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| Regional Disability Worker Scholarships |
| Program guidelines – Round 2 |
| **OFFICIAL** |

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# Background

The Victorian Government is supporting more disability workers to deliver services in regional and rural Victoria. It is doing this by providing financial support to complete a course in disability.

The Regional Disability Worker Scholarships (RDW Scholarships) support regional and rural Victorians with the financial cost of their studies. These costs include the unpaid placement in their disability course. This will allow students to:

* gain the experience they need to work in the disability sector
* complete their studies
* start fulfilling careers in regional and rural disability services.

The program delivers the Government’s commitment to increase the number of disability workers in regional and rural Victoria.

The program guidelines explain how the RDW Scholarships program works including:

* the eligibility criteria
* how scholarships are allocated
* how to apply
* the payment process.

These guidelines also include terms and conditions and a privacy statement. Applicants should read this information in full before applying for a scholarship.

Appendix 1 includes definitions of key terms and eligibility criteria.

# How the program works

The Victorian Government funds the RDW Scholarships. The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) is accountable for the program and its deliverables and outcomes. DFFH is also responsible for allocating scholarships and undertaking reporting and evaluation functions.

The Department of Government Services (DGS) manages the administration of the program, including applications, assessments and payments.

RDW Scholarships in the sum of $3,500 are available to:

* domestic students living in regional and rural Victoria or a defined border community (as outlined in Appendices 3 and 4).
* students who are currently undertaking or have recently completed the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability or dual Ageing and Disability Specialisation) (CHC33021), or Certificate IV in Disability Support (CHC43121) with an approved Victorian training provider (as outlined in Appendix 2).[[1]](#footnote-2)

Being eligible does not guarantee receiving a scholarship as scholarships are limited. The program prioritises the award of scholarships based on demographic criteria and regional workforce needs.

The program uses student data held by approved Victorian training providers to assess students’ eligibility. Scholarships are then awarded in line with these program guidelines.

Training providers collect this data, known as the Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection, and must share this with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) through the Skills Victoria Training System (SVTS).

Using this data, the program can access:

* up-to-date student information; and
* course enrolments and completions.

**It is important that scholarship applicants ensure that the personal and enrolment information provided to their training provider is correct and up to date as incomplete or incorrect information may affect application outcomes. This includes their residential address, status as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander student or student with disability.**

## Eligibility

To be eligible for an RDW Scholarship you must meet all the following criteria:

1. You must be a domestic student. For the purposes of the scholarship, this is defined as either of the following:
	* + an Australian citizen
		+ a New Zealand citizen (or dual citizenship holders of either Australia or New Zealand)
		+ an Australian permanent resident
		+ an Australian permanent humanitarian visa holder.
2. You must meet the course and unit requirements in **either Option A** or **Option B** at the time your application is assessed:

**Option A: Currently studying**

* + - You are enrolled and actively engaged[[2]](#footnote-3) in **one of** the following courses, and you have commenced or successfully completed the following units:
			* Certificate IV in Disability Support (CHC43121)

You must have commenced or have successfully completed the CHCDIS018 ‘Facilitate ongoing skills development using a person-centred approach’ and/or HLTWHS003 ‘Maintain work health and safety’ units.

* + - * Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability or dual Ageing and Disability specialisation) (CHC33021)

You must be undertaking the disability specialisation in the Certificate III in Individual Support, having commenced or successfully completed at least 1 of the 3 Group B disability electives:

* + CHCDIS011: Contribute to ongoing skills development using strengths-based approach
	+ CHCDIS012: Support community participation and social inclusion
	+ CHCDIS020: Work effectively in disability support

**and**

* + - You must have commenced or have successfully completed at least 9 units within the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability and dual Ageing and Disability specialisation).

**Option B: Recently completed course**

* + - You must have successful completed **one of** the following courses on or after 1 November 2024:
			* Certificate IV in Disability Support (CHC43121)
			* Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability or dual Ageing and Disability specialisation) (CHC33021).
1. Your current or recently completed course must be or have been delivered by an approved TAFE or Skills First Victorian training provider (as outlined in Appendix 2).
2. You must be a regional or rural Victorian resident (as outlined in Appendix 3) or resident of a defined border community (as outlined in Appendix 4).

### Ineligible applicants

* Students who are studying the Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability or dual Ageing and Disability specialisation) (CHC33021) as a **traineeship** are ineligible. The program’s aim is to support students doing unpaid placement hours.
* Students who completed their course prior to 1 November 2024 or at a provider that is not included in the approved TAFE or Skills First Victorian training provider (as outlined in Appendix 2).
* Students who are, at the time of assessment of their application, currently deferred or taking a leave of absence from their course of study are ineligible.

