



An Australian Government Initiative



AUSTRALIAN LEADERSHIP AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS HANDBOOK

March 2008

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR AWARDEES:

You must read this Handbook thoroughly 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 ALA scholarship. Please also read the other information in your pre-departure pack and follow the instructions carefully. For further assistance, please contact AusAID at ala@ausaid.gov.au.

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyrights Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission from the Commonwealth. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to the Commonwealth Copyright Administration, Attorney-General's Department, Robert Garran Offices, National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600 or posted at <http://www.ag.gov.au.cca>.

ISBN 1 920861 77 7

Internet www.ausaid.gov.au

Australian Leadership Awards Scholarships Handbook

Table of Contents

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| 1 | <i>Australian Leadership Awards Scholarships</i> | 1-1 |
| 1.1 | Introduction | 1-1 |
| 2 | <i>About the ALAS Handbook</i> | 2-2 |
| 2.1 | Purpose of the Handbook | 2-2 |
| 2.2 | How to use the Handbook | 2-2 |
| 2.3 | Changes to the Handbook | 2-2 |
| 2.4 | Management responsibilities | 2-2 |
| 3 | <i>ALAS eligibility, application, selection and placement process</i> | 3-4 |
| 3.1 | ALAS in-country pre-application process | 3-4 |
| 3.2 | ALAS eligibility requirements | 3-4 |
| 3.2.1 | Conditions relating to visas | 3-4 |
| 3.2.2 | Special needs/disability | 3-1 |
| 3.3 | ALAS application process | 3-1 |
| 3.4 | Programs available to applicants | 3-1 |
| 3.4.1 | Preparation programs | 3-1 |
| 3.4.2 | Doctoral or Masters Programs | 3-1 |
| 3.4.4 | Study Enrichment Activities..... | 3-1 |
| 3.4.5 | Work attachments | 3-1 |
| 3.5 | Types of courses not available under ALAS | 3-1 |
| 3.6 | Enrolment at an Institution | 3-2 |
| 3.6.1 | Role of the applicant..... | 3-2 |
| 3.6.2 | Role of the Institution | 3-2 |
| 3.7 | Scholarship application, assessment and offer process | 3-2 |
| 3.7.1 | Submission of application..... | 3-2 |
| 3.7.2 | Assessment | 3-2 |
| 3.8 | Offers | 3-3 |
| 3.8.1 | Successful applicants | 3-3 |
| 3.8.2 | Deferral of an ALAS Offer..... | 3-3 |
| 4 | <i>Accepting an ALAS</i> | 4-4 |
| 4.1 | ALAS acceptance | 4-4 |
| 4.2 | ALAS conditions | 4-4 |
| 4.3 | ALAS entitlements | 4-1 |
| 4.4 | ALAS duration | 4-1 |
| 4.5 | Applying for an AusAID Student Visa | 4-1 |
| 4.6 | Pre-departure information | 4-2 |
| 4.6.1 | Pre-departure briefing..... | 4-2 |
| 4.6.2 | Institution information kits | 4-2 |

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------------|
| 4.7 | Family | 4-2 |
| 5 | <i>Travel.....</i> | 5-3 |
| 5.1 | Initial travel arrangements | 5-3 |
| 5.2 | Travel to Australia at the start of the ALAS..... | 5-3 |
| 5.3 | Return Travel at the end of the ALAS..... | 5-3 |
| 5.4 | Requirements for Return travel on an ALAS..... | 5-3 |
| 5.5 | Travel not covered by the ALAS | 5-4 |
| 6 | <i>ALA scholarship entitlements and support services.....</i> | 6-5 |
| 6.1 | Leadership Development Program | 6-5 |
| 6.2 | General services | 6-5 |
| 6.2.1 | Arrival in Australia..... | 6-5 |
| 6.2.2 | Initial accommodation | 6-5 |
| 6.2.3 | Long term accommodation..... | 6-6 |
| 6.2.4 | Establishment allowance | 6-6 |
| 6.2.5 | Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE)..... | 6-6 |
| 6.3 | Critical incidents..... | 6-8 |
| 6.3.1 | Serious illness of a Student..... | 6-8 |
| 6.3.2 | Medical escort home..... | 6-8 |
| 6.3.3 | Death of a Student | 6-9 |
| 6.3.4 | Death of Student’s family member whilst in Australia..... | 6-9 |
| 6.3.5 | Serious legal issues..... | 6-10 |
| 7 | <i>Academic progress and requirements</i> | 7-11 |
| 7.1 | Introductory Academic Program | 7-11 |
| 7.2 | Satisfactory academic progress | 7-11 |
| 7.3 | Progression requirements for first year Students..... | 7-12 |
| 7.4 | Supplementary academic support..... | 7-12 |
| 7.5 | Work attachments | 7-12 |
| 7.6 | Fieldwork..... | 7-13 |
| 7.7 | Variation policy..... | 7-13 |
| 7.7.1 | Deferrals | 7-13 |
| 7.7.2 | Withdrawals..... | 7-13 |
| 7.7.3 | ALA S course detail changes..... | 7-13 |
| 7.7.4 | Extensions..... | 7-14 |
| 7.7.5 | Suspensions | 7-14 |
| 7.7.6 | Transfers | 7-15 |
| 7.7.7 | Reductions | 7-15 |
| 7.7.8 | Terminations..... | 7-16 |
| 7.8 | Miscellaneous | 7-17 |
| 7.8.1 | Off-scholarship study | 7-17 |
| 7.8.2 | Post-ALAS study opportunities in Australia | 7-17 |
| 7.8.3 | Allison Sudrajat Awardees | 7-17 |
| 8 | <i>Completion of studies.....</i> | 8-18 |
| 8.1 | Final departure date | 8-18 |
| 8.2 | Return home briefing and ALA scholarship completion ceremony | 8-18 |
| 8.3 | Completion of the ALAS | 8-19 |
| 8.4 | Maintaining contact with Students upon their return home | 8-19 |
| | <i>APPENDIX A</i> | <i>I</i> |

| | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Summary of ALA Student responsibilities</i> | I |
| Application Process | I |
| Travel and Entry Requirements | I |
| Prior to Departure to Australia | I |
| In Australia | I |
| <i>APPENDIX B</i> | III |
| <i>Policy on post-ALAS externally funded Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Fellowship Study</i> | III |
| Introduction | III |
| Objectives | III |
| Policy application | III |
| Criteria | III |
| Procedure | IV |

1.1 Introduction

The Australian Leadership Awards Scholarships (ALAS) program aims to develop leadership, build partnerships and linkages within the Asia-Pacific. They are academically elite awards offered to high achievers from the region to undertake postgraduate study in Australia including the Leadership Development Program.

