australia where the awardee is a New Zealand citizen and the accompanying spouse or children are not New Zealand citizens, or permanent residents.

19.3 Timing of Family Entry

To qualify for support for family entry, those on scholarships 18 months or longer will generally need to have at least 12 months remaining on their scholarship by the time their family arrives in the country of study.

The Department of Education or institution should counsel awardees to travel unaccompanied to the country of study, attend orientation programmes and settle into their study programme before their family joins them. It is recommended that an awardee's dependants arrive six months after the start of their scholarship. This allows time for the awardee to settle into their studies, find appropriate accommodation and arrange any necessary schooling for their family. Some flexibility in the timing of family entry may be required, for example, for awardee with school-aged children needing to commence schooling at the start of the year or where awardees are contracted to remain in their original accommodation for at least one semester.

19.4 Eligibility for Accompanied Stipend

To be eligible for the accompanied stipend, an awardee must:

- Normally reside with their spouse and/or children in Tokelau and when on-scholarship in their country of study;
- Have an approved study programme of 18 months or longer;
- Have at least 12 months remaining on scholarship by the time their family arrives in their country of study; and
- Have completed any preparatory programme, or bridging programme of less than six months, before their family joins them.

The accompanied stipend is payable from the date of the family's arrival in the country of study.

19.4.1 Eligibility of dependants for scholarship funding

In addition to the criteria above, an awardee's dependants must;

- Be residing in Tokelau at the time of application; and
- Not have held a GoT scholarship in the two years preceding their arrival in the country of study.

19.4.2 Changes to family status

If, for any reason, an awardee's circumstances change with regard to dependants, the awardee is required to tell the Department of Education immediately as it may affect their stipend entitlement (e.g. they marry while on scholarship or if family member/s are no longer residing with the awardee). Failure to provide advice will result in the accompanied stipend ceasing. Any overpaid allowance will be recovered from the awardee.

Payment of the stipend at the accompanied rate continues when:

- Family members leave the country of study for absences that coincide with institution vacation periods, or are of no more than six weeks duration outside vacation periods; or
- An awardee travels to Tokelau for approved home-located research.

If an awardee dies, the accompanied stipend continues for one month or until the dependants return to Tokelau, whichever is earlier.

Where an awardee is no longer entitled to the accompanied stipend, the Scholarship Officer will complete a variation to the payments submission to the Finance Department.

19.5 Funding for Dependants' School Education, Childcare

Dependants are required to be in their parent's country of study at the time of enrolment in schools. Institutions are required to sight the relevant documentation confirming proof of the relationship between the dependant and awardee (e.g. birth certificate, marriage certificate, etc).

19.5.1 Education of dependant children

Dependant school-age children of awardees, who are required by the law of the country of study to attend school, must do so, for the duration of the awardee's study programme.

Awardees are to enrol dependant school-age children in appropriate government (public) schools with the assistance wherever possible, of institutions.

The Department of Education pays the school fees of three Dependant children, directly to the school on receipt of invoices for school-age dependants.

All other costs including uniforms, school donations, school trips, books and stationery etc, are the responsibility of the awardee. The awardee should seek the Department of Education's approval, on a case-by-case basis, to pay any fees in excess to the levels, acceptable for school tuition fees.

The Department of Education will fund external examination fees for dependant children undertaking qualifications at senior secondary level. The Department of Education will pay these fees on receipt of an invoice.

No funding is available for Dependant children to undertake post-secondary study while in the country of study.

19.5.2 Childcare allowance

Limited funding is available as a contribution toward day-care costs for Dependant children. Awardees may qualify if they have dependant pre-school aged children (or children who require after-school care) where both the awardee and the spouse are full-time GoT awardees; or if the awardee is studying and is accompanied by their children, but their spouse, if applicable is in Tokelau.

Applications are to be made to the Department of Education and are considered by the Department of Education on a case-by-case basis. If approved, the Department of Education pays the registered childcare provider directly on receipt of an invoice.

19.5.3 Childcare by a family member

The Department of Education will provide a letter of support for one family member to apply for a visa if they are responsible for childcare in the country of study, e.g. an awardee's mother or aunt. This person will not, however, qualify for the accompanied stipend or childcare allowance. There is no travel or living costs available to family member care givers.

