



New Colombo Plan Scholarship Program 2026 Round Advice to Applicants

This **Advice to Applicants** provides information to assist applicants to prepare applications and address the eligibility and selection criteria for the 2026 New Colombo Plan (NCP). Applicants are advised to check that the details they provide in their application form align precisely with information in their supporting documentation. Conflicts with information in the feasibility letter, enrolment letter and/or dates of proposed program should be addressed in a timely manner with your university's International Liaison Officer (ILO).

The 2026 NCP Guidelines outline program eligibility requirements, assessment criteria and how funding will be allocated to successful applicants. Applicants must read and adhere to the Guidelines available at [GrantConnect](#). The Guidelines take priority to the extent of any inconsistency with this Advice to Applicants. Applicants are also encouraged to read the Scholarship Agreement template, which all successful awardees must adhere to as part of their scholarship program.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, [announced](#) the next phase of the NCP on 30 July 2025 to ensure the program delivers on the Australian Government's objective to strengthen the Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy of Australians. A summary of program changes for the 2026 round is at Attachment 2.

Applicants should design their scholarship programs to demonstrate how it will build their Indo-Pacific capability through a long-term, immersive experience in a single host location. Applicants are also encouraged to include some form of study of an official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of the host location. Study of priority Asian languages is especially encouraged.

Use of the Application Compliance Checklist at Attachment 1 will assist applicants to confirm they have met all application requirements and avoid their application being rejected for being incomplete or non-compliant.

Host Locations

Applicants should note that NCP Scholarships Program has introduced Priority Host Locations (see Guidelines section 6.1). Applications to Priority Host Locations where Australia wishes to expand linkages will be prioritised. Applications to Priority Host Locations where Australia wants to maintain its strong, existing engagement, will also be considered highly favourably. Applications are welcome for all eligible Host Locations (see Guidelines section 5.5), however, host locations not identified as a Priority Host Location will be scored less highly.

Applicants should be aware that some host locations are more popular destinations than others and consequently more competitive.

Diversity

DFAT encourages participation from students from diverse backgrounds including, but not limited to, First Nations students, students from a low socio-economic status background, students from regional/remote areas or universities, students who are first in their immediate family to attend university, students across the genders, female students studying in non-traditional fields, students with disability, and students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

The diversity section in the application form requests applicants provide diversity information. This information is used for the purposes of administering and reporting on the NCP. Scoring against assessment criteria is not directly influenced by diversity, but DFAT may accord priority to applicants from diverse backgrounds within the moderation process.

Tips for Addressing Selection Criteria

Criterion 1 – Alignment of application with the Australian Government’s geographic and sectoral priorities in the Indo-Pacific region

Applicants should provide clear evidence of research into the proposed host location, institution and how the program aligns with Australian Government geographic and sectoral priorities in the Indo-Pacific.

Applications for Priority Host Locations where Australia wishes to expand the level of engagement will score most highly. Priority Host Locations where Australia wants to maintain the current level of engagement will also be considered highly favourably. Applications for eligible host locations which are not identified as non-Priority Host Locations are still encouraged.

Applications that demonstrate **alignment to Australian Government sectoral priorities** will score highly. As examples, this could include (but is not limited to) reference to priority sectors outlined in government strategies including [Invested: Australia’s Southeast Asia Economic Strategy to 2040](#), [A New Roadmap for Australia’s Economic Engagement with India](#), and the [Australia-Pacific Regional Development Partnership Plan 2025-29](#). DFAT’s [Countries, economies and regions](#) page provides information for each eligible host location, including bilateral partnership agreements where relevant.

Australian Government Priority Sectors are broad and encompass a number of areas, including academic disciplines. Examples are provided below but are not exhaustive.

- **Economics and Business** – including but not limited to digital economy, business, including financial services, visitor economy and tourism
- **Environment, Primary Industries and Natural Resources** – including but not limited to agriculture and resources (including water management and mining)
- **Infrastructure, Climate and Energy** – including but not limited to clean energy, renewable technologies, climate change science and policy
- **Law, Asian Studies, Culture, and Human Development** – including but not limited to education and skills, health, sports, culture, the arts and creative industries
- **Technology and Innovation** – including but not limited to Technology and IT, Space

Applicants should provide evidence (including in references and their CV) of existing interest and knowledge of the proposed host location and why it was selected. Applicants should outline the linkages (personal and institutional) that they intend to develop while undertaking their NCP scholarship, building on their demonstrated interest in, and knowledge of, the Indo-Pacific. Higher scoring applications will clearly outline how the program will build Indo-Pacific capability, including through an immersive experience. In doing so, you should demonstrate how your program will be immersive and cohesive by integrating academic, professional and cultural components to build long-term links to the region.