They are intended for those who are already leaders or have the potential to assume leadership roles that can influence social and economic policy reform and development outcomes, both in their own countries and in the Asia-Pacific region.

ALAS also target those whose chosen field of study equips them to play a significant role in addressing, researching or combating regional priority issues, such as security, international trade, pandemics and climate change.

Selection for an ALAS is highly competitive based on leadership qualities and on intellect. Only a limited number of scholarships are offered each year.

ALAS are an investment in the future of the Asia-Pacific region. ALAS scholars are therefore required to return to their home country or the region for two years after they have completed their studies.

In future years, ALAS scholars will form a unique group to be known as the Australian Scholarships Alumni Network (ASAN) with strong and enduring links to Australia and the region. ASAN will increase the exchange of knowledge and information within the region and build effective networks among scholars, in their area of specialisation, within their Universities, throughout Australia and the region. Their achievements will also demonstrate the benefits of Australian education internationally.

2 About the ALAS Handbook

The ALAS Handbook is an important document for all parties involved with the management or participation in the ALAS. It should be read thoroughly and should always be referred to for the most up-to-date advice on ALAS policy, Student management, ALAS entitlements and conditions, and ALAS administrative processes.

2.1 Purpose of the Handbook

The ALAS Handbook instructs the different user groups on their roles and responsibilities in either managing or participating in ALAS. Institutions, students, AusAID officers and Managing Contractors (MC) have access to this Handbook and all should be familiar with its contents and understand their respective roles and responsibilities.

The Handbook underpins the Contract between AusAID and Institutions for the Provision of Education Services and between the ALAS Student and the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Handbook determines the minimum service delivery requirements for Institutions under their Contract.

2.2 How to use the Handbook

The Handbook follows the sequence for ALAS from application to completion. Each chapter describes a step in the ALAS process and details each stakeholder's responsibility in that process. While some information may not seem relevant to a particular user, the Handbook provides an overview of the ALAS process for all users. 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 ALAS management by all parties.

The Handbook stipulates when actions need to be taken in the Scholarships Information Management Online (SIMON), the internet based data management system that AusAID manages. SIMON enables AusAID, MCs and Institutions to access a centralised database, to electronically enter data, to process ALAS applications and manage ALAS processes. AusAID provides SIMON users with a SIMON User Manual and initial training in SIMON.

2.3 Changes to the Handbook

The Handbook will be maintained to ensure its relevance and consistency with current AusAID policy and direction. AusAID reserves the right to change or amend the Handbook at any time. AusAID will provide notification of any changes as appropriate and in a timely manner, or of any major policy changes or emerging issues. It is the user's responsibility to review the Handbook periodically.

2.4 Management responsibilities

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

AusAID

Australian Scholarships Group (referred to as AusAID (Canberra))

- a. developing and maintaining ALAS policy and conditions and ensuring consistency in their administration;

- b. assisting Posts with regional promotions, selection and mobilisation processes;
- c. coordinating the final selections by the Interdepartmental Selection Panel (ISP) in Canberra;
- d. forwarding ALAS Acceptance of Award Offer to Post;
- e. providing an AusAID ALAS contact officer;
- f. determining how ALAS will be delivered in Australia by Institutions;
- g. organising a Leadership Development Program for ALAS students;
- h. managing contracts with Institutions;
- i. managing the SIMON database;
- j. processing ALAS variations in SIMON in accordance with relevant policy and financial delegation; and
- k. reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of ALAS.

AusAID office at Australian Diplomatic Missions overseas (referred to as Posts)

Posts undertake and manage the following operational roles:

- a. arranging local promotions;
- b. receiving and processing applications;
- c. managing the short-listing process for final selections by ISP in Canberra;
- d. announcing recipients and holding functions possibly in conjunction with Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST);
- e. managing the mobilisation of ALAS to Australia;
- f. making mobilisation payments to ALAS;
- g. arranging Pre-Departure Briefings (PDBs);
- h. where appropriate, liaising with Partner Governments and/or MCs on ALAS matters;
- i. managing MCs;
- j. assisting in the review and evaluation of the effectiveness of ALAS; and
- k. promoting and supporting the Australian Scholarships Alumni Network (ASAN).

Managing Contractors (MC)

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

Australian Institutions

Institutions are responsible for 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 for all matters 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 the Institution's decision.

3.1 ALAS in-country pre-application process

The ALAS application and short-listing processes are undertaken on an annual basis and coordinated at Post, with the exception of Iraq and Afghanistan. AusAID (Canberra) develops the eligibility requirements and selection criteria. Final selections are undertaken by the Interdepartmental Selection Panel (ISP) in Canberra. Appropriate regional representation and gender balance will be achieved. Consideration will be given to Priority Themes.

3.2 ALAS eligibility requirements

To be eligible for an ALAS, an applicant must:

- a. be a citizen of an ALAS eligible country (see <http://www.usaid.gov.au/scholar/ala.cfm> for the list of countries);
- b. be residing in a country other than Australia and apply from outside Australia;
- c. have an unconditional Letter of Offer for Enrolment from an ALAS eligible Australian Institution (see <http://www.usaid.gov.au/scholar/ala.cfm> for the list of Institutions) for entry into full time study for Masters or Doctoral programs in Australia (study by distance or external mode is not permitted);
- d. meet English language requirements (as below); and
- e. meet visa requirements (as at Section 3.2.1).

ALAS Applicants must meet the following English language requirements:

- have undertaken one of the following English language proficiency tests no longer than two years prior to the date of application:
 - an IELTS Academic Test with a score of at least 6.5, or
 - a TOEFL paper-based test score of at least 580, or
 - a TOEFL computer-based test score of at least 237, or
 - a TOEFL Internet-based score of at least 92.

NOTE: Some Institutions require IELTS scores higher than 6.5 for entry into certain courses. The applicant must ensure that he/she has sufficient English for the course applied for. There is no provision for ALAS students to undertake Pre-Course English (PCE).

