



Australian Government



NEW COLOMBO PLAN

Connect to Australia's future - study in the region

New Colombo Plan Guidelines

Mobility Program

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1. Program Overview

1.1 Purpose of these Guidelines

The purpose of these Guidelines is to outline the process for allocating funding for the pilot of the New Colombo Plan Mobility Program (The Program). These Guidelines commence on 10 December 2013.

1.2 About the Program

The New Colombo Plan is a signature initiative of the Australian Government that aims to lift knowledge of the Indo Pacific in Australia and strengthen our people-to-people and institutional relationships, through study and internship / mentorship undertaken by Australian undergraduate grant recipients in the region.

The New Colombo Plan is intended to be transformational, deepening relationships with the region, both at the individual level and through expanding university, business and other stakeholder links. Over time, the Australian Government hopes to see study in the Indo Pacific region become a “rite of passage” for Australian undergraduate grant recipients, and as an endeavour that is highly valued across the Australian community.

The Australian Government has announced \$100 million of new funding over five years for the New Colombo Plan. A close partnership between governments, universities and business will support the realisation of this important initiative.

The New Colombo Plan has two key elements: a mobility program that will support many Australian undergraduates to undertake a study or internship/mentorship in the Indo Pacific region; and a scholarship program that will provide opportunities for a select number of undergraduates to undertake a long-term study in the region. The opportunity for an internship/mentorship component is also a hallmark of the New Colombo Plan.

1.3 The New Colombo Plan Strategic Objectives

The New Colombo Plan aims to:

- Lift knowledge of the Indo Pacific region in Australia and strengthen our people-to-people and institutional relationships by increasing the number of Australian undergraduate students undertaking study and internships in the region.
- Deepen Australia’s relationships with the region through the engagement of university, business and other stakeholder networks in supporting the program and ensuring such experiences are highly valued across the Australian community.
- Be transformational in establishing study in the Indo Pacific region to become a “rite of passage” for Australian undergraduate students, and increase the number of ‘Asia-capable’ and work-ready Australian graduates.

1.4 The New Colombo Plan Pilot Objectives

Specifically, the pilot program aims to:

- Select and support approximately 40 scholarships and AU\$4 million in mobility grants to Australian universities across the four pilot destinations of Hong Kong SAR, Indonesia, Japan and Singapore that meet the New Colombo Plan objectives;
- Identify, support and promote innovative mobility programs that explore new ideas in engaging and providing opportunities for Australian undergraduate grant recipients in the Indo Pacific, with the capacity to assist in scaling up to meet the NCP objectives.
- Promote and support initiatives that explore the identification of internships / mentorships for grant recipients at the pilot destinations and provide a range of models and best practice for other destinations.

- Establish bilateral support for the Program in pilot destinations that facilitates pilot phase study and internship arrangements and supports engagement with the New Colombo Plan by the wider Indo Pacific region.
- Develop an Alumni community that engages grant recipients and provides the opportunity for them to share their experiences, promote the NCP and continue to develop knowledge of and professional links with the Indo Pacific region.
- Evaluate the pilot program to identify best practice and inform the future development and scale-up of the New Colombo Plan.

1.5 The New Colombo Plan Mobility Grants Program Pilot

In this pilot round, approximately \$4 million is available in 2013-14 for universities to provide subsidies to Australian undergraduate grant recipients to participate in short term study in Hong Kong SAR, Indonesia, Japan and Singapore, and to support the development of international mobility opportunities at their institution. Diversity of study options, disciplines and grant recipients is encouraged.

Applications are for study options in 2014 and the first half of 2015.

The pilot has been designed to give universities the flexibility to explore the most effective delivery systems, propose innovative new study options and explore which models are most successful in engaging and providing mobility experiences for Australian undergraduate grant recipients. See [Section 3.2](#) for examples of eligible study options.

The Program will aim to fund an approximate proportion of 70 per cent semester-based places and 30 per cent short term places.

Activities funded in the pilot phase will be formally evaluated to inform development of the ongoing Program.

Funding will support study options of up to two semesters (12 months), short-term (less than 6 months), language study, internships and mentorships in one of the eligible destinations. The study must be for academic credit or be a mandatory part of the course.

1.6 Funding Period

Funding will be provided to universities in 2013-14 for study options in 2014 and semester 1, 2015.