Applications which propose an immersive program involving the mandatory study component, language learning, and an internship will score more highly.

Criterion 2 – Focus on Indo-Pacific languages, especially priority languages

Responses to this criterion will be scored higher where the application demonstrates that the application meets the language target criteria for language training in a priority Asian language (see Guidelines section 6.1) and has clear articulation of how the proficiency gained will be applied on program, contributing to an immersive experience, and will be maintained in the future on completion of the scholarship.

While applications without formal language studies are still eligible, at a minimum to be considered satisfactory applicants should demonstrate how the applicant will be exposed to an Indo-Pacific language (excluding English) that is commonly used or spoken in an official capacity at the host location, including (but not limited to) in social contexts.

Criterion 3 – Personal attributes for successful completion of scholarship

Responses to this criterion will be scored higher where the application demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the key risks and challenges the applicant may face in the proposed host location considering their personal circumstances and proposed program (duration, location, components, types of activity), with strategies for responding in each case informed by real-life experience – backed up by supporting documentation (CV, referees).

Applications will also score higher where they demonstrate extensive evidence of life experience and personal attributes that suggest the applicant has exceptionally high levels of drive, resilience and determination to successfully complete their proposed scholarship in the proposed host location (with evidence through references and other supporting documentation such as commendations).

Criterion 4 – Future impact of NCP experiences focused with regards to you maintaining engagement with the Indo-Pacific

Responses will be scored higher if the application demonstrates the specific knowledge and skills the applicant will develop during their NCP experience through their overall program and specific components (study, internship, language training), with concrete/confirmed plans for maintaining engagement with the Indo-Pacific on program completion, including to maintain enduring professional and personal engagement with the Indo-Pacific.

Responses will be scored higher if the program is in a priority host location and sector with a clear strategy for how the applicant will use their program, including the internship component, to develop enduring personal and/or institutional connections in the priority host location, sector, and between Australia and the Indo-Pacific.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Indo-Pacific capability

1.1. What is meant by Indo-Pacific capability?

“Indo-Pacific capability” refers to the knowledge, skills, experience, and networks that enable someone to effectively engage with and contribute to the Indo-Pacific region. In the context of the NCP, it typically includes:

- Cultural understanding: Awareness of the social, cultural, and historical contexts of countries, economies and region in the Indo-Pacific.
- Language skills: Proficiency or willingness to learn a local language to deepen engagement and capability.
- Regional knowledge: Understanding of political, economic, and strategic dynamics in the region.
- Professional networks: Building relationships with local institutions, businesses, or communities.
- Academic and practical experience: Studying, interning, or conducting research in the region to gain firsthand experience.

Essentially, it's about becoming someone who can build meaningful, long-term connections with the Indo-Pacific and contribute to Australia's engagement in the region.

2. Timing of release of academic results and official academic transcripts

2.1. Can my university's International Liaison Office (ILO) submit a nominee's unofficial academic transcript if the official copy is unavailable at the time of nomination?

Yes. Where official transcripts cannot be provided by the closing of nominations, “unofficial” academic transcripts that are verified by a signature of an approved delegate with a university stamp may be submitted at nominations. Official transcripts are to be provided by the applicant in their application.

3. Host location

3.1. Can my proposed host location in the application differ from that in the nomination?

Yes, but the host location specified in the *application* will be the applicant's final host location.

3.2. Can a scholar commence their NCP Scholarship Program in a secondary host location?

No, and variations may only be considered in exceptional/compelling circumstances.

3.3. Can I study at a host institution that is an offshore campus of an Australian university?

Yes. Scholars may study at an offshore campus of any Australia-based university where the scholarship will demonstrably enable a genuinely immersive experience in line with the Government's intention to increase engagement with Australia's Indo-Pacific transnational education presence.