3.2.1 Conditions relating to visas

Applicants must ensure that they meet the following visa requirements:

- a. are not Australian citizens or permanent residents, nor be in the process of applying;
- b. are neither married to/or be a defacto of, nor engaged to be married, to a person who holds or who is eligible to hold Australian or New Zealand citizenship or permanent residence status;
- c. satisfy Australian Government requirements for international student entry to Australia (which includes health and character checks conducted by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs).

NOTE: Residents of Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau with New Zealand citizenship are eligible but must apply for an AusAID 576 student visa.

3.2.2 Special needs/disability

Applicants with a disability/special need must provide details of the disability to the Post once selected for an award. If an applicant has a disability which may require modifications to the 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.

3.3 ALAS application process

ALAS applications can be made online using the Online Australian Scholarships Information System (OASIS) or forms and information on how to apply can be downloaded on http://www.ausaid.gov.au/scholar/ala_apply.cfm. AusAID would prefer applications to be lodged online.

3.4 Programs available to applicants

3.4.1 Preparation programs

Preparation programs, including any compulsory preliminary courses may be approved by AusAID (Canberra) at the recommendation of the Institution. Preliminary programs should be no longer than eight weeks in length and must be included in the offer. ALAS students must attend the Introductory Academic Program (IAP).

Pre-course English and foundation courses are not offered as part of ALAS.

3.4.2 Doctoral or Masters Programs

ALAS are offered for Doctoral or Masters programs only. Applicants required by the Institution to complete a Graduate Diploma before proceeding to their Masters program are eligible to do so, likewise PhD students required to complete a Masters program before proceeding to PhD program. Masters and PhD programs may be by coursework, coursework and research, or research-only.

3.4.3 Leadership Development Program

All students are required to participate in the Leadership Development Program, which is designed to strengthen and intensify leadership skills and develop networks.

3.4.4 Study Enrichment Activities

The Study Enrichment Allowance provides financial assistance to Students to enhance their formal studies. It provides up to A\$2,000 funding per student each year. (See Section 6.2.6 for further details.)

3.4.5 Work attachments

Work attachments, in addition to those under the Leadership Development Program, may be approved by the Institution. (See Section 7.5 for more information).

3.5 Types of courses not available under ALAS

ALAS are not available for:

- a. undergraduate programs, including honours year studies;
- b. legal workshops;
- c. training in areas related to nuclear technology and flying aircraft; and
- d. military training.

3.6 Enrolment at an Institution

3.6.1 Role of the applicant

Applicants must independently seek enrolment at an ALAS eligible Institution prior to submitting an application for an ALAS. Applicants select the Institution(s) at which they would prefer to study. Applicants should access various resources including Institution websites and handbooks and Institution information sessions held in-country. Information is also available from [Australian Course and Education Institution Search](#) or [Study in Australia](#) websites and on Commonwealth Register of Institutions & Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) www.cricos.dest.gov.au.

3.6.2 Role of the Institution

Institutions will make unconditional offers of enrolment directly to applicants based on the Institution's own admission policies and processes. The Institution should refer to Section 3.8 for conditions relating to ALAS offers.

The Institution cannot enter data in SIMON at this point.

3.7 Scholarship application, assessment and offer process

3.7.1 Submission of application

Applicants must submit a completed ALAS Application Form and certified copies of all relevant documentation (as detailed in the Application Form and guidelines) in the Online Australian Scholarships Information System (OASIS). Hard copy applications may be submitted. .

Note that the Institution's letter of offer for enrolment (see section 3.6.2) is a supporting document that must be uploaded into OASIS. The letter is a pre-requisite for an application being considered. Applicants must ensure that they submit accurate and complete documentation. Failure to do so may result in an application not being processed.

Applicants must also upload eligible English language test results prior to submitting their applications.

3.7.2 Assessment

Applications are checked that they meet all eligibility requirements, then short-listed and preferably interviewed by Posts. Posts then recommend short-listed applicants to the Interdepartmental Selection Panel (ISP) in Canberra. Applicants from across the Asia-Pacific region compete on merit against the following selection criteria:

- a. **academic record** - very high level results achieved in a degree(s) from an internationally recognised university and the likelihood of succeeding in further study;
- b. **leadership and personal qualities** - leadership qualities and experience as demonstrated by professional, educational, community and other relevant achievements. Leadership qualities include integrity, adaptability, initiative, ambassadorial potential and vision;
- c. **potential outcomes** - to the individual, his/her field of study and home country from the Australian education experience; and
- d. **professional record** - professional achievements as demonstrated by work experience, membership of professional bodies, awards of achievement and professional references.

Priority themes and gender and regional representation are also taken into consideration.

3.8 Offers

3.8.1 Successful applicants

Once successful applicants have been identified, AusAID (Canberra) will advise Posts of those applicants selected for an award. Posts in turn will notify applicants of the outcome of selections and seek their intention to accept/decline the Award. AusAID (Canberra) will forward (in SIMON) a list of successful applicants to Institutions at the end of October.

Institutions will forward (in SIMON) confirmation of their offer of a place to the Student within one week of receiving the Request for Placement (RFP). The Institution must record all details in SIMON at the time an offer is made. Failure to do so may result in funds not being approved.

The formal study program must be the same length and cost as that listed in CRICOS. The offer in SIMON should therefore include relevant dates and the full cost estimate for:

- a. the IAP;
- b. the study program, including any compulsory preliminary courses; and
- c. work attachment (see Section 3.5.4).

At this point, Institutions will also record costs for Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC).

All Students are eligible for funding provided under the Study Enrichment Allowance, the allocation of funds being at the discretion of the Institution. These costs will be recorded in "Miscellaneous Costs" (with the exception of the Supplementary Academic Support) in SIMON. Refer to the SIMON Handbook for advice on using SIMON.

Once a placement offer has been received in SIMON, AusAID (Canberra) will then generate the Acceptance of Award Offer and forward to Posts for distribution to successful applicants. It will be accompanied by a congratulatory letter from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Offers must be accepted within 10 days.

Applicants are responsible for obtaining an AusAID visa and should begin the application process at the time they are notified of the Award. Posts are encouraged to assist in expediting the process. The Institution and the Student should make contact at this stage to confirm the study program, and discuss the proposed start date.

