



An Australian Government Initiative



Australian Scholarships

THE PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE

AUSTRALIAN SCHOLARSHIPS HANDBOOK



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AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIPS HANDBOOK

Version 1.1

April 2007

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR AWARDEES:

You must read this Handbook carefully and fully understand its contents before signing the Contract with the Commonwealth of Australia. The Handbook is provided to answer all your questions about your ADS scholarship. Please also read the other information in your pre-departure pack and follow the instructions carefully. For further assistance, please contact AusAID at australianscholarships@ausaid.gov.au.

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Australian Development Scholarships Handbook

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1 Introduction to Australian Development Scholarships

Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) are a highly-valued form of development cooperation between Australia and Partner Countries with which Australia has a bilateral agreement.

The ADS program aims to contribute to long-term development needs of Australia's Partner Countries to promote growth and stability. ADS provide the opportunity for people to obtain tertiary qualifications at participating Australian Institutions. In so doing ADS equip people with the necessary skills and knowledge to drive change and influence the development outcomes of their own country. Many ADS awardees have become leaders in government, academia and business in their own communities.

ADS create friendships and linkages with people and institutions in Partner Countries of the region. ADS also promote recognition of Australia as a leader in international higher education.

1.1 Purpose of the Handbook

The ADS Handbook has been written for several different user groups as a guide on Student management and the ADS processes. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved in either managing ADS or participating in ADS. Institutions, Students, AusAID and Managing Contractors (MC) will have access to this Manual and all should make sure they are familiar with its contents and understand their respective roles and responsibilities.

The ADS Handbook underpins the Contract between AusAID and Institutions for the Provision of ADS Education Services. Importantly, the Handbook determines the minimum service delivery requirements for Institutions under the Contract. Institutions should use the guidance in the Handbook, together with their knowledge and experience, to make decisions that are in the best interests of the Australian Government, the Student and the Institution.

The management arrangements contained in this Handbook will come into effect from the 2007 ADS Student intake. Students who are continuing their studies post 2006 will be managed in accordance with this Handbook. Transitional arrangements applying to these Students are at Appendix B.

1.2 How to use the Handbook

The Handbook follows the sequence for an ADS from application to completion. Each chapter describes a step in the ADS process and details each stakeholder's responsibility in that process. Whilst some information may seem to be additional to some users of the Handbook, it will provide a good overview of the ADS process from each user's perspective. Each person involved in managing various aspects of the process has access to the same information, providing the opportunity for a transparent and consistent approach to ADS management by all parties.

The Handbook stipulates when actions need to be taken in the Scholarship Information Management Online (SIMON). SIMON is an internet based data management system managed by AusAID. SIMON enables AusAID, MCs and Institutions to access a centralised database to electronically enter data, process ADS applications and manage Student scholarships. AusAID will provide SIMON users with a SIMON User Manual and provide initial training in SIMON.

1.3 Changes to the Handbook

As previously noted, this Handbook forms part of the contractual arrangements between the Institutions and AusAID. It will be reviewed on a regular basis to keep it relevant and consistent with current AusAID policy and direction.

Relevant stakeholders will be notified of any major policy changes or emerging issues as they arise, which will then be incorporated into the Handbook. It is the user's responsibility to check the Handbook periodically.

AusAID reserves the right to change or amend the Handbook and to provide notification of such changes as appropriate and in a timely manner.

1.4 Management responsibilities

The following summarises the various responsibilities for users of this Handbook.

AusAID

Education and Scholarships Task Force (referred to as 'AusAID Canberra')

- a. developing and maintaining ADS policy and conditions and ensuring consistency in their administration;
- b. determining how ADS will be delivered in Australia by Institutions;
- c. managing contracts with Institutions;
- d. monitoring the performance of ADS within the context of Australian Scholarships;
- e. managing the SIMON database.

Country Programs

Policy

Posts and Desks work collaboratively on the following tasks:

- a. in consultation with Partner Governments, determining the number of ADS and fields of study in accordance with country program strategies and priorities;
- b. reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of ADS for their country.

Operational

The following operational roles are generally managed by Posts:

- a. liaising with Partner Governments on ADS matters;
- b. organising the nomination process and advertising of ADS;
- c. organising the ADS selection process;
- d. forwarding placement requests to Institutions in SIMON;
- e. arranging in-country Pre-Course English (PCE) where relevant;
- f. arranging Students' travel to Australia ;
- g. providing Pre-Departure Briefings;
- h. processing ADS variations in SIMON in accordance with current policy and financial delegations;
- i. managing MCs (if applicable).

Managing Contractors

A number of Posts have contracted out the in-country management of ADS to a MC. For the purposes of this Handbook 1, references to the Post may relate to responsibilities for either the Post or MC, depending upon each country program's internal arrangements. The roles of MCs are set out in their contract with AusAID.

Institutions

Institutions are responsible for the in-Australia management of Students in accordance with this Handbook and the Contract. Institutions nominate an Institution Contact Officer

(ICO) to act as a liaison between AusAID and the Institution. The Institution's appointed Student Contact Officer (SCO) will be the contact point for Students at the Institution. How an Institution chooses to manage these arrangements, including the roles and responsibilities of the respective contact officers, is entirely their decision.

1.5 Student responsibilities

Recipients of ADS awards are responsible for their academic and personal conduct as defined in section 3 of this Handbook.

2 ADS eligibility, application, selection and placement process

2.1 ADS in-country pre-application process

Posts work with Partner Governments to develop selection criteria, advertising strategies and selection processes to ensure appropriate applicants are selected in accordance with country program strategies. A short-listing process based on expressions of interest may take place prior to applicants submitting an ADS Application Form. It is expected that fifty percent of ADS will be awarded to male applicants, and fifty percent to female applicants.

2.2 ADS eligibility criteria for applicants

To be eligible for an ADS, applicants must:

- a. have citizenship of and be currently living in an ADS participating country as listed on AusAID's website <www.ausaid.gov.au>;
- b. not hold Australian or New Zealand citizenship or permanent residence status (unless they are applying as a citizen of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau);
- c. not be married to/or be a defacto of, or engaged to be married to, a person who holds or is eligible to hold Australian or New Zealand citizenship or permanent resident status;
- d. not hold or have held an Australian Government funded scholarship in the preceding 12 months at the time of application;
- e. satisfy any specific criteria established by the applicant's country and/or government of citizenship;
- f. satisfy all requirements of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) for an AusAID student visa; and
- g. satisfy the admission requirements of the Institution at which the ADS is to be undertaken.

2.3 ADS scholarship categories

There are two categories of an ADS: Public or Open.

ADS Public: Applicants are public sector employees who are nominated by their governments for an ADS award through a competitive selection process. Applicants are required to return to the public sector at the completion of their award in order to strengthen public sector capacity in their home country.

ADS Open: Applicants do not need to be nominated by their government or employer. Anyone who meets the eligibility criteria may apply under this category. Applicants are required to return to their country of citizenship after the completion of their award to contribute to the development of the identified priority sector in their country.

2.4 ADS application process

Eligible and/or short-listed applicants will receive an ADS application form from the Post. Applicants must complete three original ADS application forms (or as otherwise advised by the Post), and provide three sets of certified copies of relevant documentation to the Post.

Applicants must ensure they submit accurate and complete documentation. Failure to do so may result in an application not being processed or to an award being terminated if documentation or information provided is later determined to be false.

The choice of the Institution at which the applicant wishes to study is entirely up to the applicant. Applicants are encouraged to access various resources including Institution websites and handbooks and Institution information sessions held in-country, and to

consult Posts to assist them in making an informed decision on the course they wish to undertake.

Although Posts should ensure that an applicant's course selection is in accordance with country program strategies, Posts must not influence their choice of Institution or recommend/specify which Institutions the relevant country's ADS students will be allocated to.

2.4.1 Applicants with a disability/special need

Applicants with a disability/special need must provide details of the disability and/or special need on their ADS Application Form. If an applicant has a disability which may require modifications to their physical or learning environment the Post may require a full medical report that specifies the applicant's requirements. The Post will advise the Institution of any special requirements associated with a Student. AusAID will determine if additional funding is required for the Student.

2.4.2 English language entry requirements

AusAID will not accept applicants unless they have reached, or can reach, the minimum standard of English language required for their chosen course. Posts will determine if pre-course English (PCE) will be undertaken in Australia or in-country. The results of any International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) tests undertaken by the Student are to be recorded in SIMON by the Post or Institution.

2.5 Types of courses not available under ADS

ADS are not available for:

- a. undergraduate medical and veterinary science programs;
- b. training in areas related to nuclear technology or flying aircraft;
- c. legal workshops;
- d. double degrees, unless these are in the same Faculty and can be completed within the normal time limit for the level of qualification (i.e. 3 years for Bachelor's degrees, 2 years for Masters, 4 years for PhD);
- e. courses at the undergraduate level that may be available at Institutions in the Student's home country;
- f. Military training;
- g. Training of police in counter-subversion methods, the suppression of political dissent or intelligence procurement.

2.6 Types of courses available to applicants

Depending on the student's home country and AusAID policy, ADS may be available for the following types of courses. Applicants should check with AusAID in their country to find out what is applicable to them:

- a. TAFE (Technical and further education) courses
- b. Bachelor (undergraduate) degree courses
- c. Master degree courses
- d. Doctoral (PhD) degree courses

2.6.1 Articulated study program

An articulated study program is a program that combines a lower and higher level course of study, leading to an award of the higher qualification. Examples include an articulated TAFE/university study program, a Graduate Diploma leading to a Masters, or a Masters leading to a Doctorate.