Programs cannot be undertaken at an offshore campus of a university established or headquartered outside of the host location where that campus is an offshore campus of a third location university (i.e. an American or European university).

4. Enrolment

4.1. Do the subjects that I plan to study need to be eligible for accreditation to my home degree?

Yes. You are not entitled to undertake subjects at your host university that are not credited to your home degree within the NCP.

4.2. If I have or I am in the process of changing to another Bachelor or Bachelor Honours degree, am I still eligible for the NCP scholarship?

Yes. Provided your NCP scholarship study component will be fully credit-bearing to your new degree and meet all study component requirements (see Guidelines sections 5.2.1. and 7.4). The new degree must be confirmed and supported by your home university at the time of submitting the application and this should be reflected in the Feasibility Letter using the required template.

4.3. Do I need Confirmation of Admission at the host university when I submit my NCP scholarship application?

No. See Guidelines section 7.4.

4.4. If I am studying a double degree, would one single letter attesting to the feasibility of my study component suffice?

Yes. One letter is sufficient. If the units will be credit bearing to both degrees, then that letter must be signed by both faculties (and other delegated party).

4.5. Can I undertake two study components (of one semester each) at different host institutions and/or different host locations?

Applicants may propose two study components at different host institutions. However, both study components must be in the same host location.

5. Honours students

5.1. I am in the final year of my Bachelor degree and would like to undertake an Honours program for my NCP study component. However, enrolment into the Honours program will only open after the closing of the NCP scholarship application period. Am I eligible?

Yes, you are eligible to apply for an NCP scholarship. Please provide as much information on your proposed Honours program as possible in your application such as: a provisional offer; confirmed honours supervisor details; proposed honours project; and confirmation that your proposed NCP study component will be credit bearing to your home Honours degree. The awarding of a scholarship will be conditional on your being enrolled in the Honours program at your home university.

5.2. Do I need to enrol at the host institution if I'm undertaking only a research-based honours study component?

No. But if you intend to undertake coursework within your NCP study component, you must enrol at the host institution and ensure your home university credits the coursework units to your degree.

6. Referees

6.1. Can I nominate two academic referees?

Yes. Provided they can comment substantively across the assessment criteria, and not just on academic ability. Referees should have a strong knowledge of the applicant's strengths against assessment criteria and have sufficient time to develop their reports. A guide for referee reports for NCP Online will be provided to nominees.

6.2. Can I nominate a referee from high school as my academic referee?

No. However, you may nominate a personal referee from your high school if they are able to comment on non-academic criteria.

6.3. Does my academic referee have to be from my current home university?

Yes.

6.4. If I have changed courses at university recently, can I nominate an academic referee from a previous course?

Yes. Provided they are from your current home university.

6.5. Does my academic referee have to comment on the non-academic related assessment criteria?

You should select an academic referee who can comment substantively on all assessment criteria, but they may choose only to comment on the academic-related assessment criteria and leave blank the response to the remaining assessment criteria. Your personal referee must be able to comment substantively on the remaining assessment criteria.

6.6. Can referees save their draft report and complete it later?

Yes. Referees may save each completed section of the report and return to the report later. References will not be accepted after the final closing date for applications, so applicants should ensure referees submit well before this date so that any issues can be identified. An application will be non-compliant if there are not two references, including one from an academic at the home university.

6.7. My referee has accidentally submitted their incomplete report. Is it possible for the referee to resume the report?

No. Reports cannot be edited once submitted but the report can be removed by the applicant (select the “Remove” button) and re-enter the referee’s details. The referee will receive an email containing a new link and password to start a new report. Ensure that your referee is contactable throughout the application period so that they can correct any issues/resubmit if required.

References will not be accepted after the final closing date for applications, so applicants should ensure referees submit well before this date so that any issues can be identified. An application will be non-compliant if there are not two references, including one from an academic at the home university.

6.8. Do I need to have a high Grade Point Average to be admitted to the NCP

Scholars are assessed on academic and personal capabilities and other characteristics identified in this document and the Guidelines.

