

# Loans Scheme Procedure

## Section 1 - Introduction

(1) This procedure supports the allocation of funds from the University of Newcastle Loans Scheme. The Scheme provides assistance to students in need; it is a practical application of the University's commitment to access and equity.

## Section 2 - Procedure

### Administration and Management

(2) The Student Loans Scheme is administered by Student Central.

(3) The Student Loans and Grants Advisory Group (SLGAG) - an advisory group to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President - oversees the Student Loans Scheme.

(4) The SLGAG meets on at least a quarterly basis to:

- a. propose the allocation for the year;
- b. monitor effective management of the loans funds; and
- c. recommend changes to policies and procedures as needed.

### Establishment of Loan Fund

(5) The Loan Fund is initially established by the allocation of a sum of money on the basis of a recommendation from the SLGAG.

(6) Careful monitoring of the fund's resources and effective follow-up procedures by Student Equity and AccessAbility and Finance will ensure a high rate of repayment of loans.

(7) The fund will therefore be relatively self-sufficient, but will receive occasional annual "topping up" on the recommendation of the SLGAG.

### Approved Purposes

(8) Loans are available to meet urgent, short-term needs. These may include:

- a. accommodation costs;
- b. basic living costs (including medical costs where necessary);
- c. text books and course materials/equipment;
- d. practicum costs - where a student is relocating.

(9) In certain circumstances, loans may be available for transport expenses - repairs to, registration or insurance of vehicles - where the student:

- a. is not on a public transport route;
- b. is studying a program that requires off-campus travel; or
- c. can demonstrate extenuating circumstances

(10) Loans are not generally available for tuition fees except

- a. under exceptional circumstances and
- b. when recommended by the Associate Director, Student Wellbeing.

## **Eligibility**

(11) A student must:

- a. be enrolled at the University of Newcastle;
- b. be a full-time or part-time student at the undergraduate or postgraduate level;
- c. provide copies of bank statements, Centrelink Benefit payments and/or other evidence of financial disadvantage; and
- d. be able to demonstrate with appropriate documentation, a clear capacity to repay, and, where possible, a demonstrated history of meeting financial obligations.

(12) The student's academic record, attendance and progress in their program, will be taken into consideration.

## **Terms of Loans**

(13) Loans are offered for a maximum term of twelve months and cannot be extended outside the applicant's period of study as a student of the University of Newcastle.

## **Loan Conditions**

(14) The following loan conditions apply:

- a. Loan applications must be made to Student Equity and AccessAbility on the appropriate form. Appropriate documentation (see Eligibility, clauses 11 and 12) must be supplied with the application.
- b. The majority of loans will generally be granted for small amounts, in the vicinity of \$500 to \$1,000 and up to a maximum of \$2,000.
- c. As soon as the recipient of a loan defaults, the payment plan will be cancelled immediately and the debt will become due and payable in full.
- d. Loan recipients can apply to the Wellbeing Advisor to renegotiate the payment plan for a loan prior to defaulting on payments.
- e. Renegotiation of the payment plan will only occur where there are extenuating circumstances supported by documentation, where the recipient can demonstrate a clear capacity to pay and a history of meeting financial obligations.
- f. Should the recipient be unable to demonstrate the above and is at risk of defaulting, the recipient may be advised to apply for a Hardship Grant to repay the loan, in which case the Hardship Grant conditions will apply.
- g. Emergency cash loans of up to \$100 can be arranged for students if necessary and at the discretion of the Wellbeing Advisor and in accordance with all other Loan Conditions.

## **Exceptional Circumstances**

(15) Exceptional circumstances such as unavoidable family circumstances, illness, accident etc. may be considered by the Associate Director, Student Wellbeing, in relation to loans for tuition fees, term of loan and/or loans for larger

amounts.

(16) In such instances, the Senior Manager, AccessAbility and Support will refer the request to the Advisory Group who will seek approval from the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar.

## **Delegations**

(17) Loan approvals will comply with the Delegations Schedule in the [Delegation of Authority Policy](#).

## **Review of Loan Fund**

(18) Loans and repayments will be monitored at the meetings of the Advisory Committee.

(19) In addition, the Manager, Transactional Services will arrange for a financial report to be produced at each month end detailing amounts loaned and amounts repaid.

(20) This report will be given to the Wellbeing Advisors, the Health and Welfare Coordinator and the Commercial Manager, Financial Services.

(21) The Health and Welfare Coordinator and the Wellbeing Advisors will monitor the Loan Fund on an ongoing basis with the help of the monthly financial reports to ensure that loans are not advanced for more than the annual budgetary allocation and to monitor the accumulation of bad and/or doubtful debts.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
<b>Effective Date</b>	12th March 2007
<b>Review Date</b>	31st December 2019
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-Chancellor
<b>Approval Date</b>	12th March 2007
<b>Expiry Date</b>	1st December 2022
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Belinda Tynan Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
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## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"University"** - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

**"Vehicle"** - Has the same meaning as section 4 of the Road Transport Act 2013.

**"Risk"** - Effect of uncertainty on objectives. Note: An effect is a deviation from the expected, whether it is positive and/or negative.

**"Applicant"** - Where referring to a student, an applicant is an individual seeking entry to a program or course offered by the University or its partner organisation/s. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Campus"** - means any place or premises owned or controlled by the University, but may also specifically refer to a designated operating location such as the Callaghan Campus.

**"Course"** - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Student"** - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

**"Postgraduate"** - Any qualification being at the level of Graduate Certificate or above.

**"Program"** - When referring to learning, a program is a sequence of approved learning, usually leading to an Award. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Term"** - When referring to an academic period, term means a period of time aligned to an academic year for the delivery of a course in which students enrol and for which they are usually charged fees for example semesters, trimesters, summer, winter or full-year term. The academic year for a term is determined by the academic year in which the course commences, not concludes. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Undergraduate"** - Refers to any qualification up to and including the level of a Bachelor Honours degree.