

Sponsored Study

Frequently Asked Questions
(FAQs)
Fact Sheet





Sponsored Study

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Fact Sheet

Sponsored Study Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Fact Sheet seeks to respond to key questions asked by teachers, school leaders and university partners, and provide additional information about Sponsored Study offered by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS). Please navigate using the hyperlinks below.

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Please email your enquiry to sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au.

Prospective students

Sponsored Study – the basics

Why seek sponsorship?

The opportunity to apply for sponsorship in a range of postgraduate-level courses enables you to further develop your scholarship, expertise and leadership. MACS Sponsored Study support aims to develop systemic and school leadership capacity, build an inquiry-minded community of thought leaders, address the career aspirations of the workforce, and promote and value a culture of lifelong learning. The financial impost of postgraduate study on the individual can be prohibitive and become a barrier to seeking out further learning. This barrier is removed by the shared contribution arrangement of costs being covered by MACS, the school and the student.

Who can apply?

Sponsored Study is offered under certain provisions to applicants who meet eligibility criteria. Endorsement of the principal is a prerequisite for teachers in order to be considered for sponsorship. Principals applying for sponsorship require the endorsement of their regional leadership consultant.

The eligibility guidelines are as follows. All applicants should hold one of the following:

- four-year bachelor degree in Education or equivalent
- bachelor degree in an area other than Education and a recognised teaching qualification
- bachelor degree in an area other than Education and a Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies or equivalent.

Sponsored Study is offered under the following provisions. The applicant must:

- have already gained [Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School, or Accreditation to Teach Religious Education or Lead in a Catholic School](#)
- be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT)
- have employment as a teacher in the Archdiocese of Melbourne
- be committed to Catholic education
- be a permanent resident of Australia or hold Australian citizenship.

Do I need accreditation to apply for Sponsored Study?

If you are applying for a course that will provide you with [accreditation](#), then you do not need to have already gained Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School, or Accreditation to Teach Religious Education or Lead in a Catholic School. All other courses require that you have gained accreditation.

Where can I study?

MACS has entered into agreements with several approved universities to support teachers in Catholic schools in undertaking further studies. Sponsorship is only available at these universities for specific courses.

What courses are offered as Sponsored Study?

You can find all Sponsored Study university and course information online via the CEVN website <https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au> in the [Online Professional Learning \(OPL\)](#) application. Enter OPL and select Sponsored Study from the left-hand menu to view the courses on offer.

What period of time does sponsorship cover?

Sponsorship covers the usual time of completion for the specific course. This may be one, two or three years.

What costs are involved?

Costs vary depending on the institution and course you are undertaking. The costs for each course and its required units are available in [OPL](#), which can be accessed via the CEVN website. Select

Sponsored Study from the left-hand menu to view course information. Please contact sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au to request an overview of course costs.

Unit costs are the fees for each unit of study at the university. This fee may differ from the publicly advertised cost as a result of the partnership arrangement between MACS and the university. Sponsored Study does not include the costs below.

You will need to make arrangements to cover:

- the student services and amenities fee (SSAF)
- the cost of books or reading materials
- any late enrolment fees.

You will need to make arrangements through your school for teacher replacement costs or study leave.

In accordance with Australian Taxation Office (ATO) guidelines, the self-funded contribution may also be tax deductible. Applicants successful in gaining sponsorship pay their third up-front in full to the university or defer fees to the ATO via FEE-HELP. Further information is available on the Australian Government's [Study Assist](#) website.

Application

How do I apply?

Applications are made online via the CEVN website <https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au> in the [Online Professional Learning \(OPL\)](#) application. Enter OPL and select Sponsored Study from the left-hand menu. Choose the relevant course and make your application.

When can I apply?

Applications for Sponsored Study generally open in August of each year for courses beginning in the next calendar year. Some courses have a mid-year intake. Please enter [OPL](#) via the CEVN website and select Sponsored Study from the left-hand menu to view course information.

Why is principal endorsement required?

Principal endorsement is an indication of the professional learning and financial support that your school will provide during the Sponsored Study period. Sponsored Study is a partnership between yourself, your school and MACS, each contributing to the course cost. As this has budgetary implications for your school, the principal needs to be aware of your application as early as possible.

Can I apply without principal endorsement?