There will be two tranches of applications for funding:

- **Tranche 1** will allow universities or university consortia (See section 2 Eligibility) to submit one application each – either individually or as a member of a consortium, for a single destination for study options within projects which must be undertaken in Semester 1, 2014.
- **Tranche 2** will allow universities or university consortia to submit applications for one or more destinations for study options within projects in Semester 2, 2014 and Semester 1, 2015.

See [section 4](#) for details.

2. Eligibility

2.1 Who is eligible to apply?

2.1.1 Universities

Applications for funding under the NCP will be accepted from Australian universities and consortia of universities only.

An Australian university is defined as an institution listed under [Table A](#) or [Table B](#) of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA)*.

- The consortium must nominate one Australian university as the lead university. That university will be accountable for meeting the legal and reporting requirements on behalf of the consortium.

Individual universities submit applications in their own name, or they may also form part of consortia submitting additional applications.

A decision not to participate in one or both Tranches of the pilot phase will not exclude participation on the full rollout of the NCP, or any other Australian Government administered international grant recipient mobility Programs.

2.1.2 Grant recipients under the Program

Recipients must be:

- an Australian citizen. Applicants with dual citizenship are eligible, however they must undertake their study in a third country, of which they are not a citizen;
- enrolled in an Australian university at the time of application and throughout their study. An Australian university is defined as a supplier listed under [Table A](#) or [Table B](#) of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*;
- between 18 and 28 years of age at the commencement of their study program; and
- undertaking a Bachelor's degree level program (Pass or Honours) onshore at an Australia university campus at the commencement of the program.

3. About the funding

3.1 Available funding

An amount of approximately \$4 million will be available for Tranches 1 and 2 in 2013-14. The allocation will aim for a spread across the sector as a whole (including 41 universities and eligible consortia), informed also by eligibility and quality.

At least 90 per cent of the funding is to be provided to grant recipients in the form of direct grants. Universities can access a maximum of 10 per cent of the total funding they receive for the purpose of subsidising costs associated with Program administration, including the Evaluation Reporting requirement. Details of expenditure must be provided in the evaluation report (see Section 8.1 below).

Subsidies to grant recipients must be no less than \$1000 and no more than \$3000 for short-term study options and no less than \$3000 and no more than \$7000 for semester study options for each grant recipient. Universities should consider the amount required for each grant recipient in order to encourage participation. They should also encourage students to leverage other available funding such as OS-HELP (where available) when informing grant recipients of available options.

This pilot will allow some flexibility and university discretion in relation to the amounts to be allocated to grant recipients. Grant recipients undertaking the same activity (study option and location) should be funded equally. Differences in grant amounts are permitted between projects to accommodate for differences in study option location, content or to support student grant recipient choice across the target destinations. This element of the Program will be evaluated.

For example:

Students within the same project (that is, the same study option, destination and duration) should be given the same amount of funding assistance. Universities may offer different funding amounts between study options based on factors such as living costs, student demand and travel costs, duration of study etc.

3.1.1 OS-HELP

OS-HELP is a loan available to eligible grant recipients enrolled in a Commonwealth supported place who want to undertake some of their study overseas. OS-HELP can be used for a range of expenses such as airfares, accommodation, and other travel or study expenses. Grant recipients may receive one loan per six-month study period and can access a total of two OS-HELP loans over their lifetime.

Further information on OS-HELP loans is available from <http://studyassist.gov.au/sites/StudyAssist/HELPpayingMyFees>. Universities should consider how their proposed grants can be complementary and not duplicative of this and other available funding. Note that this will be considered under Selection Criterion 2.

3.2 What can the funding be used for?

The Program provides grants for Australian undergraduate students enrolled at Australian universities to facilitate the students (grant recipients) participating in an international study experience that provides credit or is otherwise a mandatory component of their course.

The Program will support universities to develop innovative study options for grant recipients. The pilot round affords flexibility to universities for this purpose, while ensuring that the funding is used efficiently, effectively and ethically, consistent with the policies of the Commonwealth.

Eligible study options can include:

- Semester based study of one or two semesters (up to 12 months)
- Practicums
- Clinical placements
- Internships / mentorships
- Short term research
- Short term study
- Volunteer placements

Additionally, the program must:

- be undertaken in one of the four pilot destinations: Hong Kong SAR; Indonesia; Japan and Singapore;
- not be undertaken at an offshore campus of an Australian university in a host destination;
- not be undertaken at a host institution in a region with a travel advice classification of Level 4 by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; and
- commence between semester 1 2014 to semester 1 2015.