Where a family member accompanies an awardee and their primary purpose for being in the country of study is to assist with childcare, the Department of Education does not support the family member obtaining employment in the country of study.

19.5.4 Cessation of funding

Funding for dependant's school education will cease:

- When the awardee's scholarship ends (if an awardee is granted an extension, only dependant school-age children's education will continue) or is terminated;
- When a Dependant child turns 19 years of age;
- When a PhD awardee remains in New Zealand (or other) for Oral examinations, as dependants are required to return home.

19.6 Medical and Travel Insurance

The scholarship covers the payment of medical fees to the institution for medical treatment for the awardee and travel insurance for awardee and his/her dependants.

19.7 Employment of Dependants in the country of study

Visa and permit provisions for most countries of study do not allow for dependants to be employed.

17 ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

Institutions are responsible for academic progress reporting.

17.1 Academic Progress Principles

While each case of scholarship variation, e.g., deferral, extension or termination, must be evaluated on its individual merits and circumstances, consistent and defensible decisions must be made. In accordance with the guiding principles for the Government of Tokelau Scholarships scheme, when making a scholarship variation decision, the identified national development needs of Tokelau should be placed ahead of the personal development needs of an individual awardee.

It is the awardee's responsibility to urgently contact the Department of Education to discuss situations where they are making unsatisfactory academic progress or might otherwise not be able to meet their scholarship obligations. The Scholarship Officer should facilitate regular contact with awardees.

Decisions on scholarship variations need consultation or approval from the Scholarship Committee through the Department of Education.

17.2 Academic Progress Monitoring

Every semester, by 31 December and 31 July each year, institutions should submit an update of academic results to the Department of Education, including the awardees' latest academic transcripts. The Department of Education will consult with the Scholarship Committee in regard to the progress of students and decisions for continuation on the scheme.

The Scholarship Officer is responsible for monitoring the academic progress of awardees and for facilitating support for awardees to complete their study within the scholarship offer duration. This may include the Scholarship Officer initiating follow up remedial action, including awardee counselling and additional academic tuition.

Academic monitoring must take account of the education institution's continuation and/or completion regulations, as well as GoT Scholarship requirements for satisfactory academic progress.

17.3 Satisfactory Academic Progress

To continue on their scholarship, an awardee must:

- Demonstrate commitment to their studies;
- Meet institution continuation criteria and completion regulations;
- Maintain satisfactory progress; and
- At all times be on schedule to complete their degree within the timeframe of the original scholarship offer plus any approved extension duration.

Commitment to study is shown when the awardee:

- Remains in the degree programme for which the scholarship was offered (or for which prior approval for a scholarship variation has been given);
- Participates in all activities associated with the study programme;
- Makes full use of available institutional academic and support facilities; and

- Studies a full course load, attends classes regularly and participates in all course-related activities (e.g. assessments, examinations, and practical/work experience) necessary to successfully complete the course requirements.

Where the degree structure is semester-based, an awardee makes satisfactory academic progress if they:

- Obtain a “Pass” grade or above in at least 75 percent of all papers in a full course load per year;
- Fail no more than one paper in a full course load in each semester, a full course load per semester as being four papers;
- Meet the institution’s grade point average or other criteria for continuation where this is specified in the Scholarship Offer Letter or probation letter; and
- Pass core papers that are prerequisites for continuation to the next level in their programme of study, or for successful completion of their qualification.

Where the degree structure is based around a full academic year, satisfactory progress is defined as:

- Passing the year at a sufficient level (as defined by the institution’s requirements) to be able to progress to the next year of the degree.
- Obtaining a “Pass” grade or above in at least 75 percent of all papers in a full course load per year;

When an awardee does not make the required satisfactory progress, then, unless there are exceptional circumstances, the scholarship will be terminated by the Scholarship Committee.

Awardees must also achieve satisfactory results in any preparatory or bridging programme to be allowed to continue on their scholarship. Where the awardee does not meet the conditions stipulated by the institution in their placement offer (and detailed in the awardee’s Scholarship Offer Letter) to progress from a preparatory or bridging programme to the main qualification (e.g. achieving a minimum B grade average in a postgraduate diploma to proceed to a Masters degree), the awardee’s scholarship will be terminated by the Scholarship Committee. An extension request to enable an awardee to continue with a preparatory or bridging programme to meet the stipulated threshold is unlikely to be approved.

