



ABN: 26 924 779 836

# **Diagnostic Imaging - Enhancing the Rural and Remote Workforce Scheme**

**A program funded by the  
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing**

## **GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION**

**Rural & Remote Postgraduate Scholarship in  
Diagnostic Imaging**

# **Rural & Remote Postgraduate Scholarship in Diagnostic Imaging**

## **Guidelines for Application**

### **1. Introduction of Scholarship**

- a. The Rural and Remote Postgraduate Scholarship in Diagnostic Imaging is designed to encourage practitioners working in the rural and remote environment to undertake postgraduate studies to advance their knowledge.
- b. This scholarship aims to:
  - Increase the diagnostic imaging health workforce in rural, regional and remote Australia by facilitating the entry of people interested in pursuing a career in allied health, diagnostic imaging professions.
  - Encourage the pursuit of a health career in both geographic areas and professions where there are shortages.
  - Support the existing diagnostic imaging workforce.
- c. The Australian Institute of Radiography (AIR) will award ten full scholarships annually for two-year postgraduate study programs in specialist diagnostic Imaging. Scholarship recipients will receive up to a maximum of \$15,000 per year (for up to two years, totalling \$30,000) during their post graduate professional studies. Part-time students will receive up to \$7,500 per year. These will be based on eligibility and assessment criteria.
- d. A minimum of two scholarships will be awarded to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people per year wherever possible.
- e. The AIR will determine if additional scholarships can be awarded each year.
- f. Scholarships will be awarded as a contribution toward the cost of accessing postgraduate education (not for entry-level qualifications) in diagnostic radiography/medical imaging.
- g. Courses must be provided by accredited providers within Australia and scholarships will not be offered for overseas study courses.

### **2. Eligibility**

- a. Applicants must be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia.
- b. They must hold a degree in diagnostic radiography / medical imaging or another relevant qualification.
- c. Applicants must meet the eligibility criteria for the postgraduate program in which they intend to enrol.
- d. Applicants will be either in full-time or part-time employment in the field of diagnostic radiography / medical imaging or eligible for employment in that field.
- e. The scholarship is available to either members or non-members of the AIR.
- f. If there are more applicants for scholarships than there are places available, not all applicants who meet the eligibility and selection criteria will be offered a scholarship.
- g. Applicants who are already in receipt of another scholarship or bursary funded by the Department of Health and Ageing will be ineligible for this scholarship.

### 3. Selection Criteria

- a. Applications will be assessed and ranked using the following criteria:
  - Eligibility of the applicant(s) will be assessed as above.
  - Rurality will be used as a ranking tool where scholarship places are oversubscribed. Preference will be given to those working, living and/or undertaking study in a rural or remote area.
  - Funding under the Scheme will concentrate on any area of Australia classified as RA2 (Inner Regional Australia), RA3 (Outer Regional Australia), RA4 (Remote Australia) and RA5 (Very Remote Australia). Further information about the Australian Standard Geographical Classification Remote Structure (RA) is available at:  
<http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DirClassManualsbyTopic/9A784FB979765947CA25738C0012C5BA?OpenDocument>  
A look-up tool for RA categories is available at:  
[http://www.healthworkforce.com.au/main\\_rrma.asp](http://www.healthworkforce.com.au/main_rrma.asp)
  - Scholarship recipients must be enrolled in a course that is approved by the AIR within Australia. Scholarships will not be offered for overseas courses. The course selected must provide the student with greater skills and knowledge in a field of direct relevance to their chosen profession.
  - Applicants must also address the selection criteria listed in the application form.
- b. Applications are then ranked according to the selection criteria to determine a scholarship recipient shortlist and information provided by applicants is verified.
- c. Having been assessed as meeting all eligibility and selection requirements, an order of merit will be formulated and used to determine the granting of scholarship places. The order of merit will be based on identified geographical and professional priority areas for applicants who have met all the eligibility and selection criteria.

### 4. Application Process

- a. Those interested must apply in writing to the AIR.
- b. All applications are required to include: a current resume; the names of three professional referees; a letter of support from their employer (where applicable); and a short justification or rationale as to why they should receive a scholarship.
- c. Applicants will be required to provide a written statement addressing all of the following selection criteria as per the application form. These criteria may change from time to time as a result of priorities and areas of need:
  - Commitment to the chosen professional field (must be the same as that for which scholarship support is sought);
  - Personal commitment to, and understanding of, the need to undertake study in their chosen field of diagnostic radiography / medical imaging specialisation;
  - Commitment to clinical practice in the chosen professional field;
  - Level of interest in pursuing a career in regional, rural or remote communities;
  - How the scholarship will benefit the applicant in pursuing a career in the chosen professional field;