3.2.1 Internships / Mentorships

Universities are encouraged to assist grant recipients whose study experiences are for one semester or more in securing internship / mentorship options as part of their study Program.

Note that the ability to provide internships / mentorships is included under Selection Criterion 1 and will be carefully considered when choosing applications for funding.

Further information on internships / mentorships is at Appendix 2.

3.2.2 Language study

The Program is also intended to facilitate the study of Asian languages as part of the study options. Language study, where undertaken, can take place either in Australia prior to departure or while in the host destination. The training must be undertaken in an official Asian language of the host destination in which the grant recipient is participating in an NCP funded activity. Universities are encouraged to include mechanisms for such language study to take place – note that it is also included as a consideration under Selection Criterion 1.

Funding is intended for additional language study, not for study that would otherwise take place as part of the student's normal course enrolment.

Note that there is no additional grant for language study options and that any costs associated with language study undertaken as part of the project should be considered by universities setting grant amounts for their students within the funding bands outlined above.

3.2.3 Study duration

Universities may design projects incorporating study options of any length, including short study projects or semester-based projects. Whatever its length, the student's activity must be eligible to attract academic credit or otherwise be a mandatory requirement of the grant recipient's course. Study options can be offered in the form of group projects or individual travel programs, as long as the other criteria in these guidelines are met.

4. Application process

The Department of Education will administer the applications, in consultation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. There will be two tranches of applications for funding:

- **Tranche 1** will allow each university to submit one application for study options in a single pilot destination which must be undertaken in Semester 1, 2014. If submitted as part of a consortium application, this is considered to be the university's application.
- **Tranche 2** will allow each university to submit applications for study options to be undertaken in Semester 2, 2014 and Semester 1, 2015 in the four pilot destinations. These applications (including those submitted as part of a consortium) should be ranked in order of the university's priorities. The rankings will be taken into account by assessors along with assessment against the selection criteria.

Universities may apply for one or both Tranches. Participation in Tranche 1 is optional and will not preclude a university being approved for funding under a later funding round.

Projects for study options under both Tranches should be designed so that they can be scaled up or down depending on the available funding. They cannot include multiple destinations within the same project.

The process for applying for funding is as follows:

- For **Tranche 1**, the application form will be available as a writeable PDF file through the ISEO system (see below) and can be submitted to the Department of Education via email to student.mobility@education.gov.au.

The application form will require answers against the fields identified in point 3 below.

- For **Tranche 2**, the application process will be completed through the ISEO system.
- Universities will complete an application form and address the selection criteria for each of the destination country applications in which they will undertake study options.

Information required for each application will also include the following fields:

- Destination
- Partner institutions (if known)
- Faculty or School
- Study Options
- Responses against each selection criterion.
- Amount of funding sought
- Universities will determine the provisions for study options, subject to the Selection Criteria. The Department of Education will assess applications against the Selection Criteria and then rate as either 'non-compliant' or 'compliant'.

To be successful for funding the study option must be compliant with all criteria. The Department of Education may approve the compliant study options within an application while rejecting non-compliant options in the same application.

Timeline	Activity
10 December 2013	Program Guidelines published Tranche 1 round opens.
11.59pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT) on 23 January 2014	Applications close for Tranche 1
31 January 2014	Funding offers made for Tranche 1
21 February 2014	Tranche 2 round opens
11.59pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time (AEDT) on 21 March 2014	Applications close for Tranche 2
April 2014	Funding offers made for Tranche 2
July/August 2014	Tranche 1 Evaluation report due
31 January 2015	Tranche 2 mid-way evaluation report due
31 July 2015	Tranche 2 final evaluation report due Completion report for Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 due

4.1 International Student Exchange Online

International Student Exchange Online (ISEO) is the Department of Education's online application and project management system. This is where universities will apply for Program funding, accept or decline funding offers, evaluate and acquit applications.

An ISEO User Guide is available by emailing student.mobility@education.gov.au.

Each university has a nominated International Liaison Officer (ILO) that submits applications for funding on behalf of the university.

A university or consortium must be registered online via ISEO prior to lodging an application.

4.2 When can applications be made?

Applications can be made in accordance with the above timeline.

4.3 What documents are required in applications?

Applications are to be submitted through the ISEO system. No additional documentation is required to be submitted with the application.

