



Directive No:	CSOUPG 02:00
Approval Date:	August 2023
Previous Review Date:	September 2021
Next Review Date:	June 2024
Author:	Assistant Director, People & Safety

# CSO Undergraduate Program Guidelines

## PURPOSE

The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) recognises that learning is a lifelong process and therefore aims to attract high achieving Catholic students into the teaching profession in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lismore. The need to provide spiritual formation, support and mentoring to students in preparation for a career in teaching in schools in the Diocese of Lismore is identified as integral to our mission of Catholic Education.

The Catholic Schools Office, via this arrangement, will provide paid work experience opportunities for select Catholic students looking to become teachers in the Diocese of Lismore and undertaking a Bachelor of Education. Additional study assistance opportunities will also be provided to select employees of the Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools Limited (DLCSL).

The aim of this document is to provide a guideline of what is required and offered as support for Catholic students undertaking a Bachelor of Education and interested in a career in Catholic Education within the Diocese of Lismore.

This undergraduate program will stand alone from the 3 week "Ready to Teach" program available for teachers who have finished their teaching degree and supporting them in preparation for entering the teaching profession in the following year.

## APPLICATION

These guidelines apply to those employees in Catholic schools under the administration of Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools Limited (DLCSL) who meet the selection criteria as outlined in this document as well as undergraduate Bachelor of Education students interested in a career with DLCSL.

## GUIDELINES

### 1. PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Participation is founded on the mission of the Catholic Church.
- 1.2 The Catholic Schools Office aims to ensure that participants contribute to the development of the quality of the teaching profession in the Diocese of Lismore.

- 1.3 Participation is awarded at the discretion of the Catholic Schools Office and the Scholarship Board.
- 1.4 Participation must be awarded through a transparent, open and accountable selection process.
- 1.5 All eligible participants must meet the specify eligibility and selection criteria.
- 1.6 Participants must adhere to Catholic ethos and participate in regular faith formation activities.

## **2. IMPLEMENTATION**

- 2.1 This program is designed to:
  - a) Enable students who have Youth Ministry or Parish association an opportunity to work in the Diocese and promote the outcomes of Proclaim 2013-2020;
  - b) Ensure quality applications to teaching, particularly in the Secondary area, and in the key learning area Religious Education; and
  - c) Develop formation of committed Catholics who may wish to find careers within schools
- 2.2 The study support issued under this program will take one of the following formats:
  - a) Full-time student – program includes:
    - Casual employment as a teacher’s aide 1 day per week across the school year (40 weeks) as outlined in clause 5.
    - Familiarisation with the operations of the Catholic Schools system.
    - Ongoing support and advice with regards to Faith, accreditation and employment in the Diocese of Lismore.
  - b) Part-time student – program includes:
    - Casual employment as a teacher’s aide 1 day per week across the school year (40 weeks) as outlined in clause 5.
    - Familiarisation with the operations of the Catholic Schools system.
    - Ongoing support and advice with regards to Faith, accreditation and employment in the Diocese of Lismore.
    - Part-time students wanting to change to full-time study are eligible to apply the following year for participation as a full-time participant. Due to participation limits on this program, such a request will be considered, however acceptance is not guaranteed and will only be granted with approval of the Scholarship Board as part of the annual selection process.
- 2.3 The number of program placements offered each year will ordinarily be 5 placements, however the Scholarship Board has authority to issue additional placements at its discretion, so long as the maximum participation within the program is not exceeded.

- 2.4 Maximum number of program participants at any one time must not exceed the maximum of 20 students.
- 2.5 To address the teacher shortage in STEM related subject areas (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) an additional 5 places will be offered to students with a stem specialization in 2024 and 2025. This will temporarily increase the maximum number of program participants.

### **3. SELECTION CRITERIA**

- 3.1 All program placements will be subject to application.
- 3.2 To be eligible, applicants will have to meet the following selection criteria:
  - a) Current student undertaking a Bachelor of Education through an approved tertiary education institution;
  - b) Achieve a grade point average of 5 or above for study undertaken to date;
  - c) Academic reference from High School Principal required for first year students;
  - d) Practicing Catholic who can provide a written reference from their Parish Priest. In 2024 and 2025 Catholicity for STEM applicants will be preferred, though not essential;
  - e) Able to meet the casual employment commitment in conjunction with their full-time or part-time studies; and
  - f) Preferably have attended a Diocese of Lismore high school.
- 3.3 Continued eligibility will be decided annually and will be subject to the student maintaining the minimum grade point average.