## Scholarship allocation model

Eligible applicants will be prioritised for RDW Scholarships based on the criteria below. DFFH may adjust the allocation model to meet changing priorities over the life of the program.

### Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students and students with disability

Applicants who have identified to their training provider as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander will be prioritised.

Applicants who have identified to their training provider as having a disability will also be prioritised.

### Place-based prioritisation

Students living in regional and rural areas with higher workforce needs will be prioritised. DFFH will determine this based on state and Commonwealth workforce data (at its discretion).

### Program of study

Students studying the Certificate IV in Disability Support (CHC43121) will be prioritised.

## Round dates

### Round 2

Round 2 is for students who are currently enrolled and who plan to complete an eligible disability course by 30 June 2026. It is also open to students who have completed an eligible disability course on or after 1 November 2024.

| Stage | Dates |
| --- | --- |
| Applications open  | 21 July 2025 |
| Applications close | 4 pm on 15 September 2025 |
| Applications assessment | October 2025 |
| Notification of application outcomes  | December 2025  |
| Payment timeframe (estimated) | December 2025 |

### Future round

Round 3 will open in 2026. Details of eligibility criteria, application, notification and payment periods will be published on the [RDW Scholarships website](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/regional-disability-worker-scholarships)[[3]](#footnote-4) closer to this round opening.

If you are, or have been previously, unsuccessful in your application, you may apply in a future round if you meet the eligibility criteria at that time. Each new application will be assessed based on its own merit during the relevant application round.

## Application and assessment

### How to apply

You must apply online at the [RDW Scholarship website](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/regional-disability-worker-scholarships)3, where applicants will be directed to the Victorian Government Grants Portal. Applications must be submitted by 4pm on 15 September 2025.

**Late applications will not be accepted.**

You must provide **all** the following information and documentation in support of your application:

* the name of your training provider and course
* your Unique Student Identifier (USI) number
* your Victorian or defined border community residential address
* all other information requested in the application form.

The eligible student must be the person who applies for the RDW Scholarship. They must provide information from **one** of the following proof of identity documents on the application form:

* Australian or New Zealand passport
* Medicare card
* Victorian driver’s licence or learner’s permit
* foreign passport for those issued with an Australian permanent resident or humanitarian visa.

If proof of identity cannot be confirmed, you will receive a follow-up email with a request to provide additional information to confirm your identity.

### How applications will be assessed

RDW Scholarships are limited and eligible applicants are not guaranteed a scholarship.

Applications will be assessed using the information provided at the time of your application. The data provided by registered training providers to DJSIR via the SVTS will be used to verify your eligibility. As part of this assessment process, DFFH may contact you to seek further information to verify your eligibility after applications close.

Students must ensure that the personal and enrolment information they have provided to their training provider is accurate and up to date **before** applying for an RDW Scholarship.

Scholarship priority will be determined based on the allocation model outlined above.

As part of this process, any information you provide may be shared with and verified by:

* eligible training providers
* Victorian Government departments (including DFFH, DGS and DJSIR)
* the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department
* the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.

All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email.

### How payments will be made

Successful applicants will be asked to complete a Scholarship Acceptance Agreement to be paid their scholarship. As part of this claim form, applicants will be asked to:

* provide their bank account details
* confirm their continued eligibility for the scholarship.

Successful completion of the claim form will finalise the agreement between the RDW Scholarship recipient and DFFH. You will need to provide these by the nominated due date. Otherwise, you will not receive the scholarship. There will be no exceptions under any circumstances.

After completing the form, a payment of $3,500 will be sent to your nominated bank account within 15 business days. Any changes to bank account details may delay your payment.