Universities successful in their application for funding will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with the Commonwealth. The Funding Agreement comprises a Deed of Standing Offer (DoSO) and a Project Schedule. See section 8.2

5. Selection process

5.1 What are the selection criteria for applications?

Universities will be required to provide evidence demonstrating that they meet each of the following selection criteria. To be successful, the application must be compliant with every criterion. Note that the assessors will be seeking to ensure adequate representation for all pilot destinations when evaluating the applications as a whole.

1. Conformance with Program objectives

This should address relevant points under the Pilot Objectives outlined in Section 1.41¹ Particular attention should be paid to demonstrating that:

- The funding will assist the university to create mobility beyond the levels the university would otherwise have undertaken.
- Universities are growing existing relationships or partnerships or have a clear strategy for developing new relationships - including in new countries for the university.
- Grant recipient internships/mentorships and language study are being actively facilitated by the university where appropriate.

2. Grants will successfully encourage Program participation

Applications should demonstrate how the amounts made available to grant recipients, in conformity with the funding requirements (Section 3), will be offered to grant recipients to complement effective use of other funding sources such as OS-HELP, to cover:

- Costs of language study
- Travel to and from the host country
- Living costs, including accommodation
- Appropriate insurance (including university arrangements to facilitate access).
- Universities should ensure that Program grant money is used in a way that complements other funding sources. Universities should also indicate what marketing and promotion activities they intend to pursue around the grants.

¹ • Identify, support and promote innovative mobility programs that explore new ideas in engaging and providing opportunities for Australian undergraduate grant recipients in the Indo Pacific, with the capacity to assist in scaling up to meet the NCP objectives.

• Promote and support initiatives that explore the identification of internships / mentorships for grant recipients at the pilot destinations and provide a range of models and best practice for other destinations.

3. Adequate recognition and engagement for grant recipients upon completion of their grant activities

This should outline what credit is to be provided for participation in the project, or how the students' offshore study is a mandatory component of the course. Universities should also describe any measures they are taking to provide appropriate recognition of Program participation in the student's academic transcripts or higher education graduation statement.

Any measures to encourage grant recipients to maintain connections with their host universities should also be included.

4. Adequate planning for support strategies and services provided to grant recipients to facilitate their pastoral care and learning outcomes while they are overseas.

This should include details such as comprehensive travel insurance availability, international offices located in the host country, the presence of education agents and induction programs in Australia or overseas,

It should also include a critical incident plan² to cater for circumstances such as natural disasters, serious incidents or political disturbances.

Universities must provide an assurance that travel will not take place to areas assessed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as an area to which Australians are advised not to travel (Level 4 – Do not travel). In the case that a destination is upgraded to Level 4 status subsequent to funding approval, it is the responsibility of the institution to either seek an alternate destination from the eligible Pilot countries or refund subsidies to the Department of Education.

If a destination is upgraded to Level 4 status while grant recipients are in country, universities must implement critical incident plans.

5.2 Who will assess the applications?

All applications will be assessed by officers from the Department of Education to determine whether or not they are eligible for funding and for initial shortlisting. The assessors will comprise officers with commensurate skills and experience to assess applications. Officers are required to complete an Employee Declaration Statement to cover issues associated with Conflict of Interest. Assessments may be undertaken in consultation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as required.

Compliant applications and an initial shortlist will be provided to a panel comprising senior representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Education. The panel will make recommendations on funding allocations with reference to the selection criteria. The Program Delegate will make final determinations on grants with due regard to the panels' recommendations.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Education will be informed of the panel's decisions and the universities will be informed in accordance with the above timetable.

6. Roles and responsibilities

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is taking the strategic leadership and setting the policy direction for the New Colombo Plan. The Department of Education is the agency responsible for administering both the mobility and scholarship Program components of the New Colombo Plan.

² More information and examples of critical incident plans can be found in the Outbound Mobility Best Practice Guide at <http://www.studyoverseas.gov.au/resource/Pages/default.aspx>

6.1 How will conflict of interest and bias be managed?

The APS Code of Conduct (section 13(7) of the *Public Service Act 1999*) requires that APS employees disclose, and take reasonable steps to avoid, any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with their APS employment. It is also in the interests of all employees that the firms and stakeholders we do engage with are confident that we act in accordance with the Code of Conduct and do not make improper use of information.

There is also obligation under the *Public Service Regulations 1999* on APS employees not to disclose any information which is obtained or generated in connection with their employment if it was received in confidence by the Australian Government, under the *Crimes Act 1914*, it is an offence for an employee to publish or communicate such information.