17.3.1 Probation

Scholarship awardees whose academic performance is marginal but who have met the continuation criteria should be sent a probation letter by the Department of Education, following consultation with the Director of Education. This letter should clearly advise the awardee of the requirements they must meet to remain on scholarship and the length of the probationary term within which they must meet those requirements.

Marginal performance is when an awardee is consistently presenting with merely ‘pass’ grades at C to C minus average; unjustified absence from examinations or non-completion of assessment requirements; failure to meeting compulsory course requirements (for example, attendance thresholds, practical course requirements, hours, not taking the full course load)

The Scholarship Officer in the letter to the awardee should specify the number of papers, and any specific papers, that the awardee must pass to continue on scholarship the following semester. The probation letter should also offer information of support services available at their institution from which the awardee can seek assistance.

During the probation period, the Scholarship Officer should closely monitor the awardee’s progress. If the awardee does not meet the probation requirements, following consultation with the Scholarship Committee through the Department of Education, the awardee’s scholarship will be terminated.

Awardees should not be placed on probation more than once, and generally for no more than one semester.

17.4 Scholarship Extensions

Awardees who fail some of their papers but are making overall satisfactory academic progress, are permitted to continue on scholarship provided they make every effort to complete the degree within the scholarship offer duration. Such awardees should consult with their course coordinator to develop a plan for re-sitting failed papers, having additional tutorial assistance and/or doing Summer School. The Scholarship Officer should be informed of this plan and the requirements within it, as soon as possible. All possible options in order to avoid the need for an extension should be considered and be reflected in the plan of action.

Where a scholarship extension is recommended, the Course Coordinator and the Scholarship Officer need to ensure that appropriate strategies are in place so that the awardee will be able to complete within the revised scholarship period.

Decisions in relation to scholarship variations are subject to Department of Education advice as to funds availability and Scholarship Committee endorsement. Scholarship variation proposals should be completed by the Scholarship Officer and submitted to the Director of Education for consideration.

Where it has been beyond the awardee's control to catch up the failed papers within the scholarship offer duration, the awardee must apply in writing to the Scholarship Committee through the Department of Education for a scholarship extension. Scholarship extensions are normally considered in the first semester of the last year of the scholarship and will be for one semester only.

Approval for a scholarship extension is subject to:

- Whether it is the only option that will allow the awardee to complete their approved degree programme;
- Consideration of the reasons why the extension is needed (supported by a statement from the awardee and Scholarship Officer);
- Institution confirmation that the awardee will be able to complete their qualification within the extended scholarship duration;
- The awardee's attitude and commitment;
- The length of the required extension; and
- The cost of the extension and funds availability.

Extensions may be approved for an additional period of one-semester/six months for coursework awardees. The scholarship award will cease at the end of the approved extension period.

A one-year extension will only be approved where the degree comprises compulsory full-year papers. Research degree (e.g. Masters and PhD awardees are only eligible for a three-month extension.

Funding for PhD awardees is generally for a three and a half year period, depending on the field of research. The maximum duration for a PhD award is four years, including Orals. No extensions will be considered for PhD awardees beyond a four-year period.

An extension request to enable an awardee to continue with a preparatory or bridging programme is unlikely to be approved.

An extension for one month may be approved only providing that no extra cost is involved, i.e. no extra tuition fee is involved, and the support costs can be met from funds already budgeted for the student.

If a scholarship extension request is not approved, a downgrade is not feasible and the qualification is not complete, the scholarship will be terminated, and the awardee will be required to return home. The awardee's scholarship student record will show as "incomplete".

A second request for an extension will not be approved unless the request has resulted from institution or other factors outside the awardee's control. If the qualification is not completed by the extended completion date, then the scholarship should be terminated.

17.5 Scholarship Deferral Requests

After commencing their study programme, an awardee may request deferral of their scholarship. A one-year deferral may be approved by the Department of Education when an awardee:

- Has serious family problems, either in their country of study or in Tokelau;
- Has a serious medical condition that is affecting their academic performance;
- Is pregnant; or
- Is hospitalised for more than three weeks during term time.