Posts and Institutions will provide pre-departure information for Students.

3.8.2 Deferral of an ALAS Offer

It is AusAID policy that ALAS Students should undertake their scholarship in the year it was offered, preferably in Semester 1. Deferrals are not permitted.

4 Accepting an ALAS

4.1 ALAS acceptance

An applicant accepting the offer of a scholarship must sign a Contract (Acceptance of Award Offer) with the Commonwealth of Australia, agreeing to comply with the ALAS conditions and entitlements contained in the Acceptance of Award Offer and this Handbook.

To initiate the ALAS, the student must forward one signed copy of the award offer to AusAID (Post or Canberra) and keep the original as proof of the award when applying for an AusAID Student Visa.

At this point the student may check with the Australian Immigration Office in their country of citizenship on what is needed to apply for an AusAID Student Visa (see section 4.5 for more information on AusAID Student Visas).

4.2 ALAS conditions

ALAS Students must:

- satisfy all visa requirements determined by the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIA) to hold an AusAID Student Visa (subclass 576) and abide by the conditions of that visa. Failure to do so may incur a debt to the Commonwealth of Australia for the total cost of the ALAS;
- take up the ALAS in the academic year for which it is offered; study full time and achieve satisfactory academic progress in the program for which the scholarship was offered;
- only undertake the approved program for which the ALAS is offered and abide by the rules of the Institution;
- return to their country of citizenship or the region for two years upon the completion of their course of study in Australia;
- not hold another Australian Government scholarship;
- reside in Australia for the duration of the ALAS (apart from reunion visits to the home country and fieldwork);
- advise AusAID (Canberra) immediately, through the Student Contact Officer (SCO) at the Institution, should they marry a person who is an Australian citizen, or has permanent residence status in Australia, a New Zealand citizen or has New Zealand citizenship;
- liaise with the SCO at the Institution regarding any changes to the approved program and acknowledge that approval is required from the Institution and AusAID (Canberra) before any changes are made;
- agree to AusAID collecting information and to passing that information on to other relevant parties concerning the Student or dependants, if necessary;
- participate in all activities associated with the course of study, including all lectures and tutorials, submit all work required for the course e.g. assignments, essays and sit for examinations;
- participate in the Leadership Development Program; and
- be aware that the ALAS may be terminated at any time for failure to comply with the laws of Australia, misconduct, breaches of the conditions of the ALAS, or for failure to make satisfactory academic progress.

4.3 ALAS entitlements

Under ALAS a common set of entitlements apply to all recipients:

| | |
|---|---|
| Mobilisation Allowance | Posts may elect one of two procedures for mobilization of students: (i) Once student is issued with a valid visa for the period of their scholarship, payment of A\$2500 as a contribution to their airline ticket and pre-departure expenses; or (ii) Posts make travel arrangements and payments. |
| Establishment Allowance | Upon arrival in Australia, payment of A\$5000 as a contribution towards expenses such as rental bonds, text books, study materials, additional medical insurance, home contents insurance, excess baggage upon return home etc. |
| 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. |
| Return Home Travel | Payment of a single economy class airfare to the student's home country, via the most direct route. |
| Contribution to Living Expenses (also referred to as a Stipend) | A fortnightly Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE) paid at a rate determined by AusAID. The 2009 rate is A\$26,009 per annum. AusAID will review the CLE as required. |
| Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) | On behalf of the student only, payment of OSHC for the duration of the scholarship, covering the Student's basic medical costs only. Students may purchase, at their own expense, additional medical insurance to cover ancillary services such as dentist, orthodontist and optometrist. |
| Leadership Development Program (LDP) | Costs associated with participation in the Leadership Development Program are covered as part of the program. |
| Study Enrichment Allowance (SEA) | SEA provides financial assistance of up to A\$2000 each year to students to enhance their formal studies and may include funding toward: fieldwork, conference support, academic support, travel home. |

4.4 ALAS duration

The ALAS will cover the length of study time defined in the Acceptance of Award Offer. It includes:

- a. Introductory Academic Program (IAP);
- b. compulsory preliminary programs, if applicable;
- c. academic course duration as listed in CRICOS;
- d. Leadership Development Program (LDP).

4.5 Applying for an AusAID Student Visa

The visa process can take a long time. As soon as the Student has signed the ALAS Acceptance of Award Offer, he/she should immediately apply for an AusAID Student Visa through the nearest Australian Immigration Office.

Note that the Student may apply for only one class of visa, the AusAID Student Visa (Subclass 576).

Once an AusAID Student Visa is issued, the Student should advise the Australian Embassy or High Commission in their home country.

Posts will then transfer the mobilisation allowance into the Student's nominated bank account, or organize travel for them.

4.6 Pre-departure information

4.6.1 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 ALAS obligations, including the requirement that they return to their home country for a minimum period of two years upon completion of the ALAS.

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.

4.6.2 Institution information kits

The Institution must provide each Student with an Institution Information Kit prior to their departure for Australia. The Institution forwards 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.

The Kit must include information that is not 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, long term accommodation, living costs, information about the Student's course, support services at the Institution and in the community, local childcare and schooling options, information about public transport etc.

4.7 Family

The Australian Government does not provide any financial or other support for the dependants of ALAS Students. Students must contact DiaC directly to ascertain the current requirements for family entry. The Student should contact the SCO at the Institution to gain more information about schooling and child care for dependants and to find out when family should join them.

See <http://www.immi.gov.au/students/students/576-2/index.htm> for details about visa requirements for family members.

5.1 Initial travel arrangements

ALAS Students are responsible for obtaining their passports, medical checks, and visas. Posts may elect to manage students' travel arrangements in one of two ways:

- a. Students make their own arrangements and receive a mobilisation allowance as a contribution to airfares, visa-related costs and any other travel costs. No other funding assistance is available. The mobilisation allowance will be made available as soon as the student has obtained a valid AusAID Student Visa (See Section 4.5).

After the Student provides his/her bank details upon signing the ALA scholarship contract and confirms that a visa has been issued, Posts will arrange to transfer the mobilisation allowance into the Student's nominated bank account.