- How their life experiences and/or professional career to date demonstrates their commitment to pursuing a career as a health professional.
  - The relationship between the proposed course of study and the proposed area of practice;
  - How the proposed course of study will be of benefit to the participant and the local community;
  - Important criteria, such as rurality or being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, may be emphasised to meet workforce need
- d. First round applications will be considered from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011. Applicants are encouraged to submit as soon as possible for entry into 2012 programs.
- e. Applicants who are currently studying a specialist diagnostic radiography / medical imaging post graduate program in an accredited Australian University in 2011 may also be eligible for scholarship funds and are invited to submit an application form
- f. Applications must be addressed to:

Professional Standards Manager  
Australian Institute of Radiography  
PO Box 16234  
Collins Street West, Vic., 8007

## 5. Additional Scholarship Information & Requirements

### a. Ongoing Awarding of Scholarship Places

Subject to the conditions below, a scholarship place will generally be continued for the normal duration of the student's course of study and not extended beyond that time. For example, where a tertiary education institution determines that a course of study may be completed on a full-time basis over two years, a scholarship place would normally be available for two years full-time equivalent. Where students are enrolled part-time, the duration of the scholarship place will be extended subject to availability of funds under the Scheme.

### b. In order to remain eligible for the scholarship, the recipient must:

- continue to be an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident;
- be enrolled in an eligible diagnostic imaging course that results in an Australian nationally recognised and/or accredited qualification;
- provide the AIR with a report of satisfactory academic achievement prior to commencing the next semester of study; and

### c. Deferral of Scholarship Place

A scholarship recipient may request a deferral of their scholarship. Deferrals may be granted to assist students in balancing their study, family and work needs. Students are not required to justify their need to defer or give detailed reasons.

The AIR may grant a request for a deferral subject to:

- the scholarship recipient having commenced their course of study and receiving scholarship payments;
- a maximum of 12 months (or two academic semesters) deferral being permitted during the course of study;

- deferrals being for whole periods of only one or two semesters (i.e. not for part-semesters, weeks or months); and
- the deferral being supported by documentation from the university confirming that study has been deferred.

d. **Withdrawal**

Scholarship recipients who withdraw from their study program will relinquish their scholarship entitlement, as follows:

- If a student withdraws prior to the university/educational institution census date, they must repay any scholarship funds paid prior to the date of withdrawal for that semester.
- If a student withdraws after the university/educational institution census date, there is no requirement to return any scholarship funds paid prior to the date of withdrawal.
- A student who has previously withdrawn is eligible to apply for a new scholarship place in future years.

e. **Failure in Academic Study**

If a scholarship recipient fails to meet the academic requirements for one or more subjects but is permitted by the tertiary education institution to re-sit those courses, payments will be suspended until the scholarship recipient provides evidence of having met all academic requirements.

Where a tertiary education institution excludes a scholarship recipient from further study, the scholarship recipient must inform the AIR immediately. In this circumstance, the scholarship will be revoked. There is no requirement to return any scholarship funds that the scholar has received prior to the date of exclusion from the tertiary education institution.

f. **Change in Course of Study**

If a scholarship recipient wishes to change their course of study from that identified in their application form, or wishes to change to another educational institution, the AIR must seek the Department's approval.

A scholarship place must be surrendered if a recipient discontinues a course of study and enrolls in a different course without prior approval to continue their scholarship.

g. **Change in Mode of Study**

Students may change from full-time to part-time (or vice versa) during their course of study. However, the total funding for the course will remain the same. That is, if the scholarship is specified as up to \$15,000 per full-time year equivalent up to a total of \$30,000, that amount will not change regardless of the length of study, subject to availability of funds under the Scheme.

h. **Repayment of Funds**

If the scholarship recipient ceases to fulfil the terms of their scholarship and fails to inform the AIR, they will be required to repay funds received from the time they ceased to be eligible. Ceasing to fulfil the terms of the scholarship may include but is not limited to:

- withdrawal from study;
- change in course of study;
- ceasing to be an Australian citizen; or

- acceptance of another scholarship or bursary funded by the Department of Health and Ageing.
- i. **Payment Reconciliation**

Students will not be required to provide documentary evidence of how they utilised scholarship funds. They will, however, be required to provide evidence of continued enrolment and academic progression to ensure ongoing payment of the scholarship.
  - j. **Scholarship Payments**

Scholarship recipients enrolled in full or part-time tertiary study will receive their scholarship payments in regular instalments as determined by AIR.

    - Scholarship recipients will usually receive their scholarship payments at the commencement of the scholarship, and then every two months thereafter.
  - k. **Scholarship Payments and Tax/Centrelink Benefits**

Scholarship applicants and recipients are encouraged to seek advice from the Australian Taxation Office and/or Centrelink about any impact the granting of a scholarship may have on their financial situation. Information is available from the Australian Taxation Office at [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au) and from Centrelink at [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au).
  - l. **Appeals**

There will not be an appeals process for the selection of scholarship recipients or the amount of funding granted.