# Terms and conditions

* RDW Scholarship recipients must agree to the terms and conditions of the RDW Scholarship as stated in the application form, claim form and these guidelines.
* Applicants must confirm they meet the eligibility criteria at the time of application. They must continue to meet the eligibility criteria when claiming payment.
* Your application constitutes an offer to the Victorian Government. If your application is successful, the Government will issue an email confirming its acceptance of your offer. You will then make an agreement with the Government of Victoria that includes:
* the Scholarship Acceptance Agreement
* these guidelines
* your completed application.
* Applicants must complete their training course.
* If an applicant enters into the RDW Scholarship agreement and does not comply with its terms and conditions, including withdrawing from their training course, **the applicant may be required to pay back any RDW Scholarship payments made to them**.
* By submitting your completed application, you consent to DGS, DFFH and/or DJSIR sharing information provided by you within the Victorian Government and external parties for the purposes of validating enrolment and other eligibility requirements including:
* your TAFE or Skills First Victorian training provider
* the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department
* the Australian Government Department of Home Affairs.
* Applications and claims for RDW Scholarship payments may be subject to audit by the Victorian Government or its representatives for up to 3 years following the completion of the RDW Scholarship program, to determine whether the application and information provided during the term of the RDW Scholarships was accurate, complete and consistent with these program guidelines.
* If allocated funding for RDW Scholarships is exhausted before the program end date, DFFH reserves the right to end the program.
* The Victorian Government, including DFFH, is under no obligation to remake any payment made where the applicant provides incorrect bank account details.
* An applicant may be asked to provide more information to help assess their application. DGS and DFFH can refuse an application if the eligibility criteria are not met, or where the applicant does not or cannot provide sufficient information in the timeframe to assess whether eligibility criteria are met.
* DFFH may, at any time, remove your application from the assessment process or terminate a scholarship agreement if, in the department’s opinion, you may bring the department, the Minister for Disability or the Victorian Government into disrepute.
* **You are responsible** for informing the RDW Scholarships program via email of any changes to your circumstances including:
* changes to personal details such as address, mobile number, email and bank account details.
* significant changes to your enrolment, such as withdrawal or deferral from your placement or course.
* If an applicant or scholarship recipient considers that their application or claim has been incorrectly assessed or paid, they may lodge a complaint. The complaint must be received within 60 days from the date DFFH or DGS notifies the applicant or recipient of the outcome of their application. If a complaint is not received within 60 days, it will not be considered. Contact DGS at RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au.

## Fraudulent claims

By submitting your application form, you are declaring that the information provided in the application and supporting documentation is true, accurate and not misleading.

If any information in the application or payment claims is found to be false, misleading or fraudulent, you will have to repay the full amount of the RDW Scholarship.

The Victorian Government reserves the right to take further action, including referring the RDW Scholarship recipient to the relevant law enforcement agency. Providing inaccurate, untrue or misleading information may be an offence. Serious penalties may apply.

## Program surveys and evaluation

By accepting an RDW Scholarship, you are agreeing that your application information can be used for program monitoring and evaluation. You also consent to being asked to take part in other evaluation activities for up to 3 years after applying. Activities might include surveys, interviews or focus groups. All information used for monitoring and evaluation will be deidentified and handled according to the privacy statement below.

# Privacy statement

* In applying for a RDW Scholarship, you will be providing personal, sensitive and health information. DGS and DFFH will collect, share and use this information. Your information is collected for the purposes of:
* assessing eligibility
* administering claims and payments
* other functions necessary to deliver the program, including monitoring and evaluation.
* By applying for an RDW Scholarship, you consent to us sharing your information as outlined in the ‘Terms and conditions’ section above and in the application form. DGS or DFFH staff may contact you to clarify your information and/or for program review, reporting, monitoring, audit and evaluation purposes.
* DGS and DFFH will complete a range of eligibility assessments. These may include data matching to clarify the accuracy and quality of information supplied by you. The data matching may occur in relation to:
* your enrolment information
* the personal, sensitive and health information provided in your application
* your supporting evidence and any claim or payment forms.
* As part of application verification and to enable payment of an RDW Scholarship, DGS will share your personal, sensitive and health information with other Victorian agencies, such as DJSIR and DFFH. As part of the verification process, DGS will source applicable SVTS data from DJSIR to confirm your program eligibility.
* Personal, sensitive and health information (including demographic information) that is collected as part of the application process will be used to assess your eligibility. Deidentified demographic information may also be used for evaluation and reporting purposes by the Victorian Government, including the Victorian Disability Worker Commission. No identifying information is used in reporting. All reports will be presented with aggregated data.
* Other than as set out in these guidelines, your personal, sensitive and health information will not be shared with any other external parties without your consent. This is unless otherwise authorised or required by law. If your information is shared with external parties apart from those listed above, DGS and/or DFFH will use best endeavours to inform you of the nature and purpose of sharing that information before doing so.
* Prior to including any personal, sensitive or health information of a third party in your application, you must ensure the third party is aware of and consents to the contents of this privacy statement.
* Any personal, sensitive or health information that you provide about yourself, or a third party, will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred and stored in accordance with the:
* *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic)
* *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic)
* *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic)
* other applicable laws.
* If you do not provide all the information asked of you, your application may not be accepted.
* You have the right to request access to your personal, sensitive or health information that is collected at any time. If you identify information in your application that is incorrect, you may request its correction.
* For enquiries about access to, or correction of, your personal information, you can email RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au. If you have concerns about your privacy and/or how your personal, sensitive or health information has been used, please email DGS at privacy@dgs.vic.gov.au.