### **4. APPLICATION PROCESS**

- 4.1 Applicants will be required to complete and submit an application prior to Term 4 of the preceding year to satisfy Catholic Schools Office budget requirements.
- 4.2 Applications will be reviewed by the Scholarship Board and assessed on merit.
- 4.3 Membership of the Scholarship Board will include:
  - a) Assistant Director, Mission Services,
  - b) Secondary School Principal; and
  - c) Human Services representative.
- 4.4 Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application by week five of Term 4.
- 4.5 Successful placements for first year applicants will be conditional upon their acceptance into university to commence studies the following year.

### **5. HOURS OF WORK**

- 5.1 Successful applicants will be required to work a minimum of 10 days per term (total of 40 days per year) over the course of the academic year being 40 weeks.
- 5.2 Successful applicants will be employed as a Teacher's Aide by the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Lismore on an award free basis.
- 5.3 Applicants will work in schools, as and where directed by the Catholic Schools

Office. Students can request preference for school placements, however placement for these required working days will be at the discretion of the Catholic Schools Office.

- 5.4 Hours of work would be flexible to support University commitments.
- 5.5 As student's work placement may vary, students will require a current driver's license and their own transport.
- 5.6 During their year of study, successful applicants will also be required to undertake 10 hours of spiritual formation. These hours will be in addition to their working commitment and will be guided by the direction of Assistant Director, Mission Services.
- 5.7 The 10 hours spiritual formation will be undertaken as a voluntary commitment toward building the individual's own spiritual formation and will be an unpaid commitment.
- 5.8 The student's Bachelor of Education block practicum, will be undertaken within a local Catholic school and in accordance with the diversity of experience requirements of the accreditation authority.
- 5.9 Block practicum placements will be undertaken as part of the essential course requirements and are additional to the 10 day per term working commitment.

## **6. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- 6.1 Hours worked will be paid at a part time temporary rate of pay on an award free basis.
- 6.2 Payment will be made into the applicants' nominated bank account on a fortnightly basis (in arrears).
- 6.3 Students must maintain a grade point average of 5 or above in order to continue to be eligible for funding. Unofficial transcript for Semester 1 is to be supplied when available to confirm student's performance remains in line with expectations.
- 6.4 Block practicum hours will not qualify as a paid working commitment from the employer.
- 6.5 Participants will be required to hold a valid working with children clearance and have undertaken mandatory SALT compliance training before they can commence work within a school.

## **7. GRADUATE PLACEMENT AND EX GRATIA PAYMENT**

- 7.1 Following completion of their studies, successful program participants will receive support from the Catholic Schools Office as a preferred candidate for employment within a Diocese of Lismore school.
- 7.2 Successful full-time program participants securing a teaching position with the Diocese will, in addition to their ordinary teaching wage, receive an ex-gratia payment of \$5,000 per annum, paid at completion of each of their first four years employed as a teacher.
- 7.3 Successful part-time program participants securing a teaching position with the Diocese will, in addition to their ordinary teaching wage, receive ex-gratia

payments of \$3,000 per annum, paid at completion of each of their first two years employed as a teacher.

- 7.4 This ex-gratia payment will be paid as a lump sum into the recipient's nominated bank account.

## **8. REIMBURSEMENT**

- 8.1 The Catholic Schools Office reserves the right to withdraw funding or invoke repayment of any ex-gratia payments.
- 8.2 If a participant is employed as a teacher following graduation and leaves their employment within the Diocese of Lismore, the following will apply:
- a) Full-time participants will be required to repay 100% of the ex-gratia payments they have received if they leave their position within the first three years;
  - b) Full-time participants will be required to repay 75% of the ex-gratia payments they have received if they leave their position before the end of their fourth year;
  - c) Full-time participants will be required to repay 50% of the ex-gratia payments they have received if they leave their position before the end of their fifth year;
  - d) Part-time participants will be required to repay 100% of their ex-gratia payments if they leave their position within the first two years;
  - e) Part-time participants will be required to repay 75% of their ex-gratia payments if they leave their position within the before the end of their third year; and
  - f) Part-time participants will be required to repay 50% of their ex-gratia payments if they leave their position within the before the end of their fourth year.