In such cases, rather than having to withdraw their scholarship, after consultation with the Scholarship Committee, the Department of Education may approve the awardee to defer for up to one year. The Department of Education will then arrange and pay for the awardee's travel to return to Tokelau and suspend all their scholarship entitlements.

If the Scholarship Committee does not approve a scholarship deferral, the awardee has the option to continue or withdraw from their scholarship. Scholarships are normally only deferred once.

17.6 Continuation of Deferred Scholarships

Continuation of a scholarship that has been deferred is subject to re-acceptance of the awardee by the institution.

Awardees are expected to contact the Department of Education and the institution directly at least two months before they are due to return to their studies.

It is the awardee's responsibility to check the validity and duration of their visa, and to pay for any renewal of their student visa/permit.

If an awardee cannot return on the agreed continuation date, the Department of Education will withdraw or terminate the scholarship.

17.7 Scholarship Withdrawal

Awardees, who are not able to continue their studies because of serious illness, incapacity, or for compassionate reasons (e.g. for serious illness or death in the immediate family), should contact the Scholarship Officer to discuss the situation and the effect it may have on their scholarship.

In such cases, where the awardee cannot continue their study for up to one year, a scholarship deferral can be approved. Otherwise, the scholarship may be withdrawn, rather than being terminated. Apart from the return home travel, all scholarship entitlements are withdrawn, and stipend payments cease on the arranged date of departure from the country of study.

The scholarships are also withdrawn when a research programme has been delayed and there is no other option for completing within the maximum funding period of the scholarship.

17.8 Scholarship Terminations

A decision to terminate a scholarship is not made lightly, but in some circumstances must be made in the overall interest of the Scholarships Scheme.

A scholarship is terminated when:

- An institution excludes/suspends the awardee from the course or institution because of misconduct (as defined by the institution);
- An awardee has insufficient English language ability for entry into the programme and the maximum period of English language training available under the scholarship has been completed;
- An awardee fails to make satisfactory academic progress (75% pass rate), and there is no other option under these Guidelines;
- The Scholarship Committee requests that the scholarship be terminated;
- The awardee decides not to continue or has an unexplained, extended absence from the course; or
- The awardee has seriously infringed other conditions of the scholarship. This may include for example, applying for permanent residency in the country of study, failing to keep their student permit or passport current, applying for a work permit, or seriously infringing the rules of the institution or the laws of the country of study and Tokelau.

The decision to terminate a scholarship rests with the Scholarship Committee, based on a recommendation by the Department of Education, and/or Institution.

The Department of Education should advise the awardee of the proposed termination in writing, and in person where possible, and ask them to provide any written statement within three working days. In the letter, the awardee should also be advised of the consequences if they do not return home within 14 days of the date of termination, should be termination be confirmed.

The Scholarship Office will advise the institution, immigration services in writing of the termination and departure details, and request that the visa expiry date is amended.

17.8.1 Termination on academic grounds

Where a scholarship is terminated for academic reasons (e.g. because of unsatisfactory academic progress or not meeting the terms of probation), the awardee is required to return to Tokelau within 14 days of the date of termination, or on the first available flight within this time. Stipend payments finish on the arranged date of the awardee's departure from the country of study.

The return to Tokelau travel is arranged and paid for by the Department of Education, less any outstanding payments of entitlements. If the awardee does not return to Tokelau within 14 days of termination, they forfeit all scholarship entitlements, including the return airfare. The total cost of their scholarship then becomes a debt to the Government of Tokelau.

17.8.2 Termination on non-academic grounds

Where a scholarship is terminated on non-academic grounds (e.g. an awardee applies for permanent residency, the serious breach of laws), the awardee permanently loses all scholarships entitlements from the date of termination. The awardee is required to return to Tokelau within 14 days of the date of termination or on the first available flight within this time.

The return home travel is arranged and paid for by the Department of Education. If the awardee does not return to Tokelau within 14 days of termination, they forfeit the return airfare. The total cost of their scholarship then becomes a debt to the Government of Tokelau.

From the date that the institution or the Department of Education becomes aware that an awardee has obtained permanent residency, or the awardee is under investigation for serious breaches of the law, they will no longer be entitled to any scholarship funding, including the return airfare. The awardee will be required to pay the full cost of the scholarship to the Government of Tokelau.