The *Privacy Act 1988* also regulates the collection, use and disclosure and storage of personal information by Australian Government agencies. Employees are required to handle personal information in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act.

Persons involved in the assessment and decision process will be required to disclose any conflicts of interest and comply with the Commonwealth Grant Guidelines.

7. Agreement process for universities

7.1 How will universities be advised of the outcome of their application?

The Department of Education will advise universities of the outcomes of their applications through ISEO. Successful applications will receive offers of funding in the form of a Project Schedule (see [section 8.2](#) below).

7.2 Offers of funding

Universities successful in their application for funding will be required to enter into a Funding Agreement with the Commonwealth. The Funding Agreement comprises a Deed of Standing Offer (DoSO) and a Project Schedule. The Funding Agreement will contain an obligation that the university (funding recipient) must comply with these Guidelines, which may be amended by the Department of Education from time to time. To the extent of any inconsistency between the Funding Agreement and the Guidelines, the Funding Agreement will prevail.

The legal framework for provision of funding is based on the following two documents:

- Deed of Standing Offer (DoSO)
- Project Schedule (the contract)

If the grant recipient's study commenced before there is a funding agreement executed with the Commonwealth, the Commonwealth is not liable for any expenditure incurred before the date of execution.

If it appears that a university will be unable to acquit its funding according to the funding agreement, they should notify the Department of Education through the student.mobility@education.gov.au address as soon as the situation arises. If necessary, a variation to the agreement may be entered into under [Section 8.3](#).

8. Funding agreement

The funding agreement will detail the university's responsibilities in ensuring that the study options are conducted according to the agreement and that project outcomes are achieved.

The funding agreement will set out conditions including but not limited to:

- the making and receiving of payments
- audit requirements
- the manner in which unspent Program moneys must be dealt with, including recovery of funds
- variation and termination of agreements.

8.1 How will the applications be monitored?

Universities will be required to submit to the Department of Education:

- Pre-departure details for each grant recipient embarking to the Indo Pacific, including dates and destination of travel, project they are travelling under, email and phone number.
- Evaluation report for **Tranche 1**
- Mid-Way Evaluation Report for **Tranche 2**
- Final Evaluation report for **Tranche 2**
- Completion Report.

Evaluation reports will be submitted through the ISEO system and will outline further details of the study options not submitted with the original application.

During the pilot program, universities should keep records on the following issues, which will form part of the evaluation process:

- A full spending breakdown, including amount spent per student, amount per study option and administration fees.
- A description of all study options funded, and description of how the administration fees were spent.
- A description of how the study options leveraged other funding sources for students such as OS-HELP, where possible.
- Study options and grant sizes that were most successful in attracting student participation
- Models of language training that were most effective in the context of the Program.
- Successful initiatives for identifying and encouraging work placement opportunities.
- Initiatives that successfully encouraged participation from disadvantaged groups.
- Suggestions for improving the Program structure to better facilitate its objectives.
- Any other relevant reflections.

The Completion Report will require the following:

- Confirmation that the study Program was implemented and that the funding was spent in accordance with these guidelines and the Funding Agreement
- Information on grant recipients who received grants under the Program.

8.2 How will underperformance be managed?

In the case of underperformance against the funding agreement, remedial action may be undertaken.

This may include:

- consultation and negotiation with the university;
- deferral and/or staging of scheduled payments;
- recovery of funds already paid; and
- referral to proper authorities of investigation of any improper use of Program funds.

8.3 How will any variations to the funding agreement be made?

A variation to a funding agreement will be considered by the Department of Education if it:

- is consistent with the Program's objectives
- is appropriate in all circumstances.

The onus is on universities to contact the Department of Education to start the project variation process.

8.4 Taxation

Universities are advised to seek their own tax advice before applying for a grant and entering into a written agreement. Applicants can contact the Australian Tax Office call centre to discuss tax issues on 13 28 66.

8.5 What documents about the Project should be retained?

It is a condition of being paid funds under the Program that universities retain all documents and records in relation to the application and the funding agreement for a period of seven years after the completion of the project and that universities provide this information to authorised officers of the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade if requested to do so.

9. How are complaints and feedback handled?

The Australian Government will not accept responsibility for any misunderstanding arising from the failure by a university to comply with these guidelines, or arising from any ambiguity, discrepancy or error contained in an application.