7. Internships

7.1. Do I have to confirm or lock in internships during the application stage?

Applicants are encouraged to indicate that they are planning to undertake an internship at the application stage, even if the internship is not confirmed. Applicants should refer to the rules around variations in the Guidelines section 12.3 and note that it will not be possible to add an internship component or change the location and/or sector of your internship once the scholarship is awarded, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

You are encouraged to plan your proposed internship – conduct research, speak to NCP alumni, enquire with potential internship host organisations on opportunities. If you do not have a confirmed internship option at the time of submitting your application, you are encouraged to indicate the type (organisation, sector, role/skills/experience), location and duration of internship you are interested in and provide any details of your research into options in your proposed location(s) or applications you’ve made or plan to make. You should include the information you have collected in your application. Proposed internships aligned with sectoral priorities (Guidelines section 6.1) will be scored favourably. Scholars are encouraged to seek out internship opportunities with Australian businesses, in line with the Government’s intent to increase the NCP’s engagement with Australian businesses operating in the region.

7.2. Does my internship have to be approved by DFAT?

Yes, all internships and mentorships must be approved by DFAT through the service provider prior to commencement and are subject to several checks before commencement (due diligence, risk checks, visa checks). Internships that are credit-bearing to the scholar’s degree must be pre-approved by the home university.

7.3. Can I undertake an internship at a host location that is different from where I undertake the study component?

Scholarships are intended to be immersive experiences. If internships are unavailable at the primary host location, scholars should explain how their proposed internship in the secondary host location will achieve a coherent program in their application. Internships are unlikely to be confirmed at the time of application but should be flagged in the application.

It is not possible to add an internship component, including in a secondary host location, that has not been proposed in the application at a later date.

7.4. Is there a limit to the number of internships I can undertake during the NCP Scholarship Program?

No, there is no limit to the number of internships you can propose, provided they meet the requirements stated in the Guidelines section 5.2.2.

8. Language study /training and the language target

8.1. Does my program have to meet the language target criteria?

No, the aim is for 15% of scholarships awarded in the 2026 round to meet the language target. However, you will score more highly if your program does meet the language target criteria, and are encouraged to include language study of the official or commonly spoken language of your host location as part of developing an immersive program, particularly if it is in a priority Asian language (see Guidelines section 6.1).

While applications without formal language studies are still eligible, at a minimum to be considered satisfactory applicants should demonstrate how the applicant will be exposed to an Indo-Pacific language (excluding English) that is commonly used or spoken in an official capacity at the host location, including (but not limited to) in social contexts.

8.2. How do I demonstrate that I will meet the language target in my application?

You should include details of the modules you will study in the study component section of the application form, backed up by your Feasibility Letter, and/or the language training you will undertake (duration, type and if possible, training provider) in the language training component section of the application. You should also indicate in the Assessment Criteria section that your proposed program meets the language target.

8.3. Do I have to have any pre-existing knowledge of the language of the host location I propose for my program?

No. Although existing language skills for the proposed host location will be considered favourably, you may indicate a beginner's level of proficiency at the start of your program and indicate how you will increase this through your proposed language training or study.

While applications without formal language studies are still eligible, at a minimum to be considered satisfactory applicants should demonstrate how the applicant will be exposed to an Indo-Pacific language (excluding English) that is commonly used or spoken in an official capacity at the host location, including (but not limited to) in social contexts.

8.4. My proposed study component includes one module that is a study of an Indo Pacific language – does this count towards the language target?

The language target as set out in the Guidelines section 6.1 requires at least 50% of the credit bearing study to be in the official or commonly spoken language (other than English) of the host location. If only taking one module and this is less than 50% overall, then this does not meet the target, however it will still be scored favourably during assessment as it is formal study of an Indo Pacific language. The Feasibility Letter should confirm this using the provided 2026 template.

8.5. My proposed study component includes linguistic and /or literature studies for the host location (e.g. Indonesia literature and linguistics) – does this count towards the language target?

No. The credit bearing units must be study of a language focusing on written/spoken language skills or must be delivered in the host location language. Examples of eligible language study includes: Beginner Korean, Advanced Mandarin, Japanese Grammar.

8.6. I am proposing 5 weeks of language training at the start of my program and 5 weeks at the end with internships and study components in between. Does this count to the language target?

No, the language target as set out in the Guidelines section 6.1 requires 10 weeks of *continuous* full-time training (minimum 15 hours per week) or an equivalent part-time language training alongside the study and/or internship component.