Principal support is a requirement for submitting Sponsored Study applications. Without it, your application will not be considered. Your principal's support, both professional and financial, is an essential part of the shared contribution towards your further learning.

Can I make a late application?

It is not possible to make a late application. Applications for sponsorship outside the advertised windows of time are not accepted. MACS sponsors many students and must adhere to stringent processes in relation to application and selection. The timeline is set to ensure that we can provide information regarding successful applicants to our university partners, meeting their enrolment deadlines. You are encouraged to check OPL and COMS for Sponsored Study updates.

You may choose to begin studies at your own cost and then apply to MACS during the advertised application timeline. Please be aware that submitting an application does not guarantee a place, as each application is assessed by a panel according to set criteria.

Can I apply for sponsorship for courses other than those advertised?

It is not possible to apply for sponsorship for courses other than those advertised by MACS. We are not in a position to offer individualised sponsorship at this time. The Sponsored Study program has been designed to support access to high-quality postgraduate courses that have been customised

for the Catholic education sector. MACS brokers partnerships with universities for courses aligned with system imperatives. Currently, sponsorship is specific to these courses.

Can I apply for sponsorship for another course if I am already studying?

If you are already a Sponsored Study student, you cannot apply to have two sponsorships concurrently. If you have begun study at your own cost in a course currently sponsored by MACS, you are welcome to apply for sponsorship when advertised. You will be required to indicate the course that you are currently undertaking as part of your application. Your application will be assessed against the selection criteria alongside all other applications.

Can I reapply if I have been unsuccessful in the past?

You are welcome to reapply each year. Your application will be assessed against the selection criteria alongside all other applications.

I want to apply for Sponsored Study, but I am changing schools next year. What should I do?

Students may change employment from one school in the Archdiocese of Melbourne to another during the application process. In this case, you are required to seek the endorsement of the principal of the new school to which you have been appointed, confirming that this school can support the shared contribution arrangement.

You need to:

1. confirm with your new principal that they are prepared to take on the shared contribution arrangement prior to applying
2. contact sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au regarding your particular situation.

Selection

How are applicants for sponsorship chosen?

Applicants for sponsorship are chosen via a rigorous selection process. When you apply online in OPL, you are required to complete an application which addresses a series of questions, including your educational and professional background, as well as questions specific to the area of study and how you will apply the new learning in your context. Each application is assessed against eligibility criteria by a panel of MACS office staff with responsibility for sponsorship.

When will I find out if my application has been successful?

Applications are generally open for a period of four weeks. Selection takes place in the week after applications close. You may be contacted during this time for clarification purposes. Applicants are normally informed via email whether they are successful or unsuccessful three weeks from the close of applications.

If unsuccessful, will I be advised why I did not meet the criteria?

If you are unsuccessful, you will be advised via email with any relevant feedback regarding your application.

Can I appeal against a decision and/or ask for a review if I am unsuccessful with my application?

You can ask for a review and this will be assessed against the selection criteria. There is no guarantee of a change in the unsuccessful status of your application as a result of the review process.

What documents will I receive from MACS if I am successful?

The email indicating your success will contain a **Letter of Offer** and an **Acceptance of Offer form**. It is important that you complete the Acceptance of Offer form promptly, liaising with your principal for their approval and signature. Once signed, it is your responsibility to email the Acceptance of Offer form back to sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au for processing by the Registrar.

What is the Acceptance of Offer?

The Acceptance of Offer for Sponsored Study is a signed agreement between the student, their principal and MACS. It outlines the duration of sponsorship, terms and conditions, obligations of each party, and action to take should there be a change of student status. It is an important document, without which there is no sponsorship arrangement.

What is expected of me as a MACS Sponsored Study student?

The Sponsored Study commitment is a three-way partnership between yourself, your school and MACS. Each commits to cover certain costs related to the sponsorship. You are required to abide by the agreement and advise all parties if there are any amendments or changes to your circumstances that would affect your sponsorship. If there is an interruption to your studies during the period of sponsorship, there is no guarantee that sponsorship will extend beyond the agreed period.

Sponsored students

Enrolment

How do I enrol?

If you accept the offer of a Sponsored Study place, your name and contact details are communicated to the relevant university by the Registrar. The university will make contact via your school email address. Each student makes their own arrangements for enrolment in the course in accordance with the requirements of the university and any late fees incurred will be the student's responsibility. After you have enrolled, you will have access to your own university email address and all further communication regarding the course will come via this channel.