The Institution offering the higher program of study is deemed to be the primary Institution. The primary Institution is to ensure that both courses comprising the articulated program are entered into SIMON as part of the ADS offer.

No ADS articulated program may comprise more than two courses. Students who are unable to complete the higher award of an articulated program, may still be eligible to graduate with the lesser award if the Institution deems this appropriate.

2.6.2 Bachelor's degrees

Students wishing to undertake Bachelor's degrees will normally be enrolled in Pass degrees. If the Institution considers that they are capable of completing an Honours degree, a variation should be submitted toward the end of the first year requesting an extension to cover the Honours year. Approval of the request is at the discretion of the Post and, if appropriate, the Partner Government.

2.6.3 Masters programs

Masters degree programs may be offered by coursework only, by research only or by a combination of coursework and research.

Masters by research or by a combination of coursework and research should only be offered to those applicants who have demonstrated the need for high-level research skills in order to undertake research or teaching or supervise researchers upon their return home.

2.6.4 Doctorate programs

Where the applicant has applied under the Public category, study at Doctorate level (PhD) is subject to Partner Government approval. This is normally only provided where the applicant occupies, or is expected to occupy, a senior position requiring individual research or the supervision of other researchers in the applicant's home country.

2.6.5 Fieldwork

Students enrolled in one of the following courses may be permitted to undertake fieldwork, generally in their home country or within Australia:

- a. Masters by research; or
- b. a combined Masters coursework and research program where the research component is at least 50%; or
- c. a Doctorate program.

Where fieldwork is a compulsory requirement of the study program, details must be recorded in SIMON by the Institution at the time an offer is made. Failure to do so may result in funds for fieldwork not being approved (see Section 5.6 for more information on fieldwork travel). AusAID provides funds for fieldwork travel only and does not provide any additional living costs, survey costs or funds for excess baggage for samples or materials etc

2.6.6 Courses not covered by the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS)

An Institution may recommend a course which is integral to a Student's academic program but is not listed in the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS). If AusAID approves such a course, the Institution may seek reimbursement of the cost from AusAID.

2.7 Selection process

ADS selection processes and timelines vary from country to country. Applicants should refer to the AusAID Post in their country of citizenship for information.

2.8 Placement at an Institution

2.8.1 Role of the Post

After the in-country selection of an applicant, the Post seeks placement at an Institution by entering the placement details into SIMON, including any relevant details of country specific conditions set by the partner Government. The Institution is notified via email that an outstanding 'Request for Placement' (RFP) is in SIMON awaiting processing.

Once the RFP has been generated in SIMON, the Post must forward a hard copy of the applicant's fully completed ADS application form to the Institution. Only one RFP per applicant is forwarded to an Institution at any one time.

The Post will forward RFPs to Institutions prior to 15 September for first semester commencement and prior to 15 March for second semester commencement.

2.8.2 Role of the Institution

On receipt of the RFP, Institutions will assess all ADS applications on merit. Institutions do not have to accept an ADS applicant and should only offer placement to those applicants they are satisfied are capable of successfully completing the course nominated, within the period specified by the Institution in CRICOS.

In addition to the nominated course, the length of the ADS offer must also cover any preparation programs that the Institution recommends for a Student and should take into account any credit for previous study or recognition of prior learning that may reduce the length of time needed to complete the course.

2.8.3 Preparation programs

Prior to responding to an RFP the Institution should assess the applicant's needs and recommend a preparation program if required. This might include one or more of the following elements:

- a. Pre Course English (PCE);
- b. qualifying or preliminary programs; or
- c. foundation studies.

Preparation programs should not exceed 12 months, except in the case of qualifying programs for Doctorate programs, which may be up to a maximum of 18 months.

If the Institution later assesses that a shorter period of preparation is adequate, the Institution must reduce the overall length of the ADS in SIMON. (Refer also to 5.7.6 Reductions). A reduction variation in SIMON should be processed toward the end of the ADS.

Students must achieve satisfactory results in preparation programs to continue their ADS. Failure to do so may result in termination of the ADS.

2.8.3.1 *Pre-course English*

Before making a placement offer, Institutions should give careful consideration to the English language training that individual applicants may require. The Institution can offer an in-Australia PCE program prior to the commencement of academic studies if the Institution believes that this is necessary for the applicant to successfully complete their course of study. The maximum length of the in-Australia PCE is six months. Institutions should not accept Students who are unlikely to reach the required level of English in this time period.

In some countries, PCE is provided prior to departure to Australia. , This should be taken into account when recommending PCE in Australia.

2.8.3.2 *Qualifying and preliminary programs*

Qualifying and preliminary programs are courses deemed necessary by the Institution to enable a postgraduate Student to successfully complete their qualification in the timeframe specified by the Institution in the CRICOS. Such programs may be formal or informal, for example bridging courses or special intensive courses, and may not lead to a recognised qualification. Students may undertake qualifying and preliminary studies in addition to other forms of preparation such as pre-course English.

If the Institution deems it necessary, they may offer a qualifying/preliminary program of not more than 12 months to Masters by research applicants. This should be entered in SIMON as part of the initial ADS offer and the total ADS length, not including any pre-course English, should not exceed 2 years.

For PhD applicants, if deemed necessary, Institutions may offer a preliminary qualifying program of up to 18 months. This should be entered in SIMON as part of the initial ADS offer and the total ADS length, not including any pre-course English, should not exceed 4 years.

If the Institution's placement offer includes a qualifying and preliminary program, the Student should commence the approved academic program as soon as the qualifying/preliminary program is completed.

2.8.3.3 *Foundation programs*

A Foundation program of up to 12 months may be offered to an undergraduate applicant if the Institution assesses that they do not meet the required standard for direct entry into their chosen course. Foundation programs must be entered in SIMON at the time the Institution makes a placement offer.

2.9 Offer options

After considering the need for preparation programs, the Institution may respond to an RFP in SIMON by:

- a. requesting further information and/or further time to assess the RFP, stipulating the amount of time necessary (within the timeframes indicated below); or
- b. declining to offer a place at the Institution and stating the reason/s why within 14 days of receiving the RFP; or
- c. offering a place conditionally; or
- d. offering a place unconditionally.

If an Institution wishes to make a conditional offer to an applicant, the specific conditions must be entered into SIMON at the time the offer is made. For example, an applicant may have to successfully complete PCE prior to enrolment in a program of study. Specific conditions required by the Institution are included in the ADS Letter of Offer forwarded to the applicant by the Post. In-country conditions must be met prior to a Student's departure for Australia.

For coursework degrees, the Institution must make an offer in SIMON:

- a. by 20 October at the latest for a semester one placement; or
- b. by 19 April at the latest for a semester 2 placement.

For research degrees, the Institution must make an offer in SIMON

- a. by 3 November at the latest for a semester one placement; or
- b. by 3 May at the latest for a semester 2 placement

2.9.1 Priority and reserve applicants

The ADS selection process in each country should result in a list of, priority applicants equal to the number of ADS available, plus a list of reserve candidates ranked in order. Reserve candidates should meet all eligibility criteria and be deemed suitable for placement in the event that a priority candidate is rejected or withdraws prior to departure.

2.9.2 Review of a placement offer

Once an Institution has submitted a placement offer to a Post in SIMON, the Post will review the placement offer to ensure that:

- a. it is complete and consistent with the course requested; and
- b. the costs entered by the Institution are consistent with those detailed in CRICOS (<<http://cricos.detya.gov.au/>>).

The Post may contact an Institution if further information or clarification is required about a placement offer. AusAID reserves the right to reject any placement offer made by an Institution.

Once Post and Institution are in agreement, the Post will generate in SIMON an ADS Letter of Offer and Student Contract for the applicant. Upon receipt of the signed Student Contract the Post will record the acceptance/rejection of the offer in SIMON. An email will automatically be sent via SIMON to the Institution advising that an applicant has accepted or rejected a placement offer.

If an applicant's first preference RFP is declined by an Institution, the Post may decide to seek a second preference placement. The Post will ask the second preference Institution if it will accept documentation from the first preference Institution (in such cases the first preference Institution will be required to forward the documentation to the second preference Institution), or if the Post is to send a second copy of the documents. The second preference Institution will process the RFP as outlined in Section 2.8.

If a priority applicant cannot be placed in their first or second choice course preference, the Post must advise the nominating authority in the Student's home country and/or the applicant (as appropriate) that no placement can be offered. In such circumstances, the Post may process Reserve applicants and will submit an RFP to the appropriate Institution for placement

3 ADS acceptance process and travel to Australia

3.1 ADS acceptance

If they wish to accept an ADS, successful applicants must, before departing their home country, sign a Student Contract between themselves and the Commonwealth of Australia agreeing to the ADS conditions and benefits.