Scholars are strongly encouraged to undertake formal language training as the first component of their scholarship program (in addition to any language learning that may be part of the scholar's study component) (see Guidelines section 5.2.4).

9. Visas

9.1. Do I need to find out about visas during the application stage?

You are strongly advised to check visa requirements prior to applying for a host location, noting that your personal circumstances/background may preclude your ability to secure a visa. Detailed knowledge of visas is not essential at application stage but may assist to plan your scholarship.

Visa rules for internships can vary widely from host location to host location, be time consuming and sometimes require substantial documentation and approvals, including from the internship host organisation. You should consider the visa processing timelines and requirements for each component in your proposed program, noting that these may change over time so will need to be re-checked closer to the time of doing a component as part of a scholarship.

Scholars will need to organise host location visas through the relevant host location's immigration authorities (not from any other source) and must not depart from Australia or start a new component until they receive the appropriate visa for the component of their NCP program. Study and language training visas requirements often differ from internship visa requirements and can change at short notice. Some visas may only be obtainable when you are in Australia and some only available from host locations.

The service provider will maintain a copy of the scholar's current, appropriate visa throughout the program. Failure to comply with this regulation will generally lead to the scholar's program being terminated.

10. Medical and disability

10.1. I have a medical condition or disability – do I need to declare it in my application form?

The diversity section in the application form requests applicants provide diversity information, including relating to disability. This information is used for the purposes of administering and reporting on the NCP in a de-identified manner. Scoring against assessment criteria is not directly influenced by diversity, but DFAT may accord priority to applicants from diverse backgrounds within the moderation process.

Applicants who have pre-existing medical conditions and/or a disability are strongly encouraged to describe how they will manage the condition or disability in the proposed host location. Assessment against Selection Criteria 3 may favourably consider applications that have demonstrated that they have considered/addressed such factors in developing their proposed program.

Failure to disclose medical conditions or disability may impact on the NCP's ability to assist or accommodate that disability or medical condition or may impact on a scholar's insurance while on the program. NCP insurance has a number of exclusions that scholars must consider carefully and does not cover ongoing treatment of pre-existing conditions. Scholars require a fitness to travel report from a travel medicine doctor before departing from Australia and should not travel against medical advice. Scholars will be required to discuss health and welfare requirements with their case manager as part of developing a risk assessment that must be approved before commencing the program overseas.

Applicants are encouraged to describe any health management or disability support plan required to ensure they can safely and effectively manage any existing medical conditions or disabilities that require ongoing management and support whilst undertaking their scholarship program in the proposed location(s).

Attachment 1 – Application Compliance Checklist

This checklist is for the use of applicants and is not to be submitted with your application. It is intended to assist applicants to ensure that applications are complete and correct to avoid the application being rejected through being incomplete or non-compliant.

Please check the following:

☐ **Degree names and dates match across all documents and comply with the Guidelines.**

- Information in your Feasibility Letter, Confirmation of Enrolment and all supporting documents precisely matches information in your application. This includes, but is not limited to, dates of enrolment, home degree course name, host institution, study component status and completion date for the degree. **You are strongly recommended to check your application form details against your supporting documentation early to allow time to engage with your home university if there are any discrepancies, such as conflicting dates identified in your Feasibility Letter and Enrolment Letter and your proposed program dates.**
- Your Scholarship Program commencement/completion dates, including compulsory study component dates and all additional language and internship components, are within your degree enrolment period – not beyond the date you will complete your home degree academic requirements. **Any components of your proposed program that are planned to occur after the completion of your degree, may not be considered in the assessment of your application.**
- Your overall planned program must commence between 1 Jan and 31 Dec 2026 and will end within 19 months – before 31 July 2028.
- Your compulsory study component commences within six months of program commencement.
- Any gaps between your program components are for periods less than 30 days.

☐ **Your university has completed the correct NCP 2026 Feasibility Letter template and you have obtained two university signatures on the template.**

- Letter is signed by the applicant's home university faculty and endorsed by the home university's NCP International Liaison Officer for scholarships or university office delegated with authority to endorse the letter (2 signatures or 3 for double degrees - see below).
- All required details are included in the Feasibility Letter and the information in the letter matches the applicant's responses in their application with no mismatch of information.