## **9. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 9.1 The program participant is employed by DLCSL on a part time temporary basis as a Teacher's Aide and is responsible to the school principal as a delegated authority with a clear role and professional responsibilities.
- 9.2 **Program Participant** - The program participant will be an active participant, contributor, collaborator, reflector and observer and will:
- a) Be pro-active, reflective and responsible for their own learning and practice;
  - b) Undertake all professional responsibilities of a teacher's aide in partnership with their assigned classroom teacher;
  - c) Seek support and guidance as necessary from their assigned classroom teacher and other relevant staff members;
  - d) Develop a clear understanding of what is required to teach and develop within the role of classroom teacher; and
  - e) Develop an understanding of the importance of Catholic identity and mission with in Diocese of Lismore schools.

- 9.3 **Assigned Classroom Teacher** - The program participant will be assigned to a classroom teacher for a select period of time (for example, one term or one year). This classroom teacher will be a highly accomplished teacher skilled in mentoring and developing the practice of others who will support, guide and advise the participant, model behaviour and practice, facilitate development and encourage collaboration and reflection. The classroom teacher will:
- a) Provide meaningful activities and tasks for the program participant to undertake during their scheduled working commitment;
  - b) Model exemplary classroom pedagogy and practices;
  - c) Support the participant with behaviour management strategies;
  - d) Nurture the general well-being of the participant and liaise with the principal if a problem occurs;
  - e) Guide the participant in developing an appreciation of the importance of Catholic identity and mission within schools; and
  - f) Provide meaningful and constructive feedback to the program participant at least at the end of each term.
- 9.4 **Leader of Pedagogy** - The program participant's Leader of Pedagogy plays a supportive role in the program and will:
- a) Ensure the program participant is paired with a highly accomplished and capable teacher who is committed to developing a pre-service teacher;
  - b) Provide feedback and support to the classroom teacher and program participant as required; and
  - c) Provide support and guidance in pedagogy, curriculum content and professional practice.
- 9.5 **School Principal** - The program participant's school principal will:
- a) Recognise and include the program participant as a paid member of the school staff;
  - b) Have a clear understanding of the CSO and university's requirements of the program participant;
  - c) Liaise with the Leader of Pedagogy periodically to review the performance of the program participant;
  - d) Communicate with the Scholarship Board or the school's Human Services Officer as required; and
  - e) Be responsible and accountable for leading and onboarding process of the program participant.
- 9.6 **Scholarship Board** - The Scholarship Board will:
- a) Be responsible for the evaluation of program applications and selection of program participants;
  - b) Be responsible for the selection of schools chosen to host a program participant;
  - c) Ensure contractual obligations for the program participant are fulfilled; and

- d) Ensure the maximum number of participants stays within the approved limits to ensure program remains within CSO budgetary constraints.

#### **10. APPLICANTS NOT RECEIVING ACCEPTANCE TO THE PROGRAM**

- 10.1 The Scholarship Board at its discretion can issue up to 4 casual teacher's aide student teacher positions at any time. These students will receive the benefit of work experience and faith formation through participation within a school whilst undertaking their tertiary studies.
- 10.2 These positions do not attract the ex-gratia payment.
- 10.3 These students are eligible to reapply to the study support program the consecutive year.
- 10.4 These casual teacher's aide participants would be invited to undertake the 10 hours voluntary spiritual formation (per clause 5).

#### **11. STUDY ASSISTANCE SCHOLARSHIPS**

- 11.1 In addition to placements under the undergraduate program, the Scholarship Board will award 10 study assistance scholarships per year to current teacher aides/ classroom and learning support assistants and a further 10 study assistance scholarships per year to current Indigenous Education Workers.
- 11.2 Participants must be employed by DLCSL prior to applying.
- 11.3 Participants will receive reimbursement of 50% of subject costs upon successful unit completion, plus 1 day per subject of paid examination leave.

#### **ENQUIRIES**

Deputy Director, Finance and Operations Human Services Consultant

#### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore: The Mission of Jesus Christ Foundational Values

Employee Performance and Discipline Policy and Standard

Operating Procedure

Parent and Caregiver Complaints Policy and Standard Operating Procedure

Privacy Policy and Standard Operating Procedure

Purchasing Policy and Standard Operating Procedure

Youth Ministry Officer Standard Operating Procedure

*Education Act 1990 (NSW)*