3.2 ADS conditions

ADS holders must:

- a. take up the ADS in the academic year for which it is offered;
- b. not hold another Australian Government scholarship at the same time as the ADS;
- c. participate in the Pre-Departure Briefing arranged by the Post, and the Institution's compulsory Introductory Academic Program (IAP) on arrival in Australia;
- d. reside in Australia for the duration of the ADS (apart from holidays, reunion visits or fieldwork visits to their home country);
- e. complete their ADS award within the period stipulated in their Student Contract;
- f. only undertake the approved program for which the ADS is offered and abide by the rules of the Institution;
- g. study full time and achieve satisfactory academic progress in the program for which the ADS was offered;
- h. participate in all activities associated with the approved course of study, including all lectures and tutorials, submit all work required for the course (e.g. assignments or essays) and sit for examinations;
- i. be aware that any employment undertaken during term times may compromise academic progress;
- j. liaise with the Student Contact Officer at the Institution regarding any proposed changes to the approved program and acknowledge that approval is required from the Institution, AusAID and Partner Government before any changes are made;
- k. agree to AusAID collecting information concerning the Student or dependants and passing that information on to other relevant parties, if necessary;
- l. advise AusAID immediately, via the Student Contact Officer at the Institution, if they marry a person who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or who has permanent residence status in Australia or New Zealand;
- m. return to their country of citizenship for two years at the completion of their study/research program in Australia;
- n. be aware that a debt to the Commonwealth of Australia will be incurred if a Student fails to return to their home country, or if they apply for Permanent Residence or for a visa to remain in or return to Australia within the two year period; and
- o. agree that the ADS may be terminated at any time for failure to make satisfactory academic progress, failure to comply with the laws of Australia, misconduct, breaches of the contract between the Student and the Commonwealth of Australia including breaches of the conditions of the ADS or of the AusAID Student Visa or if they apply to change their visa status.

3.3 ADS entitlements

Under ADS a common set of entitlements apply to all recipients. They are as follows:

Tuition Fees	Payment of full academic fees and other fees that are compulsory for all international students undertaking the same course.
Introductory Academic Program (IAP)	The provision of a 4-6 week Introductory Academic Program prior to the commencement of studies.
Travel	Payment of a single return, economy class airfare to and from Australia, via the most direct route.

Establishment Allowance	A contribution of A\$5,000 towards expenses such as rental bonds, text books, study materials, additional medical insurance, home contents insurance etc.
Contribution to Living Expenses (also referred to as a Stipend)	A fortnightly Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) paid at a rate determined by AusAID.
Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)	OSHC will be provided to cover the Student's basic medical costs. Students may purchase, at their own expense, additional medical insurance to cover ancillary services such as dentist, optometrist, physiotherapist etc.

If applicable:

Pre-Course English (PCE)	PCE in Australia may be provided for up to six months, if deemed necessary by the Institution and approved by the Post.
Supplementary Academic Support (also referred to as Tutorial Assistance)	Provided when essential to improving a Student's performance to ensure their academic success.
Reunion Airfare	Eligibility for a reunion economy class airfare is dependent on whether or not family members accompany the student to Australia.
Fieldwork	One only return economy class airfare via the most direct route may be approved for eligible research Students to their country of citizenship or within Australia.

3.4 Deferral of ADS offer

Deferrals are available to Students who are unable to commit fully to the rigours of the academic program at the time the ADS offer is made. Deferrals will be approved for a variety of reasons including pregnancy, unresolved family issues, failure to obtain a visa, etc. The ADS can be deferred for up to one semester but must be taken up in the academic year for which it is awarded. Students who wish to defer their ADS should contact the relevant Post as soon as possible after receiving the ADS offer.

Students who defer will be entitled to the conditions and entitlements that apply at the date of commencement of the study program.

Deferrals are subject to approval from the Post and Partner Government (where relevant). The Post is responsible for processing the Deferral Variation in SIMON.

3.5 Pre-departure information and travel

3.5.1 Pre-departure briefing

Posts are responsible for providing a Pre-Departure Briefing (PDB) for all Students, at least one month prior to the Students' departure for Australia.

PDBs provide essential information that Students need upon arrival in Australia, such as advice about living and studying in Australia. It is expected that the PDB will help the Student to quickly settle into Australia and the Institution, thereby enhancing their ability to complete their studies within the duration of their award.

PDBs also provide an opportunity to remind Students of their ADS obligations, including the requirement that they return to their home country for a minimum period of two years upon completion of the ADS.

Attendance at PDBs is compulsory for Students. Family members of Students, especially those who expect to accompany Students to Australia, are encouraged to attend PDBs. AusAID will only provide travel costs for the Student to attend a PDB.

3.5.2 Institution information kits

The Institution must provide each Student with an Institution Information Kit prior to their departure for Australia. The Institution is to forward the Institution Information Kit directly to the Student to arrive at the earliest possible time and no later than 14 days before the Student departs their home country. Posts may be able to assist Institutions to get the Information Kits to the Students; however Institutions should negotiate this directly with Posts. Kits should also be provided to AusAID (Canberra) and the Post upon request.

The Institution Information Kit must include information that is no less than that required under the National Standards for Education Services to International Students, and any other information the Institution deems relevant e.g. reception information, climate details, local childcare and schooling options, long term accommodation, living costs, support services at the Institution and in the community, information about the Student's course, information about public transport, etc.

3.5.3 Family

The Australian Government does not provide any financial or other support for the dependants of ADS Students. Students must indicate in their ADS application form if they are intending to bring family members with them to Australia. The Student should contact the Student Contact Officer at their Institution for information about schooling and child care for dependants and DIAC concerning the current requirements for family entry. Refer <<http://www.immi.gov.au>> for details.

3.5.4 Travel

Posts arrange and pay for the Student to travel to Australia. Posts are to arrange initial travel to ensure Students arrive in Australia before their first course-related commitment. This is normally two to four days prior to the commencement of the IAP or PCE program. Posts record a Student's travel details including flight number and arrival time in SIMON. Once the information is entered in SIMON by the Post an email is automatically generated and sent to the Institution.

The Institution is responsible for arranging and paying for the Student to travel home at the completion of the ADS. The following conditions apply to all travel (i.e. to Australia at the commencement of the ADS, from Australia upon completion of the ADS, fieldwork, reunion travel, etc.):

- a. travel should be cost effective, efficient and minimise the risk of the student incurring visa problems in third countries while in transit or on stopover.
- b. Students are entitled to travel between the airport closest to their home city/town and either: an Australian international airport/capital city, or the town/city closest to the Institution where they will be studying;
- c. Students are to travel by the most direct route. ADS Students are entitled to the "best fare of the day" which is the cheapest economy class fare available during the period in which the student will travel. Any special discount fares should be utilised;
- d. Posts/Institutions must advise the Student and the travel agent that once the ticket is purchased it cannot be varied without the approval of the Institution;
- e. unless unavoidable, stopovers in Australia or overseas are not permitted. If unavoidable, AusAID will pay reasonable accommodation costs, though it should be first checked whether these costs are covered by the airline;
- f. ADS will cover Australian airport departure tax. The Student is responsible for all external arrival/departure taxes, except where it is part of an unavoidable stopover in which case the taxes should be incorporated into the price of the ticket at the time of purchase.

ADS does not provide:

- a. the costs of travel insurance for loss of possessions, or any loss of uninsured possessions, while the Student is travelling to and from Australia or while studying in Australia;
- b. funding for the costs of travelling to and from the Student's home country during the suspension of the ADS (including any unavoidable stopovers);
- c. travel costs for dependants or family members of Students, both to and from Australia and within Australia;
- d. funding for the cost of daily travel to and from the place of study;
- e. funding to meet travel costs associated with conferences, seminars, presentations, etc;
- f. the cost of transporting personal effects and/or excess baggage to and from Australia, or within Australia.

4 ADS entitlements and support services

4.1 General services

The Institution is required to provide support services to ADS Students, which are not less than the requirements of the National Standards for International Students.

4.1.1 Arrival in Australia

Unless the Student has indicated that they do not require airport reception, the Institution will meet Students upon arrival at the airport of their final destination and take them to their initial accommodation at no cost to AusAID. Reception of family members is the responsibility of the Student.

To ensure reception arrangements are in place, Posts enter a Student's travel details in SIMON by at least 10 December for semester one commencement and 15 May for semester two commencement. Once the information is entered in SIMON by the Post an email is automatically generated and sent to the Institution.

4.1.2 Initial accommodation

The Institution will arrange initial accommodation for Students for the first seven days they are in Australia. The Institution will assume all Students require initial accommodation, unless advised otherwise in writing by the Student. The Institution may offer, at no cost to AusAID, to assist in arranging initial accommodation for family members if a Student is accompanied.

Initial accommodation arranged by the Institution must be moderately priced, clean and secure, with furniture and heating/cooling as necessary. The initial accommodation will have access to cooking facilities or to appropriate food outlets. Details of local shops, food outlets, public transport, etc must be provided to the Student at this time by the Institution.

The Student is responsible for the entire cost of initial accommodation.

4.1.3 Long-term accommodation

Students are responsible for finding their own long term accommodation and meeting all associated costs. Students are also responsible for the accommodation of family members if accompanied.

The Institution must provide Students with advice about:

- a. availability and costs of residential colleges, international houses or hostels attached to the Institution;
- b. the range of private accommodation options available; and
- c. information on tenancy requirements, tenancy protection and the establishment of utility connections and on rental prices including potential additional costs such as gas, electricity, etc.

4.1.4 Establishment allowance

Students are provided with a once-only Establishment Allowance upon arrival in Australia. The Establishment Allowance is a contribution toward expenses such as rental bonds, text books, study materials, additional medical insurance, home contents insurance, etc. The Allowance is paid in a lump sum to give Students the flexibility to use it at their discretion.

The Institution must pay the full Establishment Allowance into the bank account nominated by the Student upon arrival in Australia or by the next banking day. The Institution will assist Students to open a bank account on arrival. If there are delays with a Student opening a bank account, Institutions should manage the situation as they deem appropriate. Students should come prepared with funds (in Australian dollars) to ensure they have enough money to cover any costs that may be incurred prior to them receiving their Establishment Allowance.