Universities are responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and lodgement of their applications.

Complaints in relation to the processing of applications should be sent to the Department of Education Program Delegate at: student.mobility@education.gov.au

Appeals against decisions on grant recipient selections will not be considered.

10. Disclosure of information in the application

The use and disclosure of information provided to the Department of Education by universities for the Program is regulated by legislation including the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth), the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth), the *Crimes Act 1914* (Cth), the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) and the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth), as well as the common law.

10.1 Privacy

10.1.1 Treatment of Personal Information collected in Applications

The Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and their staff are required to treat Personal Information in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* ('the Privacy Act'), as amended from time to time. *The Privacy Act* requires the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to inform individuals of the manner and purpose of collection of the Personal Information, any third parties whom the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade may disclose the Personal Information to, and to whom and for what purpose that person or body may pass or use the Personal Information.

The Privacy Act also governs and provides limitations on the use and disclosure of an individual's Personal Information.

10.1.2 Purpose, use and disclosure of Personal Information

Universities should obtain agreement from grant recipients to collect their Personal Information. The agreement should give permission for the university to pass on their Personal Information to the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for the purposes of:

- administering this Program
- assessing applications
- contacting the grant recipients as part of the Program evaluation process
- promoting the Program, including promotional material, information and publications in hardcopy and/or on the internet
- to congratulate successful recipients and/or invite the successful recipients to functions and events held in Australia and overseas.

The Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade may provide Personal Information:

- to Australian Government departments and agencies
- to Australian Parliamentary members and committees
- to the department's contractors and agents
- to universities
- in publicly available promotional material, information and publications in hardcopy and/or on the internet.

The Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade will not otherwise use or disclose the Personal Information for a purpose other than that identified in these Guidelines, except where:

- the individual is reasonably likely to have been aware or made aware that information of that kind is usually passed to that person, body or agency;
- the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade have the person's consent to use the information for that other purpose;
- the use of the information for another purpose is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the life or health of an individual;
- use of the information is authorised or required by law, or is necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law or of a law imposing a pecuniary penalty, or for the protection of the public revenue; or
- the purpose for which the information is used is directly related to the purpose for which the information was obtained.

Complaints about breaches of privacy should be referred to the Department of Education Privacy Contact Officer.

By post: Privacy Contact Officer

Legal and Investigations Group

Location C12MT1

Department of Education

GPO Box 9880

CANBERRA ACT 2601

Complaints about breaches of privacy can also be made directly to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).

10.2 Confidentiality

10.2.1 Identification of confidential information

Information which satisfies the four criteria listed below will be treated by the Commonwealth as confidential information:

- the information to be protected has been clearly identified by the university
- the information is identified by the university as commercially sensitive
- the disclosure of the information would cause unreasonable detriment to the university or another party
- the information was provided by the university under an understanding that it would remain confidential.

Confidential information also includes information designated by the Commonwealth as confidential or that either party knows or ought to know is confidential. This does not include information that is otherwise in the public domain.

Universities must ensure that they clearly mark information in their application that is confidential and explain why it should be treated as confidential information.

10.2.2 Use of confidential information

Even if information belonging to the university is marked confidential, it may be used by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Education and the Commonwealth.

The confidential information will be disclosed to Commonwealth employees and contractors for the purposes of determining the suitability of universities to enhance the reputation of Australia as a New Colombo Plan Mobility grant recipient.

In addition to the above, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Department of Education may disclose the confidential information to:

- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister
- a House or a Committee of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
- a third party contractor engaged by the Commonwealth for audit-related purposes
- other Commonwealth agencies for law enforcement purposes, where the disclosure will serve the Commonwealth's legitimate interests and, if necessary, to substantiate a university's claims
- a technical, financial, economic and/or industry expert (including auditors) from whom the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade wishes to seek advice.

Confidential information may also be disclosed if the Commonwealth is otherwise required or permitted by law to do so (for example in accordance with the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*), where the consent of the university to the release of information is obtained prior to its disclosure, or where the information enters the public domain due to the actions of someone other than the Commonwealth. Personal information will be handled in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act.

10.3 What information about universities will be announced?

The Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs may publicly announce details of funded projects, including but not limited to:

- the names of projects, their Australian (home) university and host destination university;
- a brief description of study areas and internships/mentorships being supported through the projects; and
- the amount of funding awarded.