☐ **Feasibility Letters for study components that meet the language target criteria contain accurate information.**

- If your proposed study component meets the criteria for the language target set out in Guidelines section 6.1, this should be indicated in the Feasibility Letter (using the NCP template) demonstrating how the proposed study meets the criteria (see Clause 8.2 above).

☐ **All supporting documents are current and complete, signed where required and are official versions** (or are verified copies with a signature of an approved delegate with a university stamp with originals to be provided).

- Information in all your official documents aligns with information in your application including your name and date of birth.
- Copy of your home university's exchange agreement with the host institution (or letter from your home university outlining partnership arrangements) during the scholarship period – If intending to apply for an exchange place for the study component under an agreement between the applicant's home university and the host institution.
- If your university is unable to insert completion dates or other data, that unofficial transcripts have been verified by a delegated authority in the university and the information has been included in your Feasibility Letter

☐ **Applications meet minimum and maximum duration requirements for each component.**

- Component durations align with requirements detailed in NCP 2026 Round Guidelines section 5.2 Eligible Scholarship Program components.

☐ **A copy of your Australian passport bio page for proof of citizenship has been attached as proof of identity.**

- A copy of your driver's license is not accepted.

☐ **All proposed components are feasible within NCP funding limits (that are not intended to cover all program costs).**

- Applicant is aware that the scholarship is a contribution and not intended to cover all program costs with some costs needing to be borne by the scholar. Scholars will be required to cover any additional costs required, such as tuition fees above the tuition fee benefit limit and ensure these are paid to the timelines required by the host organisation. The NCP program cannot pay additional fees on behalf of the scholar.

Attachment 2 – Key changes to the 2026 Guidelines

Section in Guidelines and change	Rationale for change
<u>2.1</u> Change to NCP objectives including a greater emphasis on participants acquiring Indo-Pacific capability, Asia literacy and undertaking longer-term immersive experiences in the Indo-Pacific.	To ensure the next phase of the NCP delivers on the Australian Government's objectives.
<u>2.2.1, 6.1, 8.1</u> Changes to the priority areas of selection, including that priority will be given to Scholarship Programs to be undertaken in priority host locations/languages/sectors and/or programs where there is an emphasis on longer duration study of an Indo Pacific language, particularly an Asian language, in the study component or language training component.	To ensure the next phase of the NCP delivers on the Australian Government's objectives.
<u>2.2.1</u> Introducing a language learning target across all program streams (including the NCP Scholarships Program) set at 15% of the scholar cohort in 2026, working towards 25 per cent of NCP participants undertaking language-focused programs by 2028. The target is for 15% of scholarships awarded to meet at least one of the following criteria in the proposed program: • 50% of units in study component are study of the official or commonly spoken language of the host location • 50% of the units in study component are taught/delivered in the official or commonly spoken language • Language training component includes at least 10 weeks of full-time continuous study of the official or commonly spoken language of the host location, or part-time equivalent.	To ensure the next phase of the NCP delivers on the Australian Government's objective to strengthen the Indo-Pacific capability and Asia literacy of Australians.
<u>3.1</u> Create a larger cohort of Australian undergraduate students with deeper Indo-Pacific capability.	To ensure the next phase of the NCP delivers on the Australian Government's objectives.
<u>6.2</u> New Assessment Criteria, including (i) alignment with the Australian Government's geographic and sectoral priorities in the Indo-Pacific region; (ii) focus on Indo-Pacific languages, especially priority Asian languages; (iii) personal attributes for successful completion of scholarship; and (iv) future impact of NCP experiences and maintaining engagement with the Indo-Pacific.	To ensure the next phase of the NCP delivers on the Australian Government's objectives.
<u>12.1</u> Requirement to keep DFAT informed of any changes to name, home address, nominated contact details and bank account details.	To support good programming and risk management.
<u>12.5</u> New section on acknowledgement of Australian Government funding through the NCP Program, including use of logos.	To ensure appropriate recognition of Australian Government funding.
<u>13</u> Removed \$20,000 combined tuition fee benefit cap for study and language training components. Individual caps for study component and language training remain. Updates on relevant probity requirements, including in relation to foreign influence, fraud and corruption, conflicts of interest and privacy.	To ensure compliance and consistency with relevant policies and legislation.