AusAID will review the Establishment Allowance as required.

No re-establishment allowance is paid when a Student transfers between Institutions, or returns from a period of suspension.

4.1.5 Contribution to living expenses

Students are responsible for all their expenses in Australia including the expenses of any family members.

A Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) is paid to Students to assist in meeting every day living costs such as accommodation, transport, food, entertainment, stationery etc. The CLE is reviewed annually by AusAID.

CLE is paid fortnightly to Students by the Institution in arrears. The first payment should be paid into a bank account nominated by the Student, within five days of the Student's arrival in Australia. Following the initial payment, CLE should be made in accordance with the Institution's fortnightly payment periods.

Entitlement to the CLE commences on the Student's date of arrival in Australia and ceases five days after the Student completes their ADS program. For coursework Students this is five days after examination results are released. For research Students this is five days after the submission of their thesis.

1. CLE payments continue:
 - a. during public holidays and semester breaks;
 - b. during periods of fieldwork under the ADS;
 - c. during reunion visits to the Student's home country;
 - d. for up to six weeks if a student is hospitalised or detained.
2. CLE payments will not be made:
 - a. during periods of ADS suspension.
 - b. when a student is convicted of a criminal offence.
 - c. where a student is hospitalised or detained: the CLE will cease to be paid after six weeks.

The CLE is currently income tax exempt and not subject to an income test on Student or spouse income. The Student should refer to the Australian Taxation Office website <www.ato.gov.au> for information on Australian tax laws.

The Institution must advise all Students of the need to obtain a tax file number for banking purposes and for cases where Students seek employment.

AusAID strongly advises Students not to work during term times as this may compromise the Student's responsibility to focus on their academic progress. Any employment undertaken should not impinge on the Student's ability to fully apply themselves to their study.

Students wishing to work should contact the Student Contact Officer at their Institution and will need to apply to DIAC for an appropriate work permit.

4.1.6 Overseas Student Health Cover

Students have their health insurance, known as 'Overseas Student Health Cover' (OSHC), paid for them by the Institution on behalf of AusAID.

OSHC covers basic medical and hospital care in Australia, most prescription drugs and emergency ambulance transport. OSHC does not cover all costs for medical treatment. Students must be advised at the PDB and the IAP that OSHC does not cover pre-existing medical conditions and that they are responsible for all costs not covered by OSHC. AusAID will not provide funding to meet gap payments where a Student is charged more than the OSHC refundable amount.

OSHC does not cover services such as dental, physiotherapy or optical services (known as ancillary services). Ancillary OSHC cover can be purchased at the Student's own expense.

AusAID will cover the costs of the initial medical examination undertaken in the Student's home country for the issue of the AusAID Student Visa. AusAID will not pay for the costs of any additional medical examinations. This includes where the examination is required for re-entry into Australia following an ADS suspension, an extension of the AusAID Student Visa or renewing of a Student's passport.

AusAID does not provide health insurance for Students' family members. All family members on an AusAID Student Dependant Visa must be covered by OSHC at all times during their stay in Australia. Students are responsible for the organisation and payment of OSHC and any other medical expenses for all family members while they are in Australia. .

Institutions must:

- a. arrange for the enrolment and payment of OSHC for all Students; and
- b. ensure the OSHC is maintained for the length of the ADS.

4.1.7 Reunion airfare

The reunion airfare provides Students who have been separated from their family with an opportunity to be reunited once a year. Entitlement for an annual reunion airfare is limited to those Students who do not have any of their immediate family (those eligible for an AusAID Dependant Visa) accompanying them to Australia. Eligibility for the reunion airfare is confirmed by the Post before the Student arrives in Australia. At the time the Student accepts the ADS offer, the Post enters the details of the Student's immediate family members and their location in SIMON.

The Student's entitlement to the reunion airfare does not take effect until they have successfully completed the first year of study.

The reunion airfare is subject to the following conditions:

- a. eligibility for the reunion airfare will be confirmed in the Letter of Offer and entered in SIMON by the Post; and agreed to by the Student when they sign their Student Contract;
- b. eligibility for reunion airfares will not be revised during the course of the ADS;

- c. the Student must be unaccompanied in Australia, having left all immediate family members in their home country;
- d. the reunion airfare is only to be used by the Student to return to their home country and is not to be used to bring family members to Australia;
- e. depending upon the duration of the ADS the number of reunion airfares will vary;
- f. the first reunion airfare will be available to the Student after the successful completion of the first year of study;
- g. subsequent reunion airfares will be available on an annual basis for the duration of the ADS, except for the final year of the ADS;
- h. reunion airfares cannot be accumulated. A Student has twelve months to use their reunion airfare. If a student chooses not to travel, their entitlement to a reunion fare for that twelve month period will be forfeited;
- i. Students will book their own flight in accordance with the requirements set out in Section 3.5.4. Institutions will pay for the reunion airfare and will be reimbursed in accordance with the Contract.

4.2 Critical incidents

Critical incidents or welfare issues are handled on a case-by-case basis. Critical incidents include, but are not restricted to, the death of a Student, serious legal issues, or the serious physical or mental illness of a Student. In the event of a critical incident the Institution should immediately inform AusAID (Canberra). The Institution, in consultation with AusAID (Canberra), should then develop a strategy to ensure the situation is managed appropriately. In such cases, all communication with Posts will occur through AusAID (Canberra).

The Institution may not incur any costs in dealing with a critical incident without the prior written approval of AusAID (Canberra).

If a member of the Student's family is involved in a critical incident, the Student is responsible for all associated costs and arrangements regarding the family member(s) involved in the critical incident.

4.2.1 Serious legal issues

Students must comply with all laws of Australia or risk termination of their ADS and cancellation of their visa. If the Institution becomes aware of a Student encountering a legal problem it should advise the Student how to obtain legal advice and assistance. AusAID does not provide funds to meet the cost of such legal services.

4.2.2 Serious crimes

The Institution must inform AusAID (Canberra) if a Student is involved in a serious crime.

Students who are found guilty of crime/s in Australia will have their ADS terminated. The Student will be required to return home immediately upon the completion of their gaol sentence.

4.2.3 Serious illness of a Student

If a Student is hospitalised the Institution will ensure the treating doctor is aware of the limitations of OSHC, and if any OSHC exclusion clauses apply.

The Institution must consider appropriate actions such as suspension or termination and make a recommendation to AusAID (Canberra) accordingly for any Student who, as a result of serious health problems, is unable to complete their course in the ADS duration.

If a Student has completed their ADS, but is medically unfit to travel home, the following process must be followed:

- a. the Student must provide a medical certificate to the Institution, which clearly states they are unfit to travel. The medical certificate should provide an estimated date the Student will be fit enough for travel; and
- b. if, due to illness, the Student is to remain in Australia longer than 14 days after completion, the Institution must obtain a “no objection” letter from AusAID (Canberra). The Student must make arrangements with DIAC to transfer to another visa class. All costs associated with the visa change are to be met by the Student.

4.2.4 Medical escort home

Any expenditure by the Institution in regard to medical escorts home requires the prior written approval of AusAID (Canberra).

In the event that a Student requires a medical escort home during the course of his or her studies, the Institution and AusAID have the following respective responsibilities:

Institution

- a. arranging for appropriately qualified medical/nursing assistance to escort the Student home. If possible the escort should be the same sex as the Student;
- b. ensuring the carrying airline is informed of the nature of the Student’s illness and is consulted on the arrangements that need to be made, bearing in mind the Student’s right to privacy;
- c. ensuring the Post is advised of travel details;
- d. informing the Post if customs and immigration clearance is required;
- e. if a medical escort is secured through a commercial nursing agency, providing AusAID (Canberra) with an indemnity (workers compensation) from the agency as part of the contractual arrangement.

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- a. informing the nominating authority and next of kin if it has been decided that a medical escort is required, bearing in mind the Student’s right to privacy;
- b. liaising with the Post to make arrangements regarding the Student’s reception and care during transit through a third country (if required);
- c. reimbursement of approved costs in accordance with the Contract.

4.2.5 Death of a Student

In the event that a Student dies during the course of his or her studies, the Institution and AusAID have the following respective responsibilities:

Institution

- a. inform AusAID (Canberra) as soon as practicable;
- b. if accompanied by family members, the Institution should ascertain and implement the family’s wishes for dealing with the body, including:
 - (i) if repatriation is sought, seek advice from the diplomatic/consular representative concerning the requirements for the body to enter the Student’s home country;
 - (ii) if instructed to make funeral or cremation arrangements within Australia the Institution shall inform AusAID (Canberra) in writing. AusAID (Canberra) will forward details to the Post;
- c. if unaccompanied, AusAID will ascertain the wishes of the next of kin and inform the Institution. The Institution shall then implement those wishes in accordance with subclauses (i) and (ii) above;
- d. the Institution may, at their discretion, pass details of funeral arrangements to relevant student organisations;
- e. dealing with the Student’s possessions and, if necessary, placing the personal effects of the deceased Student in the hands of the Public Trustee whilst awaiting

- instruction from the next of kin. The Public Trustee can take responsibility for selling effects if required and forwarding the proceeds to the appropriate person;
- f. seeking information from the police and/or hospital about the circumstances of the death. Information cannot be made public without the agreement of the Student's next of kin;
 - g. any other actions as required by AusAID to deal with the situation in a prompt and considerate manner.