- b. 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 may be up to two weeks prior to the commencement of the IAP. Posts must inform ASG via the ALA Mailbox of the student's travel details including flight number and arrival time. ASG will then enter this in SIMON. Once the information is entered in SIMON, an email is automatically generated and sent to the Institution.

5.2 Travel to Australia at the start of the ALAS

Students are responsible for ensuring they arrive in Australia in good time to attend the Introductory Academic Program. This may be up to two weeks prior to the start of the IAP to allow time to settle in and arrange accommodation.

Prior to their departure for Australia, Students are responsible for advising the Institution of their accommodation preferences and arrival details

5.3 Return Travel at the end of the ALAS

At completion of the ALAS, the Institution is responsible for arranging and paying for the Student to travel home in accordance with the requirements set out in Section 5.4.

5.4 Requirements for Return travel on an ALAS

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.

The following conditions apply to all travel covered by the ALA scholarship, except for travel to Australia which is at the discretion of the Student. Therefore, in respect of travel from Australia upon completion of the scholarship, fieldwork and reunion travel:

- a. Students are entitled to travel from the airport closest to their home city/town/airport to either: an Australian international airport/capital city, or to the town/city closest to the Institution where they will be studying; and a return home airfare upon completion of the ALA scholarship;
- b. Students are to travel by the most direct route. ALA scholarship 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;

- c. 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;
- d. unless unavoidable, stopovers in Australia or overseas are not permitted. If unavoidable AusAID is prepared to pay reasonable accommodation costs, though it should be first checked whether the airline covers them;
- e. payment of 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 ticket at the time of purchase.

5.5 Travel not covered by the ALAS

ALA scholarships do not provide funding for:

- a. travel insurance for loss of possessions, or any loss of uninsured possessions, while travelling to and from Australia or while studying in Australia;
- b. travelling to and from the Student's home country during any suspension of the scholarship;
- c. travel costs for dependants or family members of Students, both to and from Australia and within Australia;
- d. the cost of daily travel to and from the place of study;
- e. transporting personal effects or excess baggage to and from Australia, or within Australia.

6 ALA scholarship entitlements and support services

6.1 Leadership Development Program

All ALAS students are required to attend the Leadership Development Program (LDP). This will include:

- a. Two-day conference where all ALAS students come together to meet each other and Australian leaders to discuss emerging leadership issues; and
- b. Three-day intensive workshop to explore leadership capacities and qualities at a more personal level, with students designing their own leadership development program
- c. Other activities that might include one-on-one coaching sessions and work placements.

The LDP will be arranged by a Managing Contractor on behalf of AusAID.

6.2 General services

The Institution is required to provide support services to ALAS Students which are not less than the requirements of the National Standards for International Students as defined in the Institution's Contract.

An ALAS contact officer at AusAID (Canberra) is also available to provide assistance and support as required to the Students and the Institutions. The ALAS Contact Officer can be contacted at ala@ausaid.gov.au.

The following entitlements and support services are also applicable to Students on an ALAS.

6.2.1 Arrival in Australia

Students must notify their Institution and AusAID Canberra (at ala@ausaid.gov.au) of their travel details, preferably no later than 15 December for Semester One start and 15 May for Semester Two start. 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

Students should try to arrive in Australia on a weekday as many services, such as Banks, are closed on a Saturday or Sunday.

6.2.2 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 the Student notifies otherwise in writing. The Institution may also offer to assist in arranging accommodation, at no cost to AusAID, where family members accompany the Student.

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 also be provided to the Student at this time.

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

6.2.3 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.

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.

6.2.4 Establishment allowance

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

Students are advised to bring additional funds (in Australian dollars) to ensure they have enough money to cover any costs that may be incurred on arrival before their Establishment Allowance is paid. Money can be exchanged at airports on arrival in Australia.

The Institution must pay the full Establishment Allowance immediately or by the next banking day into the bank account that the Student nominates upon arrival in Australia. If there are delays with a Student opening a bank account, Institutions should manage the situation as they see appropriate. AusAID will reimburse the payment of the Establishment Allowance to the Institution in accordance with the terms of the Contract.

AusAID will review the Establishment Allowance as required.

No re-Establishment Allowance is paid if a Student transfers between Institutions.

6.2.5 Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE)

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

CLE (formerly known as a 'stipend') is paid to Students as a contribution to assist in meeting every day living costs such as accommodation, food, entertainment, etc. AusAID reviews the CLE annually.

CLE is paid fortnightly in arrears. The first payment however, should be paid into a bank account that the Student has nominated, within five days after the Student has arrived in Australia. The Institution will assist Students on arrival to open a bank account. Following the initial payment, CLE should be made in accordance with the Institution's fortnightly payment periods.

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

CLE payments continue:

- a. during public holidays and semester breaks;

- b. during periods of fieldwork under the ALA scholarship;
- c. during reunion visits to the Student's home country;
- d. for up to six weeks if a student is hospitalized or detained..

CLE payments will not be paid :

- a. during periods of ALAS 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 exempt from income tax 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. Students wishing to work should contact DIAC for information. AusAID strongly counsels Students not to work during term times.

6.2.6 Study Enrichment Allowance

The Study Enrichment Allowance provides financial assistance to enhance students' formal studies. All ALAS students are eligible to receive these funds without restriction. Eligible activities include:

- a. fieldwork included as part of the formal study program;
- b. conferences relevant to their studies or for professional development;
- c. supplementary academic support (such as individual or group tutorials or assistance with thesis editing); and
- d. travel home for a short-term visit.

Funding is limited to A\$2000 per annum per student. These allowances will be administered by, and are at the discretion of, the Institution. Unspent funds may also be accrued across years.

6.2.7 Overseas Student Health Cover

AusAID (Canberra) provides funding for Students to take out basic medical insurance for the duration of their ALA scholarship. This insurance is known as 'Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)' and is arranged by the Institution on behalf of the student.

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 attending the PDB at the Post and/or during the IAP should be advised that OSHC does not cover pre-existing medical conditions and they are responsible for all costs that OSHC does not cover. AusAID will not provide funding to meet gap payments.

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.

Students are responsible for organising and paying OSHC for all family members while they are in Australia. All family members on an AusAID Dependant Visa must be covered by OSHC at all times during their stay in Australia.