Who do I ask if I have a question about enrolment?

Sponsorship is different to enrolment; MACS administers the sponsorship program and universities coordinate the enrolment of students. You are responsible for managing your enrolment and any questions arising from this process need to be addressed to the university.

How do I find out more about the course?

Each university has course information details on its website. As an enrolled student, you will be provided with course details and are encouraged to connect with the relevant faculty for any further information.

Fees

How do I pay the fees?

Students need to pay their fees directly to the university prior to the commencement of the unit. You will be invoiced your contribution to the fees (one-third) plus student amenity fees. You are required to pay this amount and there is no reimbursement.

What is the shared contribution towards the payment of fees and how does it work?

Each university has a contractual agreement with MACS for the payment of fees. Courses are offered by MACS at a special fee per unit. Generally, MACS will sponsor one-third of this unit cost, the employing school will contribute one-third (upon approval from the principal) and the student will contribute one-third directly to the partner university. When payment is due, you pay the university directly and then the university invoices MACS for the remaining two-thirds. Through MACS internal finance processes, we recoup funds from your school.

What should I do if my invoice is incorrect?

If you receive an incorrect invoice, please contact the respective university to rectify it.

Change of student status

Can I defer the start of the course?

Deferring is the term used to describe delaying the commencement of a course for up to 12 months. While the universities offer students the option to **defer commencement**, this is not part of the MACS sponsorship agreement. MACS is not in a position to 'hold' places for students in the sponsorship program. It is designed to support those who are actively studying. Therefore, if you defer the commencement of a course, MACS sponsorship is withdrawn.

You need to:

1. understand that deferral is not an option available under the sponsorship agreement. The shared contribution arrangement with the school and MACS ceases, and you take on the full cost at the public rate when returning to study. The decision to defer is a decision to withdraw from sponsorship
2. decide whether to begin studies or withdraw
3. inform the principal of the decision to withdraw
4. inform MACS of the decision to withdraw via sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au
5. inform the university of the decision to withdraw and follow the required procedures prior to census date.

Who do I contact regarding recognition of prior learning?

Many of the MACS Sponsored Study courses have been developed as a cohort experience or are a customised offer with partner universities. This may preclude students who have already begun equivalent studies from being suitable candidates for sponsorship. Other Sponsored Study courses are open, enrolling MACS students alongside public students. In this instance, it may be possible to make an offer of sponsorship so that the student finishes the course as a Sponsored Study student and can seek recognition of prior learning. For questions about eligibility for sponsorship, contact sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au.

All questions relating to credits for previous studies need to be directed to the university. Each university has its own process for **recognition of prior learning** and credit. Once you have accepted your offer and enrolled, you can apply for credit by submitting the appropriate application forms and supporting documents directly to the university.

What happens if I withdraw from a unit/course?

If you decide to **withdraw** from a course, then MACS sponsorship is withdrawn. If you decide to withdraw from a unit during the agreement period, then you must make up that unit during the period or undertake it at your own cost outside the sponsorship arrangement timeframe.

You are required to notify the university of your intention to withdraw, following university procedures, prior to census date. You must also inform both your principal and MACS of this change. If you withdraw from a unit/course after the census date, you are responsible for the full cost of fees for units in which you are enrolled.

You need to:

1. inform the principal of the decision to withdraw
2. inform MACS of the decision to withdraw via sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au
3. inform the university of the decision to withdraw from the unit/course and follow the required procedures prior to census date
4. pay full fees if withdrawal does not occur prior to census date.

What happens if I am not able to study for a period of time?

Circumstances may arise where you need to take a **leave of absence**, interrupting your studies. The sponsorship agreement covers a period of time (one, two or three years). All units completed during this window will be sponsored through the shared contribution arrangement. A leave of absence may interrupt studies enough that it requires you to complete some units outside the agreed timeframe, which would be at your own cost.

You need to:

1. inform the principal of the decision to take a leave of absence from your studies
2. inform MACS of the decision to take a leave of absence via sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au
3. inform the university of the decision to take a leave of absence and follow the required procedures prior to census date.

What happens if I fail a unit?