10.4 Freedom of Information

All documents created or held by the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs with regard to the Program are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*. Unless a document falls under an exemption provision, or is conditionally exempt and it is not in the public interest to give access to the document, it will, subject to any obligations of third party consultation, be disclosed in response to a request under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

11. How will the Program be evaluated?

Any information collected as part of the Program can be used by the case management contractor, the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs for performance monitoring and management of the New Colombo Plan.

Information gathered in the pilot Program will be used to identify best practice and inform the future development and scale-up of the New Colombo Plan. Information will also be used to create testimonials for promotional material.

New Colombo Plan grant recipients will be asked to participate in the formal evaluation of the pilot Program, which may involve, for example, participation in focus groups and completion of an exit survey upon completion of their Program. These will be used as an evaluative tool of the student's experience. It is also an opportunity for a student to share their personal journey. Questions will be reflective of both the Australian Government and the New Colombo Plan Program pilot objectives.

Universities are required to obtain and keep records of consent from grant recipients to ensure their participation in the evaluation of the program to be undertaken by the Department of Education and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, its contractors and agents.

Appendix 1: Definitions of Key Terms

Confidential Information is information which satisfies the four criteria listed at item 11.2.1 of these guidelines or is designated by the Commonwealth as confidential or that either party knows or ought to know is confidential. This does not include information that is otherwise in the public domain.

Consortia means consortia comprised of Australian universities (Tables A and B under the Higher Education Support Act 2003) only.

Personal Information has the same meaning as in the **Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)**

Program means the *New Colombo Plan Mobility Pilot*

Program Delegate means an employee of the Department of Education who has been empowered by the Minister, or otherwise duly authorised, to disperse the funds appropriated for the Program.

Program funding or **Program funds** means the funding made available by the Commonwealth of Australia for the Program in any given financial year.

In these Guidelines:

- 'may' is permissive and not mandatory;
- a reference to the singular includes the plural and vice versa; and
- if a word or phrase is defined its other grammatical forms have corresponding meanings.

Project is an activity that involves one or multiple students going to the same destination for a common study option.

Study Options are activities that provide academic credit or are a mandatory element of the student's course, and include semester based study of one or two semesters (up to 12 months), Practicums, Clinical placements, internships/mentorships, short term research, short term study and volunteer placements.

University means a supplier listed under Table A or Table B of the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*, or a consortium of such universities.

Appendix 2: Internships/Mentorships

Grant recipients are strongly encouraged to undertake an internship/mentorship as part of their study option, where possible. For the purpose of the NCP Mobility Program, an internship/mentorship is defined as any placement relating to the recipient's field of study undertaken outside of their host university.

- An **Internship** is a carefully monitored work or volunteer experience in which an individual has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what he or she is learning throughout the experience. Internships offer grant recipients the chance to test their skills in real-life situations, explore career options and gain an insight into an organisation or career path.
- A **Mentorship** is a personal developmental relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person, relevant to work, career, or professional development. Mentoring is more than just answering occasional questions or providing ad hoc help, it is about an ongoing relationship of learning, dialogue, and challenge.

An internship/mentorship could be with any company, business, government department or agency, not-for-profit organisation or research organisation in the host destination. There are many variations on what the internship/mentorship component might look like. For example, it could be:

- an unpaid position with a local company or business, government agency or non-government organisation; or
- with an agency or organisation in the host destination with which the recipient's Australian university has, or seeks to develop, links.

The maximum duration of internship/mentorship opportunities under the New Colombo Plan Mobility Program is six months (full-time).

A flexible approach is taken to assist grant recipients in undertaking an internship/mentorship within their study option where it is considered most beneficial. An internship/mentorship may be taken during or after the study component but is not encouraged to be undertaken prior to the study component. The internship/mentorship period may be undertaken with more than one host organisation (all host organisations must be within the host destination of the study component).

If an internship/mentorship is to be undertaken after the study component, grant recipients are encouraged to allow less than one month between the completion of the study component and the commencement of the internship/mentorship.

Please note that it is the recipient's responsibility to ensure they have appropriate visas at all stages of their time in the host destination.

Arranging the Internship/Mentorship and Approval Process

It is the grant recipient's responsibility to arrange and confirm the internship / mentorship. The recipient will be supported in this by their home university.

Arranging credit for the internship / mentorship component of the scholarship

In partnership with their Australian university, grant recipients are encouraged to seek credit for the internship / mentorship and for it to be recognised as an integral component of a NCP experience