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- a. liaising with the relevant Post, Partner Government and next of kin;
- b. writing a letter of condolence to the next of kin;
- c. passing on any information obtained or in its possession which is required by the Institution to carry out its obligations;
- d. reimbursing approved costs associated with dealing with the Student's body, unless an insurance claim is pending following an accident.

4.2.6 Death of Student's family member whilst in Australia

AusAID does not provide any form of financial assistance to Students in the event that a family member dies whilst in Australia.

5 Academic management in Australia

5.1 Introductory academic program

The Institution must provide an Introductory Academic Program (IAP) to all Students upon their arrival in Australia prior to the commencement of studies.

Attendance at the IAP is compulsory for all ADS Students. Failure to attend the IAP may result in a Student's ADS being terminated. Institutions are required to keep an attendance record to be provided to AusAID (Canberra) upon request.

The IAP is intended to assist Students to prepare themselves for study in Australia, to enhance their ability to meet the demands of their studies and maximise the likelihood they will complete their course by the ADS completion date. The IAP can also assist the Institution to monitor a Student's capability and identify Students who may need further assistance during the course of their studies.

The Institution may subcontract the IAP, within the terms of the Contract, conditional upon the Institution being able to meet its obligations under the Contract.

The content of the IAP will be developed by the Institution. However, AusAID expects that at a minimum the IAP will be conducted over four to six weeks and will provide advice and information in areas such as:

- assistance for newly arrived Students;
- assistance to Students facing difficulties adapting to their new environment;
- academic matters and study requirements
- study skills and general academic skills including critical analysis, research skills and academic writing;
- accommodation options and living arrangements;
- living costs and budgeting;
- welfare related information;
- advice and assistance in relation to health services;
- social adjustment activities;
- equity and access issues and information on advocacy procedures;
- chaplaincy and prayer rooms;
- information on legal requirements and relevant State laws;
- support services provided in accordance with the requirements of the National Standards for Education Services to International Students; and
- support services provided by the Institution, international student advisors, student counsellors; and
- returning home programs.

The IAP should also include a mechanism for evaluating its effectiveness, which should incorporate feedback from Students.

5.2 Satisfactory academic progress

Institutions must maintain an up-to-date record of Student progress in SIMON so that this is accessible to AusAID.

Institutions must monitor Students to ensure that they are on schedule to complete their course by the ADS completion date. Such monitoring should include ensuring that they attend the IAP, are studying full time in the course for which the ADS was offered (or for which prior approval has been given to transfer), and are meeting the Institution's and DIAC's rules relating to satisfactory progress for international Students.

AusAID supports early intervention by Institutions to minimise variation of ADS courses, particularly where a Student is experiencing difficulties in achieving satisfactory academic progress.

Where a Student has failed a unit, Institutions must implement appropriate strategies to address the failure, including additional tutorial assistance or academic support, work plans and summer schools. Where summer schools incur a cost, it is considered to be an ADS variation. Approval should be sought from Posts prior to the Student enrolling in the school (refer to section 5.8.3). The strategy taken must be recorded in SIMON as a journal entry or in the student progress record.

AusAID and Partner Governments have no entitlement to the academic transcripts of Students. Where Partner Governments require a Student's academic results, the Post can request Students to send transcripts directly to the Partner Government.

5.3 First year Students' progression requirements

Students must make satisfactory progress and pass at least 80% of their first year units. Failure to do so may result in the ADS being terminated.

Early intervention for at-risk students in the first year of study is particularly important. AusAID supports Institutions making early decisions regarding Students who are not able to successfully complete the ADS. If a Student has failed more than 20% of the course subjects, the Institution must make a judgment, taking into account the Student's previous performance and overall capabilities, as to whether the Student has the ability to continue and complete their ADS on time.

The Institution may either:

- a. implement a strategy for the Student to make up the failed unit(s), including those outlined in Section 5.2, to ensure the Student finishes their studies in the required timeframe. The details should be entered in the study progress or journal screen of SIMON;
- b. recommend suspension if the Student's failure relates to health or family issues;
or
- c. recommend termination of the ADS.

Where a strategy results in an increase in the cost of ADS, for example summer school enrolment and/or enrolling in additional subjects in subsequent semesters, the Institution must seek approval from the Post.

A request for an extension in the length of the ADS in the first year will not be approved, except where this relates to an Honours program.

5.4 Supplementary academic support

A limited amount of supplementary academic support (also referred to as 'tutorial assistance') is available where such assistance is determined by the Institution as being essential to avoiding the potential failure of a Student.

Institutions may arrange supplementary academic support in the form of:

- a. individual tutorial assistance or academic support;
- b. group tutorial sessions (e.g. supplementary computer training) when a number of Students are experiencing similar difficulties;
- c. thesis editing (but not word processing).

In determining the level of assistance required, the Institution is expected to take into account the following:

- a. the financial limitation of the Contract;
- b. whether assistance can be provided through the Institution's academic support mechanisms;
- c. Students' capacity for success in the course;
- d. Students' commitment to their study;

- e. previous tutorial assistance used;
- f. cost effective means of delivering tutorial assistance, e.g. individual or group sessions and tutor costs that provide optimum value for money.

The Institution has the authority to approve supplementary academic support up to \$1000 per annum for each year of the ADS. Funds may be pooled for the duration of the Student's studies. For example, a Student enrolled in a two year ADS is entitled to a maximum of \$2000 supplementary academic support over that period.

If the Student requires intensive support in the first year of their studies, additional funds may be allocated from the total sum. For example, \$1500 supplementary academic support in their first year of study may be utilised, and \$500 in their second year of study. It is only where the Students exceed their maximum entitlement that Institutions need to seek approval from AusAID for additional funds.

The Institution must monitor the provision of supplementary academic support, particularly the performance of individual tutors and the progress of Students receiving supplementary academic support. The Institution must maintain records of expenditure against Students. AusAID may audit these records at any time.

Supplementary academic support funding must not be used to meet conference or seminar attendance.

5.5 Work attachments

All work attachments must be identified in the Institution's original placement offer and entered in SIMON. The Institution arranges the work attachment or provides the Student with sufficient information to enable him or her to make the arrangements.

CLE will continue to be paid for the duration of the work attachment, irrespective of any payment the Student may receive from the employer.

The period of a work attachment is limited to a maximum of 12 months. Work attachments must be undertaken in either Australia or the Student's home country.

Work experience to gain membership of an Australian association will not be approved, where the work experience could be undertaken in the Student's home country to gain membership of the relevant association in that country.

5.6 Fieldwork in the Student's home country or Australia

Only one period of fieldwork will be funded during the course of an ADS. The Institution is responsible for organising fieldwork travel for the Student. Where travel is an essential component of the fieldwork, the fieldwork may take place in more than one location within the Student's home country or within Australia.

One return economy class airfare, in accordance with the travel conditions detailed at section 3.6.4, may be approved for the Student to undertake fieldwork essential to their program. If the Student is accompanied, they are responsible for all family members whilst undertaking fieldwork. Where the Student will be undertaking fieldwork overseas, he/she must consult early with DIMA on the current policy relating to either the dependants staying in Australia or travelling with the Student.

Students must provide to the Institution prior to their departure on fieldwork:

- a. an outline of the fieldwork and the relationship to the Student's program of study;
- b. a statement that the fieldwork is essential to the successful completion of the Student's program;
- c. a detailed travel itinerary (including flight times, accommodation, contact details whilst overseas, etc.); and

- d. a description of supervisory arrangements whilst undertaking fieldwork.

The maximum period approved for fieldwork is eight months for Masters Students and 12 months for Doctoral Students. Fieldwork must not result in the need for an extension to the ADS. Requests to undertake fieldwork in a country other than Australia or the Student's home country will not be approved.

Also refer to Section 2.6.4 of this Manual for further information on fieldwork.

5.7 ADS variation policy

ADS are awarded to Students to obtain specified qualifications. The proposed course and the length of the ADS are agreed by AusAID and the Partner Government, following advice from Institutions. The Student then agrees through the acceptance process. It is therefore expected that extensions and other ADS variations will not be necessary.

Institutions should view variations as a serious matter. Variations should not be recommended unless the Institution is firmly convinced that the variation is the only option to enable the Student to successfully complete their scholarship.

In counseling Students regarding possible variations, the Institution must reiterate that an ADS is intended to provide skills valuable to the development of the Partner Country. A Student's personal aspirations are of secondary importance.

All ADS variations, with the exception of terminations, are managed and processed in SIMON by the Post and the Institution. In deciding if a variation to a Student's program is necessary, the Institution should assess the options available to produce the most effective outcome. Approval must be sought from the Post, as variations frequently involve the commitment of new funds. In some cases variations will require negotiation with other parties, such as Partner Governments. The Post will determine if Partner Government approval is required for a variation and should only approve variations in accordance with the relevant policy and financial delegation

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Variation requests may take an extended period of time to process by the Post, particularly if Partner Government approval is required. Institutions must therefore lodge variation requests in SIMON at least six weeks prior to the current ADS completion date.

Where a variation occurs in a Student's ADS, any course fees will be refunded in accordance with the Institution's fees refund policy

ADS variations can take a number of different forms and each variation type is dealt with separately below.

5.7.1 Withdrawals

A Student may withdraw from the ADS before or after their arrival in Australia. In cases where a Student withdraws after their arrival in Australia they must return home immediately. Institutions are to process a withdrawal variation in SIMON.