AusAID offers a mobilisation allowance to contribute to the costs of medical examinations for the issue of the AusAID Student Visa. No additional allowance is available. Students must cover the costs of any subsequent medical examinations, whether they are required for re-entry into Australia following an ALAS suspension, an extension of the AusAID Student Visa or renewing of a Student's passport.

Institutions must:

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

6.3 Critical incidents

Critical incidents 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, 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).

AusAID does not provide any financial assistance if a member of the Student's family is involved in a critical incident. Students are responsible for all arrangements where a member or members of a student's family are involved in a critical incident.

6.3.1 Serious illness of a Student

If a Student is hospitalised the Institution will ensure the treating doctor is aware of the limitations of the 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 designated ALA scholarship duration.

If a Student has completed their ALAS 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 consult DIAC to make arrangements to transfer the Student to another visa class. The Student must meet all costs associated with the visa change.

6.3.2 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 (Canberra) 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 AusAID (Canberra) is advised of travel details;
- d. informing AusAID (Canberra) 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.

AusAID (Canberra)

- 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. ensuring the Post is advised of travel details;
- d. informing the Post if customs and immigration clearance is required;
- e. reimbursement of approved costs in accordance with the Contract.

6.3.3 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 the Student was 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 the Student is unaccompanied, AusAID (Canberra) 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 AusAID requires to deal with the situation in a prompt and considerate manner.

AusAID (Canberra)

- a. liaising with the relevant Post, Partner Government and next of kin and write a letter of condolence to the next of kin;
- b. if the Student is unaccompanied, ascertaining 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;
- c. passing on any information obtained or in its possession which the Institution requires 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.

6.3.4 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.

6.3.5 Serious legal issues

Students must comply with all laws of Australia or risk termination of their ALAS 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.

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

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

7 Academic progress and requirements

7.1 Introductory Academic Program

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

The IAP is intended to assist Students to prepare for study in Australia, enhance their ability to meet the demands of study and maximise the likelihood they will complete their course by the ALA scholarship 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. In exceptional circumstances ASG will consider waiving the IAP requirement. Scholars should provide ASG with a letter of support from their Institution stating that the scholar does not need to attend IAP. The letter should include the reasons for such a decision by the Institution.

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.

7.2 Satisfactory academic progress

Institutions must maintain an up-to-date record of Student progress in SIMON. AusAID (Canberra) can access information on Student progress in SIMON.

Institutions must monitor Students to ensure that they are on schedule to complete their course by the ALAS completion date. Such monitoring should include ensuring that they attend the IAP, are studying full time in the course for which the ALAS 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 ALAS 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 ALAS variation. Approval should be sought from AusAID Canberra prior to the Student enrolling in the school. 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.

7.3 Progression requirements for first year Students

Students must make satisfactory progress and pass at least 80% of their first year units. Failure to do so may result in the ALAS 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 ALAS. 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 ALAS 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 7.2, 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 ALAS.

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

A request for an extension in the length of the ALAS in the first year will not be approved.

7.4 Supplementary academic support

See Study Enrichment Allowance at Section 6.2.6.

7.5 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.

7.6 Fieldwork

The maximum period approved for fieldwork is eight (8) months for Masters Students and 12 months for Doctoral Students. Fieldwork must not result in the need for an extension to the ALA scholarship.

Only one period of fieldwork will be funded during the course of an ALA scholarship.

See also Study Enrichment Allowance at Section 6.2.6.

7.7 Variation policy

ALAS are awarded to Students to obtain specified qualifications. AusAID determines the length of the ALA scholarship according to the length of the study program cited in the Institution's placement offer, and the Student agrees to the length of the scholarship through the acceptance process. Therefore it is expected that extensions and other ALAS 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 the course of study.

Variation requests of an ALAS may take an extended period of time to process. Variations frequently require AusAID to commit new funds and may in some cases require negotiation with other parties. In deciding if a variation to a Student's program is necessary the Institution should assess the options available to produce the most effective proposal. Only AusAID (Canberra) can approve ALAS variations.

AusAID (Canberra) and the Institutions manage and process all ALAS variations in SIMON. Where a variation occurs in a Student's ALAS, any course fees will be refunded in accordance with the Institution's fees refund policy.

ALA scholarship variations can take a number of different forms: withdrawals, course detail changes, extensions, suspensions, transfers (intra and inter Institution transfers), reductions, and terminations. Each variation type is dealt with separately below.

7.7.1 Deferrals

Deferrals are not permitted.

7.7.2 Withdrawals

A Student may withdraw from the ALAS before or after their arrival in Australia.

If a Student withdraws before arrival and has already received the mobilisation allowance, this amount must be returned in full immediately.

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.

7.7.3 ALAS course detail changes

The Institution can enter a Course Detail Change Variation in SIMON without consultation with AusAID (Canberra) if a minor date change needs to be made to a Student's record due to:

- a. a minor change in the Student's travel plans (i.e. the Student may arrive a day earlier than originally anticipated);
- b. incorrect data entry.

7.7.4 Extensions

An extension is defined as “any increase to the length and/or cost of an ALAS”. AusAID will approve only one extension of up to a maximum of six months. AusAID (Canberra) will not approve an extension in the length of the ALAS during the first year, and the Institution will need to make a convincing case for any extension in later years

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.

In situations where a Student is not likely to finish their study 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 and/or Cross-Institutional enrolment;
- c. course downgrade (will only be considered for ALAS where there is a need to downgrade from a PhD to a Masters);
- d. overloading in subsequent semesters;
- e. completing studies from home, particularly for research Students. In such cases the Student would not receive any further funding from AusAID;
- f. termination of the ALAS if repeated failures have occurred.

Extensions should only be recommended where:

- a. all other avenues to achieve the qualification on time have been exhausted and the Institution deems an extension to be the only acceptable strategy;
- b. the Student is expected to achieve the qualification as a consequence of the extension;
- c. if a Student failed a subject(s), and the Institution has implemented a strategy to assist the Student to complete the ALAS on time and address the reasons for the failure.

Where an ALAS 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 ALAS 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 ALAS.

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

- a. adequately monitor the Student's progress;
- b. identify that a Student was at risk and put early measures in place; or
- c. provide appropriate academic supervision and support to the Student to enable them to complete the ALAS on time.

7.7.5 Suspensions

Suspensions of up to a maximum of twelve months, for health or family reasons only, may be approved under ALAS.