<u>5.2.1</u> Change to allow for scholarships to be undertaken at offshore campuses of Australian universities where a genuinely immersive experience can be met.	Support study at Australian offshore campuses while maintaining the requirement for a genuinely immersive program experience.
<u>5.5.3</u> Reduction in number of possible secondary locations to one location to strengthen program coherence. A secondary location is possible where the applicant can show that it is not possible to identify a quality internship that meets the overall program goals in the primary host location, and can still demonstrate an immersive, cohesive experience through the proposed program.	To maximise the likelihood of the scholar having a genuinely immersive experience.
<u>12.3</u> Change to requirements in relation to enabling scholars to propose variations to their program from that set out in their application which forms the basis of the award. Variations will only be approved in exceptional circumstances. Applicants should consider their program design carefully and be sure that they will be able to undertake it as proposed.	To maximise the likelihood of the scholar having a genuinely immersive experience, and ensure compliance with grant principles.
<u>2.6(p)</u> Change to require scholars to obtain and submit travel medical clearance for the proposed location, from a clinic specialising in travel medicine, including any necessary vaccinations or health requirements required for entry, prior to program commencement.	Required to mitigate medical risks faced by scholars and ensure consideration of the specific host location context and risks.
<u>5.6</u> Changes to rules around permitted gaps (suspension, gap leave, leave of absence) to ensure genuinely immersive experience. This ensures that scholars do not take long periods of leave away from their program.	To maximise the likelihood of the scholar having a genuinely immersive experience.
<u>5.5.1</u> Removal of Myanmar and Pakistan as NCP eligible host locations.	Reflects long-term DFAT Smartraveller advice in these locations.
<u>5.2.1</u> Clearer arrangements for university consortia participation. In priority host locations, NCP scholars may choose to engage the services of non-profit consortia/membership organisations to provide academic services.	To ensure compliance and consistency with relevant policies and legislation.
<u>Glossary:</u> Updates to reflect relevant definitions, including as required by the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024.	To ensure compliance and consistency with relevant policies and legislation.

Attachment 3 – Questions Asked During Application

Do applicants have to demonstrate high-level academic achievement?

Applications are assessed against four assessment criteria that are intended to confirm the scholar's resilience and capacity to effectively undertake the scholarship and contribute to the New Colombo Plan aims and objectives.

Can scholars planning to undertake an honours program apply for an NCP scholarship?

Yes. Where an applicant does not have a confirmed honours enrolment at the time of application they should provide information in their application such as a provisional offer, confirmed honours supervisor details, and confirmation that their proposed NCP study component will be credit-bearing to their home Honours degree. The awarding of a scholarship will be conditional on the scholar being enrolled in the Honours program at their home university.

Are NCP scholarships available only for overseas universities where home universities have a formal exchange program?

No. The application process allows eligible students to apply for both exchange and fee-paying options.

How are internships organised?

Proposed internships (or mentorships) are arranged by the applicant.

How do students get visas for their scholarship?

Scholars must obtain their own visas for each component of their scholarship program. Advice on visas must only be sought from the host location's immigration authorities.

Can scholars undertake their scholarship in more than one host location?

Scholarships are intended to be immersive experiences and should undertake their scholarship in a single location. In exceptional circumstances a scholar may undertake their scholarship program in more than one host location and/or at more than one host institution or host organisation and their overall program is cohesive.

What languages can an NCP scholar study and is it important to study a priority language?

Applicants are encouraged to include some form of study of an official or commonly spoken language of their host location (other than English), particularly at the beginning of their program. Scholars can either undertake language study as part of their study component or undertake language training as a separate component. Language training does not have to be credit-bearing.

Are there services provided by for students with disabilities and/or mental illness?

DFAT will consider reasonable accommodation to support participation of students with disability. Funding for disability support may be provided on a case-by-case basis. Scholars must obtain and submit medical clearance from a clinic specialising in travel medicine, including any necessary vaccinations, prior to commencing travel. This should include a medical/health clearance, stating fitness to study and live overseas with a plan to manage any pre-existing conditions. Applicants should also consult with their home university for available support for students with a disability.