After the release of student results, universities will inform MACS if a student fails. MACS sponsorship does not cover a student who is required to repeat a unit; therefore, you will be required to repeat the unit at your own cost. MACS will invoice you the remaining 2/3 of your unit fee once the university issues MACS with the corresponding invoice. for the re-enrolment of the failed unit.". You are encouraged to make contact with sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au to discuss options and seek support.

What happens if I am not able to complete my studies during the agreed sponsorship timeframe?

Some students may not complete their studies during the period of the sponsorship agreement. For some, this may be due to extenuating circumstances, including personal health issues, bereavement or family issues. Other students may choose to prioritise different facets of their professional or personal lives over their study commitments.

Regardless of the circumstances, all students who have completed at least 50% of the course units and seek to complete units outside the agreed timeframe are advised to apply for an extension via the Sponsored Study Extension form available in OPL. Alternatively, they may complete the remaining units at their own cost.

You need to:

1. apply for extension via OPL for continuing studies beyond the agreed period of sponsorship
2. seek the support of your principal to endorse the sponsorship to continue and complete studies
3. understand that submitting an application does not guarantee a sponsored place
4. understand that extensions will be granted based on valid reasons presented in the application form and are subject to the same approval process as a regular enrolment
5. understand each teacher is allowed to apply for extension only once for each course sponsored.

Can I change courses while being sponsored?

It is not possible to change courses as a sponsored student due to equity and budgetary reasons. Your sponsorship was based on you meeting selection criteria for a specific course. This is a rigorous process with criteria that vary between courses. It would not be a fair process if a change of sponsorship arrangements was allowed after commencement of studies. Another reason this is not possible is that the funding for sponsorship comes from different MACS business unit accounts, with set budgets for the year based on the agreed number of students.

You may choose to:

1. continue your current studies as per the signed Acceptance of Offer agreement

2. withdraw from sponsorship (prior to census so as not to incur full costs), enrol in a different course/subject and continue your studies at your own cost
3. withdraw from sponsorship (prior to census so as not to incur full costs) and, with the support of your principal, reapply for sponsorship during the application window. You will be prompted to indicate previous MACS sponsorship on the application form. Your application will then be assessed against the selection criteria alongside all other applications.

If you do choose to withdraw and continue at your own cost or withdraw and reapply, please inform sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au so that we can support you with this process. We do ask that you also discuss this with your principal, as it is a shared contribution arrangement.

What happens if I change my name or role?

You need to advise Sponsored Study of any changes to your name, role, school or contact details. This is important so that we have current information in our database. Please contact sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au with any relevant changes.

Change of employment

Will sponsorship continue if I change schools?

Students may change employment from one school in the Archdiocese of Melbourne to another while being sponsored. In this case, you are required to seek the endorsement of the principal of the new school to which you have been appointed, confirming that this school can support the shared contribution arrangement.

You need to:

1. confirm with your new principal that they are prepared to take on the shared contribution arrangement prior to continuing the course
2. contact sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au for a **Change of School form** (includes new principal endorsement) and, when completed, submit it via the same email address.

Will sponsorship continue if I leave the Archdiocese of Melbourne?

If you cease employment in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, then MACS sponsorship will be withdrawn.

You need to:

1. inform MACS of the decision to leave employment in the Archdiocese of Melbourne via sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au
2. communicate this change of employment to the university
3. undertake further study at your own cost or investigate options for sponsorship through your new employer.

MACS is working towards adding support measures for teachers within VCEA who commit to sponsored study and seek to change Dioceses, ensuring they are not financially disadvantaged as a result of the move.

You need to:

1. contact the sponsored study team in your new Archdiocese to continued support and request them to coordinate with MACS to maintain sponsorship.
2. contact your new VCEA school to seek your principal support
3. understand that MACS will uphold the sponsored study support until the end of the sponsorship period and invoice your new diocese so teachers avoid reapplying for sponsorship.

Support

Who do I contact if I have any concerns regarding my course?

If you have questions related to the course including enrolment, fees, course map, dates or content, please address these directly to the university. Any concerns related to sponsorship can be addressed by contacting sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au.

I haven't heard back from the university. What should I do?

If you do not hear back from the university after making enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact sponsoredstudy@macs.vic.edu.au. We will work with you and the university partner to resolve the issue.