In considering a suspension the Institution should take into account the length of time of the ALAS remaining and the likely effects of the suspension (especially the break from study) on satisfactory completion of the course.

All requests for suspensions should be lodged in SIMON and are to include the revised ALAS completion date and any additional tuition fee. The Institution should lodge the

request as soon as possible to ensure fee penalties are minimized. Where a Student will have to repeat subjects for which fees have already been incurred, the request will be handled as a suspension with an extension. Thus, no further requests for an extension will be permitted.

The Student is to return, at their own cost, to their home country (with their family if accompanied) for the period of the suspension. There will be no CLE or other fees payable for the period of suspension. The Student should keep in contact with the Institution while on suspension.

The Student must contact the Institution prior to returning from suspension at least two months before the date the Student intends recommencing their course in Australia. The Student must, at his/her own expense, ensure that his/her visa and passport is valid prior to returning to Australia.

If a suspension on medical grounds is requested, the Student may be required to undergo a medical examination prior to returning to study in Australia to ascertain if the Student is 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.

7.7.6 Transfers

Transfers of course or Institution should be considered as a last resort. Transfers should not be considered merely to accommodate a Student's request. Any request for a transfer must be compatible with the original ALAS application.

Transfers involve a Student transferring from:

- a. one course to another course at the same level within the same Institution (Intra-Transfer); or
- b. one course to another course at the same level but to another Institution (Inter-Transfer); or
- c. a PhD to a Masters course (downgrade) either within the same Institution or to another Institution. If in the Institution's view the Student will not be able to complete the nominated ALAS course successfully, a course downgrade should be discussed with the AusAID (Canberra) to ensure that the Masters course is consistent with the original offer. This may also involve a reduction to the ALAS duration.

Acceptable reasons for a transfer are:

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

Transfers can only be approved if:

- a. the transfer Institution is an Institution contracted with AusAID;
- b. AusAID (Canberra) considers that the new course aligns with the intention of the original offer;
- c. it will not result in an extension of time to the ALAS; and
- d. the Student is likely to complete the ALAS successfully.

Where there has been a reduction in the ALAS duration due to a transfer, the Institution must inform DIAC of the revised ALAS completion date.

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

7.7.7 Reductions

The Institution may lodge an ALAS Reduction Variation in SIMON if a Student finishes their ALAS early as a result of completing their study ahead of time.

The Institution is to ensure the Student departs Australia within 14 days of the revised ALAS completion date. The Student is not permitted to remain in Australia until their AusAID Student Visa expires. The Institution must inform DIAC of the revised ALAS completion date for the Student.

7.7.8 Terminations

In some circumstances an ALAS must be terminated.

AusAID (Canberra) is responsible for the termination of an ALAS, usually based upon the recommendation from the Institution. AusAID supports Institutions using their knowledge and skills in making early recommendations to terminate Students, when a Student is clearly unable to complete the ALA scholarship within the allocated timeframe. AusAID reserves the right to terminate an ALAS 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 ALAS will be terminated if a Student:

- a. continues to fail, fails to attend compulsory courses, and where remedial strategies have not been successful; or
- b. has infringed or failed to meet the conditions of the ALAS; 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. is unable to continue a program due to serious illness or incapacity for medical or psychiatric reasons (for temporary conditions, the ALAS should be suspended); or
- e. conducts him or herself in a manner which is considered to have transgressed acceptable community standards; or
- f. decides not to continue the ALAS; or
- g. indicates he/she intends to remain in Australia or does not intend returning to the home country, has applied for or been granted a non-AusAID visa or permanent residency; or
- h. is enrolled in a research program that has been delayed, and all options to address the delay are not practical or possible; or
- i. is found guilty of crime/s in Australia.

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

7.7.8.1 Termination process

The ALA termination process is outlined in the following steps:

- a. 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.
- b. 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.

- c. The Student provides a letter of appeal direct to The Director, Australian Scholarships' Group, AusAID Canberra, GPO. Box 887 Canberra City 2601.
- d. 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.
- e. The formal letter of termination will advise the Student that the ALAS 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.
- f. The formal letter of termination will also include an acknowledgement form, which the Student will be asked to sign as an acknowledgement of the decision to terminate the scholarship. A copy of the form is to be forwarded to AusAID (Canberra) by the Student. AusAID will forward a copy of this acknowledgement form to the Institution and Overseas Post.
- g. Where AusAID does not support the request for termination, AusAID will advise the Student of this appeal outcome, copied to the Institution and the Overseas Post. The Student will continue with their course of study at the Institution. Where appropriate, AusAID and the Institution will negotiate and agree upon a course of action if a variation to the ALAS is required.

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 and be in general terms (for example, academic failure, non-attendance, breach of ALAS Acceptance of Award Offer etc.).

7.8 Miscellaneous

7.8.1 Off-scholarship study

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

7.8.2 Post-ALAS study opportunities in Australia

Exceptional Students may be permitted to remain in Australia after completion of their ALAS where they are offered an externally funded Doctoral Scholarship or Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Australia. Such requests must be approved by AusAID (Canberra). The policy and guidelines for the procedures and criteria applying to the policy and the approval process are at Appendix B.

7.8.3 Allison Sudradjat Awardees

Allison Sudradjat awardees are permitted to remain in Australia after completion of their ALAS if they are undertaking a work placement or research fellowship as part of the Allison Sudradjat Award. Such requests must be approved by AusAID (Canberra). The maximum period of the post-award stay is six months after completion of their ALAS.

8 Completion of studies

8.1 Final departure date

6.1 Completion of Studies

The completion of studies is defined as follows:

- a. 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. Research Students: the date of submission of their thesis/research work.

Students will continue to receive CLE for only five days from the completion of studies.

6.2 Final departure date

Students are required to return to their home country within 14 days of the completion of studies.

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

DlaC will issue the visa with an end date of one month after the course end date recorded in SIMON. Regardless of this, Students must leave Australia within 14 days of the completion of studies.

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 AusAID scholarship. The spouse whose scholarship 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 DlaC. 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 studies to remain with their family.

8.2 Return home briefing and ALA scholarship completion ceremony

Institutions may, but are not contractually obligated to, offer those Students returning home a Return Home Briefing, and an ALAS Completion Ceremony (in lieu of a formal graduation ceremony).