5.7.2 ADS course detail changes

The Institution may lodge a Course Detail Change Variation in SIMON if:

- a. the Student needs to undertake a period of fieldwork which was not previously identified during the offer phase. As previously detailed, there is no guarantee that fieldwork will be approved if requested at a later date;
- b. minor date changes which need to be made to a Student's record due to;
- c. a change in the student's travel plans (i.e. the Student may arrive a day earlier than originally anticipated);

- d. incorrect data entry;
- e. changes in timeframes for articulated courses.

5.7.3 Extensions

An extension is defined as any increase to the length and /or cost of an ADS. Apart from Honours year extensions, only one extension of six months will be approved for the duration of the ADS.

Legitimate reasons may include unforeseen and exceptional circumstances that are beyond the control of the Student and the Institution. Legitimate reasons do not include health issues, family matters, or a death in the family as these are more appropriately dealt with as suspensions.

Extensions should only be recommended where:

- a. The student is already in the second or subsequent year of their course and the Institution deems an extension to be the only acceptable strategy to achieve the qualification on time;
- b. the Student is expected to achieve the qualification as a consequence of the extension; and
- c. if a Student failed a subject(s), the Institution has implemented a strategy to assist the Student to complete the ADS on time and address the reasons for the failure.

In situations where a Student is not likely to finish their studies on time, the Institution should consider all possible options in order to avoid the need for an extension. These options include:

- a. supplementary academic support;
- b. enrolling in summer school subjects to repeat failed subjects;
- c. cross-Institutional enrolment to repeat/replace failed subjects;
- d. course downgrade;
- e. overloading in subsequent semesters;
- f. completing studies from home, particularly for research Students. In such cases the Student would not receive any further funding from AusAID;
- g. termination of the ADS if repeated failures have occurred.

Where an ADS extension is recommended, the Institution must ensure that appropriate support, monitoring and counseling strategies are in place that will enable the Student to complete within the revised ADS duration. Institutions must maintain thorough records on extension requests. If the Student is unlikely to achieve the desired outcome with the assistance provided, the Institution should recommend termination of the ADS.

The Institution should not recommend an extension where the Institution failed to:

- a. adequately monitor the Student's progress;
- b. take mitigating action where reasons necessitating the extension occurred prior to the last two semesters of study; or
- c. provide appropriate academic supervision and support to the Student to enable them to complete the ADS on time.

In cases where the Institution has failed to satisfactorily monitor Student performance, the Institution should implement appropriate strategies to address the issue, to enable the Student to resume satisfactory academic progress and complete the ADS within the specified ADS duration.

5.7.4 Suspensions

An ADS may be suspended for a maximum total of twelve months, if deemed necessary for health or family reasons.

In assessing a request for a suspension the Institution should give consideration to the duration of the ADS remaining and the likely effects of the suspension (especially the break from study) on satisfactory completion of the course.

The following points are to be taken into account by the Institution and Post in assessing suspension requests:

- a. requests for suspension are to be lodged in SIMON by the Institution and are to include the revised ADS completion date and any additional costs;
- b. suspensions are to be approved by the Post and in some cases also the Partner Government;
- c. suspensions should be lodged as early as possible to ensure fee penalties are minimised;
- d. a suspension request incurring costs will not be approved if an extension has already been granted;
- e. where a Student will have to repeat subjects for which fees were incurred, the request will be handled as a suspension with an extension. No further requests for an extension will be permitted for the remainder of the ADS;
- f. the Student is to return, at their own cost, to their home country (with their family if accompanied) for the period of the suspension;
- g. no CLE or other fees are payable for period of suspension;
- h. if a suspension is granted on medical grounds, the Student may be required to undergo a medical examination to ascertain if they are fit to travel and resume full time study in Australia. This examination will be at the Student's expense, and they must provide documentary evidence to the Institution prior to their return to Australia;
- i. the Student must contact the Institution prior to returning from suspension, concerning their ADS recommencement date. This must be done at least two months prior to the date the Student intends returning to Australia.
- j. the Student must, at their own expense, ensure that their visa and passport are valid prior to their return to Australia.

5.7.5 Transfers

A transfer between courses or to another Institution should be considered as a last resort. A transfer should not be considered merely to accommodate a Student's request. Any request for a transfer must be compatible with the original ADS application, Partner Government requirements and country program priorities, rather than the personal aspirations of the Student.

A transfer involves a Student transferring from one course to:

- a. another course at the same level at the same Institution (Intra-Transfer); or
- b. another course at the same level but at another Institution (Inter-Transfer); or
- c. a lower level course (downgrade) either within the same Institution or at another Institution.

Acceptable reasons for a transfer are:

- a. movement of an academic supervisor (research students);
- b. the course ceases to be offered at the Institution;
- c. course downgrades.

A transfer can only be approved if:

- a. the transfer Institution is an Institution contracted with AusAID;
- b. the new course is considered by the Post to be consistent with the country program priorities and Partner Government requirements;
- c. it will not result in an extension of time to the ADS; and

- d. the Student is likely to complete the ADS successfully.

If a Student is permitted to transfer between Institutions, AusAID will not meet any costs associated with the transfer.

If the course to which a Student transfers is shorter than the original course, a reduction to the ADS duration may occur.

5.7.6 Reduction

The Institution must lodge a Reduction Variation in SIMON if a Student finishes their ADS early due to:

- a. completing their study ahead of time;
- b. conditions not being met, usually as part of conditional offers;
- c. transferring to a shorter course; or
- d. in the case of articulated courses, the Student completes the first course but not to a sufficient level to undertake the second course.

The Institution is to ensure the Student departs Australia within 14 days of the revised ADS completion date, even if their AusAID Student visa is not yet due to expire. The Institution must inform the State office of DIAC of the revised completion date for the Student. An email will automatically be sent from SIMON to the DIAC office in Canberra.

5.7.7 ADS terminations

In some circumstances an ADS must be terminated.

AusAID (Canberra) is responsible for the termination of an ADS, based upon a recommendation from the Institution. AusAID reserves the right to terminate an ADS without a supporting recommendation from the Institution, where in AusAID's view the continued funding of the Student would be an inappropriate use of Australian Government funds.

An ADS will be terminated where a Student:

- a. shows continued academic failure, or lack of adequate academic progress and remedial strategies have not been successful; or
- b. has infringed or failed to meet the conditions of the ADS; or
- c. is excluded by the Institution from the course or from remaining at the Institution because of misconduct (as defined by the Institution); or
- d. has completed the maximum period of English language training available under the ADS and still has insufficient English language ability for entry to the academic program; or
- e. is unable to continue a program due to serious illness or incapacity for medical or psychiatric reasons (for temporary conditions, the ADS should be suspended); or
- f. conducts himself or herself in a manner which is considered to have transgressed acceptable community standards; or
- g. decides not to continue the ADS; or
- h. indicates he/she intends to remain in Australia or does not intend returning to the home country having applied for or been granted a non-AusAID visa; or has applied for permanent residency; or
- i. is enrolled in a research program and the program has been delayed, and all options to address the delay are not practical or possible.

The Institution must immediately advise AusAID (Canberra) if it becomes aware of any of the circumstances detailed above, or of any other circumstances which it considers that AusAID (Canberra) may reasonably determine would be grounds to terminate the ADS.

5.7.8 Termination process

The ADS termination process is outlined in the following steps:

1. The Institution lodges a Termination Variation in SIMON for AusAID (Canberra) to consider. The Institution should provide AusAID with the Student's last known street and/or email address.
2. AusAID advises the student in writing that the Institution has recommended termination of the AusAID scholarship. AusAID will send "a letter of intent to terminate the ADS Scholarship." The student will be advised that they have 14 days from the receipt of the letter of intent to terminate the scholarship to provide a statement detailing the reasons why the scholarship should not be terminated. The student will also be advised that if the AusAID rejects the student's appeal he/she will have 14 days in which to depart Australia following the receipt of the formal letter of termination.
3. The student provides a letter of appeal direct to The Director, Education and Scholarship Taskforce, AusAID Canberra, GPO. Box 887 Canberra City 2601.
4. If AusAID (Canberra) supports the request for termination, AusAID (Canberra) will produce a formal termination letter which will be forwarded direct to the student copied to the Institution and the Post.
5. The formal letter of termination will advise the student that the ADS Scholarship has been terminated and the student will have to depart Australia within 14 days (from receipt of AusAID's formal advice). The CLE will continue to be paid for five days from the same date.
6. The Student acknowledges the decision to terminate the ADS (this acknowledgement forms part of the formal termination letter issued by AusAID (Canberra). A copy of the acknowledgement form is to be forwarded to AusAID (Canberra) by the student.
7. The Institution will assist the Student with return home travel arrangements.

AusAID (Canberra) will notify DIAC Canberra of the date a Student's ADS is to be terminated.

Where a termination is requested involves a public category Student, the Partner Government will be informed. In all other cases, no consultation with the Partner Government should be required. The reasons for termination are treated as confidential within AusAID and the Institution, and details are not passed to the Partner Government. Explanation of the termination recorded in SIMON must be factual (for example, academic failure, non-attendance, etc.).

5.8 Miscellaneous

5.8.1 Off-scholarship study

Off-scholarship study is not permitted under any circumstances. It is not possible for an ADS Student to continue to study and remain in Australia on an AusAID Student Visa, without receiving financial assistance from AusAID.

5.8.2 Change to field of study

A change to the field of study is not permitted under ADS. For example, a request for a transfer from a law to an arts degree would not be approved.