# Other information

We strongly recommend you get professional advice when you are considering applying for an RDW Scholarship. Find out about any impact that an RDW Scholarship may have on your tax liability, or any other benefits paid under an Australian Government scheme. These include:

* Austudy
* ABSTUDY
* aged, disability or carer allowances
* pensions.

Students who receive academic scholarships not funded by the Victorian Government may be able to apply for an RDW Scholarship. If you are receiving another scholarship, we recommend you review the terms of your existing scholarship and the impact of receiving the RDW Scholarship, if you were to be successful, before applying.

DFFH reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms at any time it deems appropriate. (This is subject to appropriate notice being given either by publication on the RDW Scholarships website or by email to applicants and recipients.)

# Contact

Please review the frequently asked questions and program guideline appendices. Queries can be emailed to the RDW Scholarships team at RDWS@grants.vic.gov.au.

# Appendix 1: Key terms and definitions

| Term | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| Active enrolment | When a student is enrolled in a unit or units in the current study period and is engaged in the learning, assessment or administrative activity associated with the enrolment, as required by their approved training provider.Students who are currently deferred or taking a leave of absence are not considered to be in active enrolment. |
| Approved (Victorian) training provider | A Victorian TAFE or other Skills First funded Victorian training provider subsidised by the Victorian Government to deliver in demand courses and skills for eligible students. Information about Skills First funded providers can be found on the [VET funding contracts website[[4]](#footnote-5).](https://www.vic.gov.au/vet-funding-contracts) Refer to Appendix 2 in these guidelines for the list of approved providers for Round 2. |
| Border community resident | A person whose primary address is in a border community (as defined in Appendix 4). The primary address must be where the person usually lives, rather than any temporary address where they live for training, work or other purposes before returning to their home. It cannot be a post office box. |
| Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability or dual Ageing and Disability specialisation)  | The current CHC33021 – Certificate III in Individual Support qualification as outlined on the [training.gov.au website](https://training.gov.au/training/details/CHC33021/qualdetails).[[5]](#footnote-6) |
| Certificate IV in Disability Support  | The current CHC43121 – Certificate IV in Disability Support qualification as outlined on the [training.vic.gov.au website](https://training.gov.au/training/details/CHC43121/qualdetails).[[6]](#footnote-7)  |
| Regional or rural Victorian resident | A person whose primary address is in a Victorian regional or rural local government area as defined in Appendices 3 and 4. The primary address must be where the person usually lives, rather than any temporary address where they live for training, work or other purposes before returning to their home. It cannot be a post office box. |
| The Skills Victoria Training System (SVTS) | The SVTS receives and validates information training providers provide to DJSIR. The information collected through the SVTS is called the Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection. |
| Unique Student Identifier (USI) | The USI uniquely identifies an individual who accesses vocational education and training anywhere in Australia over their lifetime. It is issued by the USI Agency. The USI must be reported for all nationally recognised training. For more information, visit the [USI website](https://www.usi.gov.au/) https://www.usi.gov.au/.  |
| Victorian VET Student Statistical Collection | Information collected on training activity in Victoria. This includes, but is not limited to, information on: * registered training organisations (RTOs);
* training activity;
* students’ demographics; and
* prior education details.

It also includes enrolment and qualification completion details associated with Vocational Education and Training (VET) delivery for domestic and international students, both in Victoria and offshore. |