Where a going-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; and

- c. encourage the 'alumni association' concept and maintain an “after-care” program.

An ALAS Completion Ceremony (e.g. graduation, presentation ceremony or reception) marks the end of the Students' ALAS. 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.

8.3 Completion of the ALAS

Within seven calendar days of the Student's departure, the Institution must update in SIMON:

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

The Student record in SIMON must be up-to-date and accurate before AusAID will pay a correctly rendered invoice for the reimbursable item, Return Home Travel. AusAID may withhold payment of this reimbursable item if the Student record is not up-to-date and accurate.

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

8.4 Maintaining contact with Students upon their return home

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

APPENDIX A

Summary of ALA Student responsibilities

Application Process

The Student is responsible for submitting an application, including direct application to an Institution for the unconditional offer of enrolment. (See application information at www.ausaid.gov.au/scholar)

Travel and Entry Requirements

The student is responsible for:

- a. Obtaining an AusAID Student visa Subclass 576 from the appropriate Australian immigration office, including medical checks; (Upon the issue of a valid visa, AusAID will provide a financial contribution towards the pre-departure costs and the purchase of an airline ticket to Australia.);
- b. Arranging travel to Australia and advising Institutions and AusAID (Canberra) at ala@ausaid.gov.au of arrival date, unless the Australian Embassy or High Commission in their country is responsible for making these arrangements;
- c. Arranging attendance at any pre-departure function or briefing at Post;
- d. Insurance costs (travel & baggage, home contents);
- e. Personal effects transport costs (i.e. removal costs either to and from Australia or within Australia);
- f. Excess baggage;
- g. Travel costs for dependants of Students, both to and from Australia and within Australia;
- h. Arranging visas and meeting all requirements and costs for family entry to Australia including payment of compulsory OSHC health insurance for family members;
- i. Travel costs related to any suspension; and
- j. Reunion airfare travel arrangements, if eligible.

Prior to Departure to Australia

Successful ALAS applicants must

- a. sign an Acceptance of Award Offer between themselves and the Commonwealth of Australia before departing to Australia, agreeing to comply with the ALAS terms and conditions and relevant sections of the ALAS Handbook;
- b. provide bank account details at a bank in their country of residence to facilitate the electronic funds transfer (EFT) of the mobilisation allowance; and
- c. provide details of next of kin or an emergency contact in their country of citizenship.

In Australia

It is mandatory that ALAS holders:

- a. satisfy all visa requirements determined by the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) to hold an AusAID Student Visa

- (subclass 576) and abide by the conditions of that visa. Failure to do so may incur a debt to the Commonwealth of Australia;
- b. read the ALAS Handbook and understand its contents;
 - c. take up the ALAS in the academic year for which it is offered, preferably in the first semester; study full time and achieve satisfactory academic progress in the program for which the scholarship was offered;
 - d. complete the ALAS award within the time specified ;
 - e. only undertake the approved program for which the ALAS is offered and abide by the rules of the Institution;
 - f. participate in the LDP;
 - g. return to their country of citizenship or the region for two years at the completion of their study/research program in Australia;
 - h. not hold another Australian Government scholarship;
 - i. reside in Australia for the duration of the ALAS (apart from reunion visits and fieldwork);
 - j. advise AusAID immediately, via the Student Contact Officer at the Institution, should they marry a person who is an Australian citizen, or has permanent residence status in Australia, a New Zealand citizen or has New Zealand citizenship;
 - k. liaise with the Student Contact Officer at the Institution regarding any changes to the approved program and acknowledge that approval is required from the Institution and AusAID (Canberra) before any changes are made;
 - l. agree to AusAID collecting information and to passing that information on to other relevant parties concerning the Student or dependants, if necessary;
 - m. participate in all activities associated with the course of study, including all lectures and tutorials, submit all work required for the course e.g. assignments, essays and sit for examinations;
 - n. be aware that the ALAS may be terminated at any time for a 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 ALA scholarship, breaches to the conditions of the AusAID Student Visa or attempts to change visa status, or for failure to make satisfactory academic progress;
 - o. provide AusAID and the Institutions with relevant personal information to facilitate tracer studies, student surveys and alumni activities, and other activities as required.

ALAS Students are responsible for their own day-to-day costs and arrangements, including but not limited to:

- a. opening a bank account on arrival in Australia, with assistance of the Institution, for payment of Contribution to Living Expenses (CLE);
- b. initial and long term accommodation costs;
- c. finding long term housing;
- d. daily travel to the place of study;
- e. all matters and costs associated with any family members who visit or accompany the ALAS Student to Australia including extending Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) to family members;
- f. ongoing costs of living and study e.g. food, furniture, textbooks, clothing;
- g. obtaining a tax file number.

ALAS Students are also responsible for:

- a. costs for medical services that the OSHC does not cover;
- b. all costs associated with critical incidents involving family members;
- c. costs of any legal services;
- d. any visa extensions and related-costs for both the Student and family. Costs associated with family visa extensions are the responsibility of the Student.

APPENDIX B

Policy on post-ALAS externally funded Doctoral and Post-Doctoral Fellowship Study

Introduction

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

Objectives

This policy, while reaffirming the basic premise that ALAS recipients should return to their home country upon completion of the program, also recognises that exceptional students 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 students capable of receiving doctoral or post-doctoral awards in Australia are likely to receive scholarship awards from third countries. If former ALAS 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 ALA students who qualify for doctoral or post-doctoral studies and who are deemed to have exceptional ability. Those ALAS students 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 and the support from their sponsor.

Criteria

In determining whether to seek approval to allow a student 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 student's home government, Asian Development Bank, World Bank, 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 ALAS scholarship based on academic ability of the applicant and relevance to the partner country's 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).

The applicant must arrange with 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

Students 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 approve applications from students who remain in Australia for this purpose or take up the offer of the scholarship/fellowship prior to a decision from AusAID.

Former ALAS 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 ALAS 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 student 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 student 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 DIAC, in order to enable the relevant visa to be issued.

DEED OF AMENDMENT

BETWEEN

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

AND

<insert name>

IN RELATION TO

**AUSTRALIAN DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP/
AUSTRALIAN LEADERSHIP AWARD SCHOLARSHIP**

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 UPGRADES

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/ALAS 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

.....