5.8.3 ADS upgrades

Course upgrades are not permitted under ADS, apart from when a Student undertaking a Bachelor's degree is permitted to upgrade to an Honours degree.

5.8.4 Post-ADS upgrades

Exceptional Students may be permitted to remain in Australia after completion of their ADS if they have been offered an externally funded Doctoral Scholarship or Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Australia. Such requests must be approved by AusAID (Canberra). The details of the conditions applying and the approval process are at Appendix C.

6.1 Final departure date

ADS Students are required to return to their home country within 14 days of the completion of studies but will continue to receive CLE for only five days from the completion of studies.

The completion of studies is defined as follows:

- a. for coursework Students: the date examination results are released. The date of release of exam dates is taken to be the date as advised by the Institution.
- b. for research Students: the date of submission of their thesis/research work.

Students are not permitted to extend their visa to enable them to remain in Australia to attend a formal graduation ceremony.

DIAC will issue the visa with an end date of one month after the course end date recorded in SIMON.

Institutions must advise the Post via email of a Student's return home details (flight number, dates etc) at least three days prior to the scheduled departure dates.

The only exception to the requirement to return home within 14 days is where a Student and their spouse are both on AusAID scholarships. In such cases, the Student who has completed may be permitted to remain in Australia until their spouse completes their ADS. The spouse whose ADS finishes first must transfer to an AusAID Dependant Visa at their own expense. Institutions should contact AusAID (Canberra) to obtain a "no objection letter" which the Student will require when they apply for the AusAID Dependant Visa at DIAC. The letter will be forwarded to the Student, via the Institution. It is the Institution's responsibility to ensure the letter is received by the Student.

Students whose children and/or spouse are working or studying as private Students are not permitted to remain in Australia after the completion of their ADS studies to remain with their family.

6.2 Return home briefing and ADS completion ceremony

Institutions may offer those Students returning home a Return Home Briefing, and an ADS completion ceremony (where the Student is unable to attend a formal graduation ceremony).

Where a Return Home Briefing is undertaken, Institutions should note the following from the AVCC Code of Practice:

- a. be sensitive to the circumstances the Student will encounter upon departure and returning to their home country;
- b. provide advice and assistance where possible on re-orientation;
- c. encourage the "alumni association" concept and maintain an "after-care" program.

An ADS completion ceremony (e.g. graduation, presentation ceremony or reception) marks the end of the Students' ADS. Where possible, the completion function should be arranged within five days after:

- a. coursework examination results are released (including supplementary examinations); or
- b. submission of the final piece of the research work.

6.3 Completion of the ADS

The Institution must, within seven calendar days of the Student's departure, update the following Student information in SIMON:

- a. ADS status (i.e. successful, unsuccessful, etc.);
- b. ADS completion date;
- c. follow-up home country contact address;
- d. degree the Student graduated with;
- e. the study program screen.

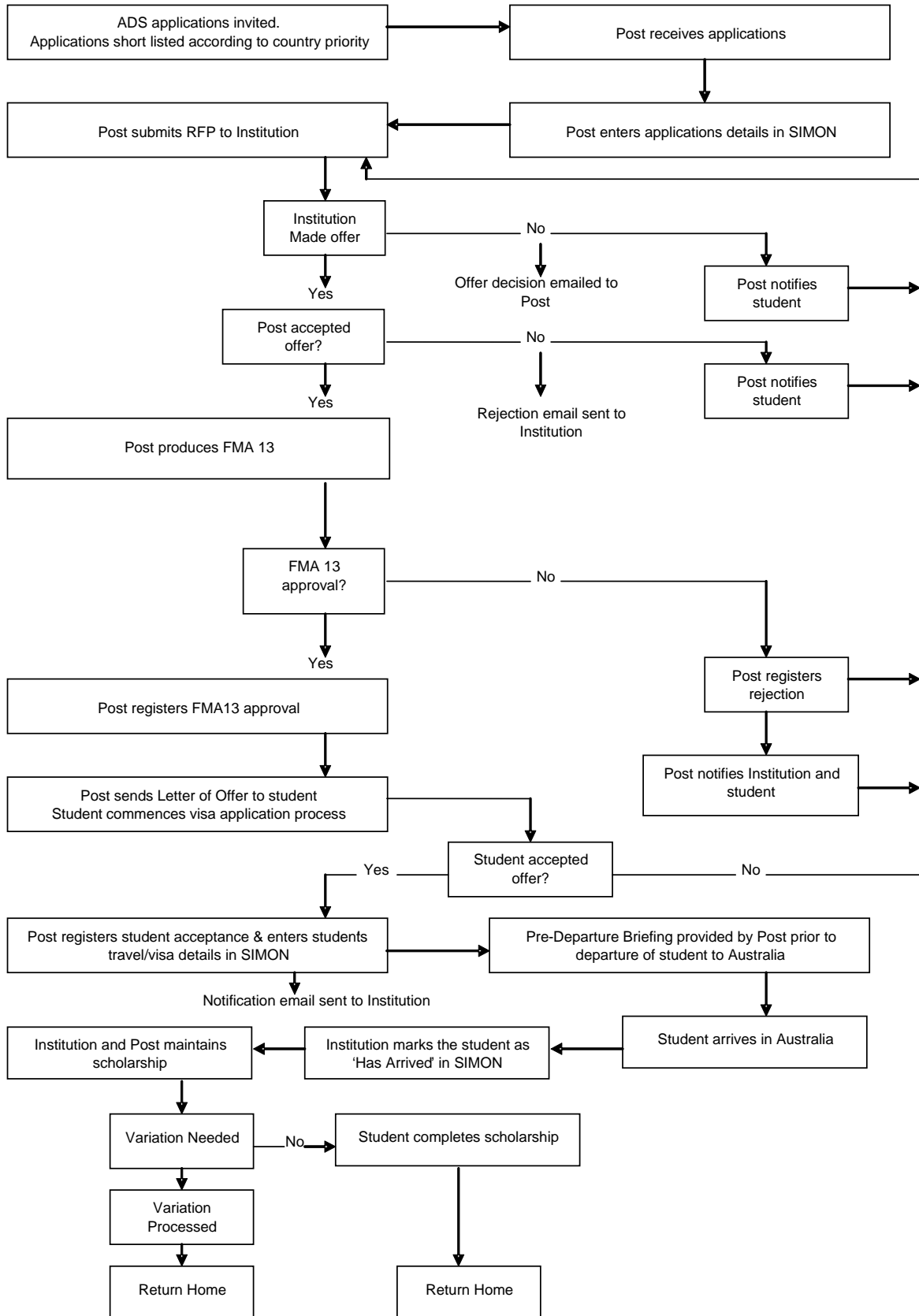
AusAID may withhold payment to the Institution of the reimbursable Return Home Travel until the Student record in SIMON is up-to-date and accurate.

Subject to negotiation, AusAID may require the Institution to collect information from Students to assist in the follow-up progress of Students upon their return to the home country.

6.3.1 Maintaining contact with Students upon their return home

Where possible, Institutions should make arrangements between graduating Students to stay in touch via Alumni organisations or other means.

7 Flowchart: ADS Management Process



APPENDIX A

Summary of Student responsibilities

Prior to Departure

- A. You must advise AusAID of any personal or family circumstances (eg. family or financial problems, medical conditions, pregnancy) likely to affect your ability to commence the scholarship on time or to complete the approved course in the scholarship period.
- B. You must take up the scholarship in the academic year for which it is offered.
- C. You must participate in the pre-departure briefing arranged by the AusAID Post in your country of citizenship.
- D. You must not behave in a manner that is unacceptable by normal community standards.

Travel and Entry Requirements

Please note that the following are not provided by AusAID or the Institution and are therefore your responsibility:

- a) Insurance costs (travel & baggage, home contents);
- b) Personal effects transport costs (ie removal costs either to and from Australia or within Australia);
- c) Excess baggage costs;
- d) Travel costs for your dependants, either to and from Australia or within Australia; and
- e) Arranging visas and meeting all requirements and costs for family entry to Australia including payment of compulsory OSHC health insurance for family members.

In Australia

As an ADS student you must:

- A. reside in Australia for the duration of the ADS (apart from holidays or fieldwork visits to your home country);
- B. not hold another Australian Government scholarship at the same time as the ADS;
- C. participate in the Institution's Introductory Academic Program (IAP) on arrival in Australia;
- D. only undertake the approved program for which the ADS is offered and abide by the rules of the Institution;
- E. study full time and achieve satisfactory academic progress in the program for which the ADS was offered;
- F. participate in all activities associated with the approved course of study, including all lectures and tutorials, submit all work required for the course (e.g. assignments or essays) and sit for examinations;
- G. be aware that any employment undertaken during term times may compromise academic progress and that AusAID strongly advises students not to take paid employment during term times as this may affect their ability to study effectively;
- H. liaise with the Student Contact Officer at the Institution regarding any proposed changes to your approved program and acknowledge that approval is required from the Institution, AusAID and Partner Government before any changes are made;

- I. advise AusAID immediately, via the Student Contact Officer at the Institution, if you marry a person who is an Australian or New Zealand citizen, or who has permanent residence status in Australia or New Zealand; and
- J. return to your country of citizenship for two years at the completion of your study/research program in Australia. A debt to the Commonwealth of Australia will be incurred if you fail to return to your home country, or if you apply for Permanent Residence or for a visa to remain in or return to Australia within the two year period.