# Appendix 2: Approved training providers for Round 2

* Academia Australia
* Advance Community College
* AdvancED Education & Training
* Aged Care Training Services
* ALACC Health College Australia
* All Health Training
* AMES Australia
* AMZ Training Organisation
* Angel Institute of Education
* Australian College of Professional Studies
* Australian Global Academy of Education
* Australian Institute of Flexible Learning
* Australian Institute of Vocational Development Pty Ltd or Integracom VIC
* Australian Vietnamese Women's Association Inc
* Balance Training Services Pty Ltd or Are-able
* Bellarine Training and Community Hub Inc.
* Bendigo Kangan Institute
* BGT Jobs and Training Ballarat
* Box Hill Institute
* BRACE Education Training and Employment Limited
* Brite Institute
* Chisholm Institute
* CIRE Services Incorporated
* Community College Gippsland Ltd
* Diamond Valley Learning Centre Inc
* Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services
* Employ-Ease Pty Ltd
* Eva Burrows College Vocational Training
* Federation University Australia
* FYI Education and Training Pty Ltd
* GenU training
* Global Business College of Australia
* Gordon Institute of TAFE
* GOTAFE
* Goworkskills.com or Milson College
* Hammond Institute Pty Ltd
* Holmesglen Institute
* Inclusion Melbourne Inc or Inclusion Training
* Institute of Health and Nursing Australia
* Institute of Tertiary and Higher Education Australia or ITHEA
* Institute of Training and Further Education
* Intercare Training
* International College of Victoria
* Job Training Institute Pty Ltd
* Kal Training
* Keysborough Learning Centre
* Laurels Education and Training
* Laverton Community Education Centre
* MADEC Community College
* Max Solutions Pty Ltd
* Mayfield Education Inc
* McCarthy Learning
* Melbourne City Institute of Education
* Melbourne College of Further Education
* Melbourne Polytechnic
* Migrant Resource Centre North West Region Inc.
* Milcom Institute
* MP Training and Recruitment
* Murray Adult Community Education-Swan Hill Inc
* Nepean Industry Edge Training
* North Ringwood Community House Inc
* Partners in Training Australia Pty Ltd
* Phillips Institute
* Pines Learning
* Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
* Selmar Institute of Education
* Skills Training Australia
* South West TAFE
* South West Training Services Pty Ltd
* Southern Cross Education Institute
* Stirling Institute of Australia
* Sunraysia Institute of TAFE
* Swinburne University of Technology
* TAFE Gippsland
* The Centre For Continuing Education Inc
* The Management Edge Pty Ltd (TME Trade Training)
* The Skills Development and Training Company Pty Ltd or Chandler RTO
* VASS College of Vocational Education
* Vative Healthcare
* VFA Learning
* VICSEG New Futures
* Victoria University
* Warner Institute
* WCIG
* WISE Training Services or Interskills
* Wodonga Institute of TAFE
* Yarraville Community Centre Inc
* Yarrawonga Mulwala Community & Learning Centre

In addition, the following training providers are also approved if you graduated from one of the program’s in-scope courses between the 1 November 2024 and the 31 December 2024.

* Gippsland Employment Skills Training
* Guidestar Training & Professional Services
* Multicultural Community Services Geelong Inc or Cultura

# Appendix 3: Regional or rural Victoria

Regional or rural local government areas in Victoria are:

* Alpine
* Ararat
* Ballarat
* Bass Coast
* Baw Baw
* Benalla
* Buloke
* Campaspe
* Central Goldfields
* Colac Otway
* Corangamite
* East Gippsland
* Gannawarra
* Glenelg
* Golden Plains
* Greater Bendigo
* Greater Geelong
* Greater Shepparton
* Hepburn
* Hindmarsh
* Horsham
* Indigo
* Latrobe
* Loddon
* Macedon Ranges
* Mansfield
* Mildura
* Mitchell
* Moira
* Moorabool
* Mount Alexander
* Moyne
* Murrindindi
* Northern Grampians
* Pyrenees
* Queenscliff
* South Gippsland
* Southern Grampians
* Strathbogie
* Surf Coast
* Swan Hill
* Towong
* Wangaratta
* Warrnambool
* Wellington
* West Wimmera
* Wodonga
* Yarriambiack.

# Appendix 4: Border communities

Defined border communities are local government areas in New South Wales and South Australia that border Victoria. The border communities are as follows:

## New South Wales

* Balranald Shire
* Bega Valley Shire
* Berrigan Shire
* City of Albury
* City of Broken Hill
* City of Wagga Wagga
* Edward River Council
* Federation Council
* Greater Hume Shire
* Hay Shire
* Lockhart Shire
* Murray River Council
* Murrumbidgee Council
* Snowy Monaro Regional Council
* Snowy Valleys Council
* Wentworth Shire

## South Australia

* Berri Barmera Council
* City of Mount Gambier
* District Council of Grant
* District Council of Loxton Waikerie
* District Council of Robe
* Kingston District Council
* Naracoorte Lucindale Council
* Renmark Paringa Council
* Southern Mallee District Council
* Tatiara District Council
* Wattle Range Council

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| To receive this document in another format, email the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing Regional Disability Worker Scholarship team rdws@dffh.vic.gov.auAuthorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, June 2025**ISBN** 978-1-76130-826-0 **(pdf/online/MS word)** Available on the [Regional Disability Worker Scholarships webpage](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/regional-disability-worker-scholarships) https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/regional-disability-worker-scholarships |

1. Note the list of approved training providers for Round 2 (as outlined in Appendix 2) is subject to change in Round 3 of the program [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. This means you cannot be deferred or taking a leave of absence from your course [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/regional-disability-worker-scholarships [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. https://www.vic.gov.au/vet-funding-contracts [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. https://training.gov.au/training/details/CHC33021 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. https://training.gov.au/training/details/CHC43121 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)