And you agree:

that the ADS may be terminated at any time for failure to make satisfactory academic progress, failure to comply with the laws of Australia, misconduct, breaches of the contract between the Student and the Commonwealth of Australia including breaches of the conditions of the ADS, or of the AusAID Student Visa or if you apply to change your visa status.

Your financial obligations: AusAID will provide you with an Establishment Allowance on arrival and a fortnightly Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE). You are responsible for the use of these funds to pay your own living expenses, including but not limited to:

- initial and long term accommodation costs;
- daily travel to your place of study;
- ongoing costs of living and study e.g. food, furniture, textbooks, clothing;
- costs of medical services not covered by the Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC);
- all costs associated with any family members who visit or accompany you to Australia, including OSHC for family members;
- all costs associated with critical incidents involving family members;
- costs of any legal services; and
- all costs related to any visa extension that may be necessary.

APPENDIX B

Arrangements for continuing Students

Transitional arrangements for Students enrolled prior to January 1 2007 are defined in Clause 37 of the contract and set out below.

These arrangements apply to those Institutions that are contracted to AusAID for the management of Students prior to 2007.

If Students (continuing Students) continue their studies at the Institution under an ADS Scholarships awarded before 1 January 2007, the Institution shall manage those students in accordance with this Contract, subject to the exceptions set out in Clause 37.3.

Continuing Students will retain their entitlements and conditions as stated in their Letters of Offer and Acceptance Agreement including the following benefits:

- a. Accompanied Students are entitled to the family rate of the Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) and the payment of Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) for family members, for the duration of the ADS;
- b. Provision for an unaccompanied Student to obtain approval for their family to join them in Australia; thus becoming entitled to the accompanied rate of CLE and dependants' OSHC expenses upon arrival of the dependants; and
- c. Subject to approval in writing by AusAID, a two semester extension following academic failure.

The only exception to the principle of retention of existing entitlements and conditions contained in Clause 37.2 is that Continuing Students will have 14 days to leave Australia following completion of the ADS with the CLE ceasing 5 days after the ADS completion date.

No continuing Student will be entitled to a reunion airfare.

APPENDIX C

Policy on post-ADS/ALA externally funded Doctoral and Post-doctoral Fellowship study in Australia

Introduction

The following outline the procedures and criteria to be applied when processing a request from a former ADS or ALA recipient to undertake an externally funded doctoral scholarship or post-doctoral fellowship in Australia on completion of an ADS or ALA-funded course of study. This policy takes effect from the date of approval.

Objectives

This policy, while reaffirming the basic premise that ADS/ALA recipients should return to their home country upon completion of the program, also recognises that exceptional scholars should be permitted to pursue their studies to the limit of their abilities as this will produce the greatest global benefits for the partner country, AusAID and the student.

It also recognises that exceptional scholars capable of receiving doctoral or post-doctoral awards in Australia are likely to receive scholarship awards from third countries. If former ADS/ALA students accept award offers from third countries the aim of having the student remain in their home country to meet the two year requirement would be defeated.

Policy application

This policy is limited in its application. It only applies to those post-ADS/ALA students who are offered a fully funded doctoral or post-doctoral scholarship by a non-AusAID third party, including those offered by other Australian Government entities. Those ADS/ALA scholars, not subject to this policy, will continue to be required to return home for a minimum of two years on completion of their award.

This policy requires a decision to be made on a case-by-case basis considering the ability of the applicant to meet the selection criteria, support from their sponsor, approval from the Partner Government (where appropriate) and approval of the relevant Post.

Criteria

In determining whether to seek approval to allow a scholar to take up the offer of an externally funded doctoral scholarship or post-doctoral fellowship, AusAID Officers should ensure the application addresses the following:

1. An offer of a fully funded (including per diem rates) Australian doctoral scholarship or post-doctoral fellowship by an entity other than AusAID (eg scholar's home government, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, Australian Government entity, Australian university, private sector). An original or certified copy of the letter of offer of a scholarship/fellowship must be provided;
2. A letter of support from the Institution at which the applicant intends to undertake the externally funded scholarship;
3. A written recommendation by the course co-ordinator and/or supervisor of the student's capability and ability to succeed;
4. Provide clear justification for the post ADS/ALA scholarship based on academic ability of the applicant and relevance to the partner countries' development priorities;
5. Agreement to return home for a period of two years after completion of the externally funded scholarship or fellowship, or in the case of students who have

returned home, the period remaining once the time spent in the home country has been deducted from the two year timeframe (see Procedures below for further information).

A key requirement is that there is no objection from the Post or the Partner Government for the student to remain in Australia to continue their studies. AusAID will liaise with the relevant Partner Government concerning this matter.

The applicant must arrange with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) to be issued with a private student or other appropriate visa. The scholar must meet all DIAC requirements. The decision on whether or not to issue a visa is solely DIAC's responsibility based on their standard visa requirements

Scholars will not be able to remain in Australia pending any decision on approvals for externally funded doctoral scholarships or post-doctoral fellowships they have applied for prior to returning to their home country. AusAID may not also approve applications from scholars who remain in Australia for this purpose or take up the offer of the scholarship/fellowship prior to a decision from AusAID.

An AusAID funded airfare to return home **will not** be available to former ADS or ALA scholars who remain in Australia on an externally funded doctoral scholarship or post doctoral fellowship. Scholars will only be entitled to an airfare home if they return immediately after the end of their award.

Former ADS/ALA students who have been offered an externally funded doctoral scholarship or post-doctoral fellowship within two years of return to their home country, may be eligible under this policy if they meet the criteria as stated above.

For all students the two year return home requirement will not be waived but rather will be deferred to commence once the students have completed the externally funded scholarship/fellowship. Any time spent in their home country prior to taking up the scholarship/fellowship will be deducted from the two year timeframe.

If AusAID does not approve a former ADS/ALA student's externally funded doctoral scholarship or post-doctoral fellowship, the applicant is able to request a review of the case and provide new information based on the criteria to support their request. Once a review has been undertaken, AusAID's decision is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

Procedure

1. Applications must be made in writing by the scholar and/or their sponsor to AusAID in Canberra. The applicant must allow 30 days for processing of the application.
2. AusAID Canberra will assess applications based on the criteria defined above.
3. If the applicant meets the criteria above, a minute recommending approval of the externally funded doctoral scholarship or post-doctoral fellowship will be provided to the Assistant Director General (ADG), AusAID with responsibility for Australian Scholarships.
4. Following approval/non approval of the request, advice is to be sent to the applicant, Institution and relevant Post, and a copy filed by AusAID.
5. If applicable, approval by AusAID is effected by the signing of a Deed of Amendment to the scholar's Acceptance of Offer contract with AusAID (see example variation at [Attachment A](#)). The scholar will confirm their intention to return home at the end of the externally funded scholarship/fellowship for a period up to a total of two years.
6. Once approval for the externally funded doctoral scholarship or post-doctoral fellowship has been gained from the ADG, three copies of the Deed of Amendment should be sent to the student via the institution to be signed and returned to AusAID for signature of the delegate or the delegate's nominee.

7. AusAID then files one original and sends two originals back to the institution (one for their file and one for the student), A copy should also be sent to the relevant Post.
8. Once the application for an externally funded scholarship or fellowship has been approved, AusAID will issue a letter of “no objection” to DIMA, in order to enable the relevant visa to be issued.

AusAID, Canberra

October 2006

DEED OF AMENDMENT

BETWEEN

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

AND

<insert name>

IN RELATION TO

AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP/

AUSTRALIAN LEADERSHIP AWARD

ACCEPTANCE OF OFFER

THIS DEED OF AMENDMENT is made this day of *<insert date>*
BETWEEN:

The COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA, acting through the **AUSTRALIAN AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT** of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade ("the Commonwealth") of the one part

AND

<insert name>

WHEREAS:

- A. An *Agreement* between the Commonwealth and *<insert name>* was entered into in writing on *<insert date of agreement>* for the provision of a scholarship as described in the Agreement.
- B. The parties have now agreed to alter the *Agreement* as set out herein.

NOW THEREFORE THIS DEED WITNESSETH as follows:

1. In this Deed unless the contrary intention appears, a reference to "the Agreement" is to the Agreement referred to in Recital A (as amended at Recital B above.).
2. Subject to clause 3 herein the Agreement is amended as set out below;

Insert a new heading and clause as follows:

“EXTERNALLY FUNDED POST AusAID SCHOLARSHIPS

For any period that I am in receipt of an in-Australia Doctoral Scholarship or Post-Doctoral Fellowship by an entity other than AusAID (eg scholar’s home government, ADB, World Bank, Australian University, private sector) any provisions of this agreement that provide for my exclusion from Australia is inoperative, subject to my not applying for Permanent Residence (PR) in Australia.

I confirm that I intend to fulfil my obligation as a former ADS/ALA awardee to return home to my country of citizenship promptly at the completion of my current scholarship/fellowship for a period of *[insert relevant timeframe]* years/months. I agree to the collection and disclosure of information by Australian immigration authorities and education institutions to AusAID.”

3. In all other respects the parties confirm the Agreement.

IN WITNESS whereof this Deed has been executed by the Commonwealth, by an authorised officer, and has been executed by *<insert name>*.

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED

for and on behalf of the

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA by

.....

.....
Name and Designation

.....
Signature

in the presence of -

.....
Name

SIGNED SEALED AND DELIVERED

for and on behalf of

<insert name> by

.....
Signature of Witness

.....
<insert name>

.....
Signature

in the presence of -

.....
Name Signature of Witness

.....